

## HOMESICKNESS

For many girls, attending Oakcrest is their first experience being away from home for several days. For some campers, even the most excited ones, homesickness is an unexpected experience. We encourage parents to take some time prior to their daughter attending Oakcrest to discuss homesickness with her and prepare her for this possibility.

Let your daughter know that it is normal to feel homesick when leaving her home and family for a week. Every camper that attends Oakcrest feels homesick, in varying degrees. Feeling homesick is an indication that she loves her family. Share with your daughter that there are some coping skills that will help her manage homesick feelings and have the best experience possible at Oakcrest. The following list may be helpful as you discuss homesickness with your daughter:

- Night time can be particularly difficult for some campers as they have more time to think and miss home. Talk to your daughter about replacing any sad thoughts with more positive ones like the words of a favorite Primary song, a happy memory with friends or family, or even some meditation pointers.
- Many campers struggle with emotions when they are hungry or thirsty. Remind your daughter to drink frequently and keep a snack or two in her backpack.
- Remind her that Oakcrest is a once-in-a-lifetime experience and homesickness passes. Most homesickness is resolved for campers within the first day or two.
- Help her choose a scripture that may be comforting, perhaps a family favorite.
- Oakcrest has two sets of senior missionary couples. The brethren are available to give a Priesthood blessing if your daughter would like one to help with her homesickness.
- Remind your daughter of the power of prayer. Her Heavenly Father will help her if she asks Him in prayer. Let her know that you and your family will pray for her also.
- Share with her the principle of service and how it can be helpful if she feels homesick.
- Be sure to have her pack her journal and write down her feelings.
- Remind her to stay busy and enjoy each moment. She can do hard things!
- It might be helpful to send a list of some of these suggestions, and others you may have, with your daughter to camp so she can refer to them if needed.
- As parents, you can write a note of encouragement and love to your daughter and slip it into her bag as a surprise.

At Oakcrest, we have marvelous counselors, leadership, First Aid specialists, senior missionary couples, and others who understand homesickness and are prepared to give support and help to your daughter if she experiences homesickness.

On rare occasions we allow a homesick girl to call home. It would be very helpful if you would encourage her to stay at camp rather than offering to pick her up. Often this is a great opportunity for her to face a challenge and succeed.

Campers are ALWAYS glad that they stayed at camp. Thank you for preparing your daughter to be away from home. Our goal is to make your daughter's Oakcrest experience the best it can be.