

PRACTICAL PEARLS: Anxiety about summer camp

INTRODUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• In children and adolescents with significant clinical anxiety, anticipating attending summer camps can lead to serious, even disabling stress and agitation.• However, these kids can have very positive experiences with summer camps that lead to personal growth and enhanced self-esteem http://www.jaacap.com/article/S0890-8567(09)61838-4/abstract
INITIAL EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT BY PRIMARY CARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify kids who have significant anxiety symptoms through yearly behavioral health screening• Reinforce that summer camp experiences, if handled properly, can lead to significant personal growth and enhanced self-esteem for kids dealing with anxiety• For kids showing signs of significant distress or disability in association with anticipation of attending a camp, conduct an in-person evaluation and assess for anxiety symptoms
WHEN TO REFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If more than transient distress or if the child is using “avoidance” as a primary coping mechanism (refusing to go to camp, calling frequently to come home, presenting with various non-specific general medical complaints with no identifiable medical cause)
HOW TO REFER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• (413) 794-5555 (Behavioral Health Central Intake)• (413) 794-3342 (Baystate MCPAP consultation)
WHAT TO EXPECT FROM BAYSTATE CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL VISIT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehensive Evaluation and treatment plan by a trained pediatric mental health professional• Counseling, psychotherapy and psychiatric services provided to family as needed and indicated

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