

## Talking to Your Child about Camp Being Cancelled This Summer

To begin, remember this is hard for you, too. Take time to process the news about this summer yourself before talking to your child.

1. Children may respond in a wide variety of ways to hearing the news that they will not be returning to Huckins this summer. It's best not to assume you know how your daughter will react.

That being said, we expect that many girls will have very strong feelings of sadness, loss, anger and grief in response to this news. This may be especially true for girls who have spent many summers at camp or are anticipating a camp milestone such as their Huckster year or entering the Leadership Division. Any parent who has found their daughter in tears on pick up day knows what we are talking about, and it happens at every age! It is important to validate their disappointment and their feelings. This is a huge loss for all of us, campers and staff alike.

2. Set aside time to sit with your daughter and to discuss this news. Listen empathically and without judgement to her thoughts and feelings. Encourage her to talk about how she is feeling with you. Assure her that she is not alone, and it's important to allow herself to feel and share whatever she is feeling – to have a good cry or start laughing uncontrollably. Remind her Honesty is part of being Nellie. Continue to check in over time as her feelings may shift and come in waves of intensity as the summer approaches.
3. Anticipate that there may be a spike in sadness about the loss of camp as remote learning ends, summer begins and the date that your daughter would be going to camp approaches. Consider ways to make that day special for her and your family. Perhaps she can teach you some Huckins songs, dress up in a crazy outfit at dinner, facetime with a camp friend, and if possible, spend time in nature. Huckins has special plans to mark our campers' opening day – **you will be able to register soon for our *summer virtual program* to make sure your daughter is included.**
4. When your camper is ready, brainstorm ways they can feel connected to their Huckins experience and community. What can they do to feel more connected to the person they are at camp? Perhaps there is a Huckins virtual program activity coming up they can join in, or stories they can share with you about their favorite parts of camp. Is there a camp meal you can make at home, a camp game or song she can share? Not everyone will feel better by doing camp activities at home, so let them be the guide.
5. Remember, the Huckins staff is here for you and your daughter. We are also feeling disappointed and sad, and we are committed to getting through this together.

