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10 Things You Can Do To Prepare Your Child for Camp

Originally provided by Mr. Ed Covert, Executive Director of Redwood Glen, Loma Mar, CA, a Salvation Army Camp, *revisions in RED have been made to this document to align it with the Lakeside Bible Camp experience.*

1. Arrange for your child to stay with a grandparent or friend for a night or two. This way your son or daughter can experience what it is like to sleep somewhere new and different.
2. Make sure that your child can manage basic personal hygiene, such as brushing teeth, changing clothes, and bathing (*showering*). Bed wetting should not preclude a child from attendance at camp (*and it won't*) but the camp staff needs to be made aware of the issue so that appropriate arrangements can be made and to ensure that the camper's dignity and privacy are protected.
3. During the weeks leading up to camp, take time to share your own camp stories and memories with your child to build excitement and anticipation for camp. If possible, pull out old camp photos or scrapbooks for your kids to look at.
4. Do not schedule a significant family event while our child will be away at camp. No child wants to be abandoned at camp, while mom, dad, and the rest of the family go on a fun family vacation or have a special celebration.
5. Develop a checklist of items needed for camp – *the LBC website lists a camper checklist under the Camps FAQ, additionally, the camper checklist will be sent to you with the check-in reminder a few days before your camp begins* – and work with your child to get everything together. Call the camp if there are items that you cannot secure for your camper – *in the case of Bibles, LBC provides extras for campers to use during chapel time* - most camps will have extra supplies or resources that will ensure that each camper arrives at his or her cabin with all of the needed essentials to have a successful week at camp – *IMPORTANT, please put your campers name (First & Last) on each item of clothing that they will be bringing to camp, especially LBC logo wear! Please review the Lost & Found procedure on our website- <http://www.lakesidebiblecamp.org>.*
6. Mark the first day of camp on the family calendar – *LBC camps begin on Sundays at 3:00 PM with formal check-in*. Together with your child, mark off each day leading up to that date and spend some time talking about what a great experience it will be.
7. Write a couple of letters to your child and pack the sealed envelopes in their luggage a day or two before they leave for camp – *while you can choose to do this, LBC offers a mail service which allows you to drop off letters at the camp with your child for delivery later in the week*. It is also equally, if not more, important for you to write a letter to him/her that is sent through the mail – *at LBC, all mail received for campers is stored in an area separate from the office*

and distributed by the specific camp's directors. Incoming mail is delivered to the office on a daily basis. Every child loves to get mail from home.

8. Pack paper, postcards, and stamps so that your child can write to you – *bulky items cannot be sent through the mail by your camper (e.g., often times campers want to send home some candy, such packages cannot be sent out in regular envelopes) – postage is the responsibility of the camper and is handled through the office.*
9. *(#9 on the original list does not apply to LBC, since all youth campers are housed in cabins, not tents.)*
10. When you arrive at camp with your child, make it a point to meet and connect with the camp staff, so that your child can see that you are interested in, and trust the people that will be caring for them while they are away from home. *LBC check-in takes place on the baseball field. If you have never been to LBC before, have no fear, you will quickly see where that is upon entering the camp. The DCM (Director of Camp Ministries), camp directors, cabin leaders, as well as some staff members, will be at this location, along with the nurse/EMT serving during that week. Parents are encouraged to mill about the camp, have a treat in the café/store, and take their child to his/her cabin once they know what that is. However, parents are also free to leave immediately upon completion of the check-in procedure. Although parents will often start arriving as soon as 1:00 – 2:00, **until they have checked in their camper (which begins no earlier than 3:00 PM) they are responsible for him/her, and children cannot roam the camp without adult supervision.** Between 4:00 – 4:30, camp will “officially” begin, which is signified by the ringing of the camp bell. Any parents still at LBC when the bell rings will need to leave at this time.*