

YOUTH HEALTH BULLETIN



JUNE 2017

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: HANDLING HOMESICKNESS



Going away for a night or even away at a camp for a few nights can be a lot of fun. But for some kids, it can be really hard to be away from home. Wally Cat wants you to know that it is OK to feel homesick, but he doesn't want you to miss out on the fun! Read on to learn more about some ways you can help stop the feeling of homesickness.

About homesickness

Homesickness is not like an illness that you get from germs — rather, homesickness is when you may be upset or sad while you are not at home. For some kids, they want to have fun at a

Continued on the back →



Letting a friend or a counselor know that you are feeling a little homesick can help you feel better.

➔ Continued from page 1

friend's house or an overnight camp, but when they get there they just feel sad, or even scared, and want to go home. When some kids get homesick, they may feel headaches or stomachaches. There are many ways that missing home can affect our bodies. Not all kids get homesick, but it is OK if you do. A lot of kids feel homesick, and even some adults!

Some ways to help yourself feel less homesick

Here are some things you can do that will help you stay and enjoy all the fun:

- **Bring a little part of home with you:** For an overnight stay, it may be helpful to bring something from home. Think about your favorite toy or wear your favorite pajamas. You may also want to take a picture of your family that you can look at from time to time.
- **Stay busy:** when you are busy having fun, you have less time to think about being home. If you are at an overnight sleepover, play games, dance and enjoy the time with your friends. If you are at an overnight camp, think about all of the activities that you have to choose from and perhaps even try something new!



Favorite
PJs?
check!
stuffed
animal?
check!
Family photo?
check!

- **Talk to someone:** For some kids, just letting someone else know that you are feeling a little homesick can help you feel better. Whether it is a friend or a counselor, he or she may have some other ideas to help you have fun and not think about being away from home.
- **Practice:** It may seem silly, but it may be helpful to practice being away from home. This may mean staying at a friend's house for a few hours before trying to stay for an overnight visit. It may mean staying a few overnight visits with friends or checking out a day camp before going to an overnight camp.

Wally Cat wants you to enjoy time with friends and to make new friends, too! If you sometimes feel a little homesick, remember that it is OK and that there are ways to lessen that feeling.

SOURCE:

Nemours KidsHealth <https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/homesickness.html>

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