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## Set your camper up for success

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Dear {{RecipientFirstName}},

One of our biggest goals for all campers coming to North Star is to “Set them up for success.” You’ll hear us say this a thousand times because we feel so strongly about it. In order for it to be a reality, we need your partnership.

Setting campers up for success doesn’t mean that things will always come easily or result in happiness or perfection all the time. In fact, in order to have a meaningful and fulfilling success story, challenge and productive struggle often need to be part of the storyline. How we talk to our kids about these expected challenges can set the stage.

In this email, we’ll share some of our tips for what to say and what to do in order to set your camper up for success with feelings of missing home.

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### How to set your camper up for success now with... **Missing Home (Homesickness! 😞)**

We'll fill you in on something- we don't like the word "homesick." Having feelings of missing home are totally normal and using the word "homesick" shares an underlying message that when you miss home at camp, you'll also feel symptoms of being ill. Not true! Right now, as your camper is at home and talking about feelings of missing you, missing their pets, missing their bed, do your best to change your own language and talk about "feelings of missing home" instead of "feeling homesick."

\*\*\*Research has shown that upwards of 90% of campers have feelings of missing home. The good news is, research also shows that prevention, particularly prevention with severity, is possible. When your camper talks about missing home, always remind them how normal that is. For most campers, it won't be "if" they miss home, but "when" and what should they do when they feel that way. Remind campers of past instances when they've been away from home and how they were successful (i.e. trips, sleepovers, time spent with other family and friends). Here are some tips to come up with a good plan together!

Before camp starts, talk about feelings of missing home and write down a plan for what your camper can do (We recommend you do this even if you don't think your camper will be one to miss home!) Some of the best plans include: Staying busy with activities, talking to a trusted person (a counselor, a camp director, a friend), making new friends, spending time with friends, and staying positive. Remind them that feelings of missing home often happen during the quiet times at camp-

during chill rest periods, sometimes during meals and most often at bedtime. Even if they never need to use their plan, they'll feel ready and have the support of lots of people around them.

As you talk to your child about their feelings, don't make any promises that can't be kept. One of the biggest mistakes that happens is promising to pick a camper up if they don't like it. (*We refer to this as "the kiss of death."*) In these moments, parents think, "I know they'll love it, they just have to get there and get through the transition." Instead, campers hold onto these words and plans and instead of allowing themselves to acclimate, they often focus on negativity. In these moments of worry before camp starts, your child needs validation, support, reminders of the skills and abilities they already have and a plan for how to navigate when there are moments of challenge.

If you need suggestions of what to say when helping your camper navigate feelings of missing home before camp starts, check out our full parent guide, "Helping your Camper Deal with Anxious Feelings Ahead of Camp." Reach out to us for partnership and additional ideas at anytime!

## Parent Guide: Helping Your Camper Deal with Anxious Feelings Leading Up to Camp

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### Complete your camp forms

Being well organized and well prepared at home can help campers feel organized and well prepared when camp starts as well.

✔ *Complete all of your medical camp forms now!* This way, our team of directors can review the information you submit and reach out if there are any questions.

- In April, additional, camp forms for you and your camper to complete will be added. Get your health forms submitted now so you don't get overloaded when the next forms are added. To complete your camper's forms, go to your CamplnTouch portal (or the Companion app on your phone) and login. All forms are located in the "Forms and Document" section.

✔ *Start labeling your camp items early:* Our packing list is always available online. We recommend you start collecting and labeling items now.

[Login to CamplnTouch to complete North Star Camp forms](#)

[Link to North Star's Packing List](#)

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### Download our mobile app, CAMPANION

North Star uses Companion as a mobile friendly way for you to fill out your camp forms, see pictures and send emails to your camper while they are in-session.

Follow these three simple steps to get started:

- [Download the Companion app](#)
- **Login** to the app using this email address and password (the same you created during registration and the same you use on your desktop)

- **Upload** a reference photo of your child (this will allow you to get direct notifications of when new pictures are posted of your camper in the summer)



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We're here to partner with you and your camper. As we all get ready for camp, please reach out with questions!

Thanks,

-Andy, Dan, Robyn, Glick and Beth



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"Remember the Scholarship Fund" - [www.CampForAllKids.org](http://www.CampForAllKids.org)



[\\*\\*\\*Thurber CA, Walton E: American Academy of Pediatrics Council on School Health. Preventing and treating homesickness. Pediatrics. 2007 Jan;119\(1\):192-201. doi: 10.1542/peds.2006-2781. PMID: 17200288.](#)