

# Homesickness

**The Deal With Homesickness** – When you're homesick, you are feeling nostalgic for familiar things like your family, friends, pets, house or neighborhood. You can miss something as simple as your bed or the tree outside your window. Homesickness isn't only for kids – Practically everyone feels homesick from time to time, even adults. Players might get homesick while on the trip.

**Why Do I Feel This Way?** – Familiar surroundings, people and routines provide people with a sense of security and comfort. In a new place, you may find yourself missing the comforts of home and loved ones. Those homesick feelings are completely normal. Some may feel a little loneliness, sadness or anxiety. Others may feel physical symptoms, like stomachache or headache, or even become depressed. Most of the time, once the new surroundings and people become more familiar, feelings of homesickness fade or go away. But if you are feeling overwhelmed, it's a good idea to seek help from a friend, the coach or maybe the chaperone. If you have additional stress in your life, homesickness can be more intense. When you're coping with other loss or change, you'll feel especially attached to things that bring you comfort and miss them more when you're not around them.

**Tips for Dealing with Homesickness** – Luckily, homesickness is usually mild and doesn't last long. And you can do some things to make sure it doesn't spoil your fun:

- *Bring something that reminds you of home* – Pack photos or letters or a favorite stuffed animal, sleep shirt or pillow. When you start longing for familiar faces and places, you'll have a little bit of home right there with you.
- *Call home when you can* – This may seem obvious, but a quick call to hear your dad's voice or your sister's story about something at home can be comforting. You might want to arrange a time to call so you'll have something to look forward to.
- *Do something you enjoy* – When you're having fun, you're less likely to spend time thinking about people and things you miss.
- *Talk to a friend* – Talk with someone who's going through the same experience you are. Knowing you're not the only one dealing with this can take the sting out of feeling lonely, and you may feel better when you cheer up someone else.
- *Write in a journal* – Putting your feelings down on paper can help you understand them. Maybe writing about homesickness will show you what you really miss. Then you can find a way to ease that ache.
- *Stay active* – If you sit on the sidelines, you'll have more time to think about feeling sad. Talk to people and throw yourself into activities – Before you know it, you'll be too busy to be homesick.
- *Review expectations* – Feelings of sadness may be feelings of disappointment that don't live up to your dreams. You may need to adjust what it is that you want to get out of the experience.
- *Talk to an adult* – Missing your family and home is normal. But if after a couple of days away you're having trouble eating or sleeping or you're not interested in doing anything, talk to an adult you trust about your feelings. That person can help you work through this tough time.

Almost everyone has felt homesick at some time. Remember that there's a good side to homesickness, too – It means you have family and friends worth missing and a place you want to return to when your adventure away from home is over.