



GLEN BERNARD CAMP

Tips to prepare for a great first time camp experience

Camp is full of amazing opportunities and experiences for young people, so it's a good to discuss expectations prior to departure.

Parents and campers should talk about:

Making new friends – what characteristics make good friends, inviting someone to join your group

Trying new things - there are so many exciting activities and programs and it will be more fun if you just try everything at least once! There may be new food options at meals too, you may discover a new favourite!

The excitement of new experiences! - it's normal for campers to feel nervous about being away from home, discuss what to do if you miss home and check out our tips for missing home

Ask for help if needed – there is always a staff member who can assist with questions, help solve problems, lend an ear for listening or give a hug!

Living in a group – sharing a cabin with 4-8 other people will be something new for most people! Talk about the importance of compromise, cooperation, inclusion and respecting others.

Communication – discuss how you will communicate with each other and anticipated frequency. Be realistic with your communication expectations!

Items to practice before camp:

- 1) It's a good idea to **practice being away** from home if you have never done so. For example, have a sleepover at friends' house. Parents, resist the urge to pack their bag or check on them while they are away. It's good to practice not having direct or constant contact.
- 2) Take a mini-vacation from your devices. Try a couple of days without your phone, TV, gameboy or the internet to get the feel of being disconnected. It's a great feeling!

Section Coordinators will call or email all new campers a week or so before the session begins. Write down questions together so that you will remember to ask these when she calls or emails.

Note to parents:

You are giving your child an incredible gift! Use the following tips to get the most out of your investment:

- 1) Above all, be positive! Be supportive of new experiences and the development of independence. Talk about all the great things camp has to offer in the weeks leading up to camp to help build their confidence.
- 2) Campers should know they are staying for the full session. Making a "pick up deal" undermines their confidence and their ability to deal with these feelings, as well as intensifies homesickness. GBC's program is designed to keep campers involved and active and campers usually feel at home after a few days. GBC staff have many strategies to help campers overcome missing home however it is extremely difficult for us to help if they are solely focused on the promise you made to pick them up if something isn't right.
- 3) Apprehensions or anxieties? Call us, we're happy to talk to you about them!
- 4) Letters from parents should be encouraging and supportive. Keep in mind that for some campers, it's hard to hear about the things that are happening at home while they are away at camp.
- 5) Enjoy YOUR break! Your daughter is being well cared for.

Remember, no news is good news! If we have any concerns during the session, we will call you.

Don't Forget to:

Review the camper preparation checklist to help you get ready for camp!

Take a look at the FAQs on our website for some answers to great camper questions!

Get **EXCITED** for your first camp adventure!