

CHAPTER 7

THE FRESHKIDS

and other first time campers

Manitou is a big family and our program includes everybody, but we add a few extra elements for our supervision of campers in this age group of 7 – 9 year olds because of their unique needs. (Remind them about their moose beanie baby they will get the 1st night!)

BY DAY SEVEN OF CAMP

If your camper is a Freshkid or a new camper to Manitou, you will be hearing from us around day 4-6 about how your child is fairing at camp. Please remember no news is always good news!

TWO-WEEK CAMPERS/FOUR-WEEK

We sit down with all Freshkids after their 10 days of camp to see how they feel about staying for the remainder of the session. Please note that the two-week option is really a four-week session and most campers do want to stay the full four weeks. We will advise you by phone if your camper wants to stay and is 100% committed, as we want to ensure they leave on a high note. YOU will get a call 36-48 hours in advance of the two-week mark to let you know if they are staying. **If you do not want us to ask them about staying on for the remainder of the session please let us know in advance.**



PREPARING YOUR FRESHKID OR ANY NEW CAMPER FOR CAMP

Having parents speak to their children in almost all cases makes kids more homesick. Teaching children that they can deal with every day life, and the challenges or issues that affect them, without communicating with parents is essential to a healthy camp experience and in fact is one of the greatest benefits of sending your child to camp. Trust us that your children have the most nurturing counselors and head staff to take care of them. To become self confident, independent children it is critical that they rely upon their friends and staff to help them. To better understand these issues please review on our web site our communication policy based described in "camp communication issues" (<http://www.manitoucamp.com/information.htm#articles>).

Here are some other tips to prepare your child. Talk to them about:

- Writing good old-fashioned letters home and that you will be writing to them as well and the excitement of receiving a letter at camp.
- Doing some things by their own choice, but also having to go along with the group doing things like waking up and going to bed at certain times, going to scheduled activities (some that they like and some that are new to them), swimming everyday, cleaning the cabin and generally doing things in a group.
- Letting them know there are always adults to turn to. Everyone is accessible and approachable. Please be sure that they know if a problem develops or if they are unhappy... they should always let someone know.
- See our articles online at <http://www.manitoucamp.com/information.htm#articles> re homesickness, to read up on how to combat homesickness before your child gets to camp.