

# Tips for Separation Anxiety

The transition from home to school can be difficult. Children who have difficulty with changes in everyday life, such as new routines, may have more difficulty transitioning to school. Parents should gradually introduce the idea of school to their child and what it will be like in order to help them prepare. Family and teacher collaboration can help to increase children's level of comfort and prepare them to have a positive day (Luckenbill, n.d.).

## Tips for Transitioning into a New Classroom

### Before the school year begins

Visit the school before the beginning of the year

- Role play going to school
- Read books about school: The Kissing Hand, Llama Llama Misses Mama, Owl Babies
- Make books for your child about their routine and transitioning from home to school

### In the first days of school

- Help your child get to know the teachers before you leave the classroom
- Ask program staff about their strategies for making children feel comfortable at the beginning of the school year
- Teach your child's teacher a few words in your home language
- Review the daily schedule with your child
- Develop a goodbye routine with your child
- With your child, develop soothing strategies they can use when they miss their family
- Send a picture of your family or a transition item (blanket or stuffed animal) to school. This can be kept in their backpack for when they feel sad.
- Establish a reunion ritual for the end of the school day, welcoming your child home (e.g., hugs, snacks, chill time)

### Throughout the year

Share with the teacher your child's favorite activities

- Talk with your child about their feelings. Let them know, it is ok to miss their parents.
- Share your child's favorite activities with the teacher
- Establish a reunion ritual
- Check in with your child's teacher about the day
- Try to pick your child up at the same time each day
- Role-play going to school
- Send a picture of your family or a transition item (blanket or stuffed animal) to school. This can be kept in their backpack for when they feel sad.

References: Luckenbill, J. (n.d.). 11 Ways to Help Children Say Goodbye. Retrieved from <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/help-children-say-goodbye>

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