

Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp

Homesickness

Twelve million kids go away to camp each summer! For most, summer camp is an opportunity to be independent, learn self reliance and experience adventure. For a few others, missing home, pets, and friends is a natural tendency. While homesickness is usually mild and temporary, it's not fun for your child - or for you. Here are a few tips you may find helpful.

- **Discuss ahead of time what to do if your child starts feeling homesick.** Write down your ideas and pack it in their bag. Some ideas might be: talk to a friend, counselor or church staff, do something fun or new, go buy a treat from the canteen, think about something good that happened that day, write a postcard home, remind them about how proud of themselves they'll feel after a successful week away.
- **Don't promise an early pickup.** This puts your child's focus on getting home – and it sends the message that the experience won't be a success. Please give our staff the opportunity to work through, to the best of our ability, our time tested procedures.
- **Talk about camp before they go.** Ask questions together and discuss what camp might be like and what they might expect. Check out our website together – www.campwapo.org and explore program descriptions and what to bring lists and sample schedules. Talk about some of the fun activities they can look forward to experiencing while at camp.

Homesick Camper Policy

If a camper begins to feel homesick, camp staff follows these steps:

- The camper's counselor informs the Program Director of the camper's homesickness. The counselor also encourages the camper to become actively involved in activities and to have fun.
- If the camper really wants to call home, the counselor consults with the Program Director. The Program Director consults with church staff, if present and enlists their help in problem solving. If necessary, the Program Director calls the parents to inform them of their camper's homesickness. At this point, the parents are consulted as to how they would like their child's homesickness to be handled.
- The Program Director, counselor and church staff will follow the parent's instructions. Several options may be offered; the camper might try to become more actively involved and stay at camp; the camper might call and speak with his/her parents; or the parents might pick up the camper from camp.

We do our best to include everyone in our camp community. We want campers to feel as comfortable as possible especially when it may be the first time away from their family. Yet, for some campers it's still not easy to be away from home. We feel it is best for the parents and

church staff to collectively decide whether it's appropriate for the camper to be encouraged to stay at camp or go home and try another year. When a camper is extremely homesick, it's not only difficult for the camper, but also for the camper's counselor and the community of the cabin. We hope that together we can find the best solution for everyone involved.