

Homesickness Helps

By Jolene Roehlkepartain



During the summer, children often leave home to attend residential camp, stay overnight with grandparents, or take part in a day camp program. Ease homesickness by talking about it in advance and identifying ways to cope.

For

Young Family

Season

Summer

Needed

Bible, Treasures from Home worksheet (see last page), pens or pencils



Prepare in Advance

Place bookmarks in your Bible at Philippians 4:6-7 and Ecclesiastes 3:1-22. Print a copy of Treasures from Home worksheet (see last page) for each family member. Bring a pen or pencil for each person.

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin:

God, thank you for being with us and loving us, whether we're at home or away. Amen.

2. Ask someone to read aloud Philippians 4:6-7 from your Bible or the text at the end of the activity. Have another family member read aloud Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. Discuss together how life includes moments of happiness and moments of sadness mixed together, and how God loves and cares for us in all the moments of life.
3. As a family, talk about homesickness. Explain that homesickness is normal. Everyone feels it. Encourage both adults and children to answer the following questions:
 - What's the longest time you've been away from home?
 - What do you love most about being home?
 - What have you done in the past when you felt homesick?
 - What can help a person when he or she is feeling homesick?
4. Give each family member a copy of Treasures from Home worksheet (see last page) and a pencil or pen.
5. Allow time for each person to complete the Treasures from Home worksheet. Help young children by writing the responses they dictate. Work together to identify objects that may help each other relieve homesickness. It may be helpful to move around your home to look at your belongings as you complete this worksheet.
6. After everyone has finished, talk about your responses. Have each person identify two or three things he or she might take along when he or she is going to be away from home.
7. Invite family members to tell about other things that have helped them cope with homesickness. For example, writing a letter or email, or calling family members; doing something fun to take attention away from feeling homesick; making a countdown line to mark the time until seeing family again. Encourage children to talk to a trusted adult about their feelings when they're away from home.



Philippians 4:6-7

⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

A Time for Everything

¹For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

² a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

³ a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;

⁴ a time to weep, and a time to laugh;

a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

⁵ a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

⁶ a time to seek, and a time to lose;

a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

⁷ a time to tear, and a time to sew;

a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

⁸ a time to love, and a time to hate;

a time for war, and a time for peace.



Treasures from Home

Identify objects that could remind you of home when you are away. Name one item for each category. Choose two or three items to take with you when you are going to be away from home.

Stuffed animal:

Photo:

Book:

Bookmark:

Clothing item:

Jewelry:

Game or toy:

Other item:

