

☆ *Preparing for Your Child's First Day* ☆

Setting Your Child Up for Success

For many children, coming to school for the first time and staying without their parent can cause separation anxiety. This anxiety can take the form of crying and/or clinging to a parent or guardian. Anxiety over separating from a parent is completely typical and with proper support should taper off over time.

According to the Early Steps Learning Center, there are three main steps to assisting your child with this transition that have been proven successful.

Step One– Be Confident: As a parent, you set the tone for your child. Show your child that you are excited for them and how happy you are for their step towards independence. If you feel emotional about your baby growing up, do not show your preschooler. Only put out positive vibes and confidence in their new adventure!

Step Two– Be Consistent: If you set a routine for each day that your child attends school, they learn what to expect and feel comfortable. Walk your child to their classroom, give them a quick hug and kiss before they walk in, and then walk out of the building. This provides a smooth transition into their new surroundings and encourages a healthy bond with your child's teachers.

Step Three– Be Prepared for Relapses. Separation anxiety is not limited to the beginning of the school year. Any changes in the preschooler's life can trigger anxiety, but know that most mid-year episodes end quickly with reassurance in the routine.

Excerpts from Early Steps Learning Center
www.earlystepslearningcenter.com/parentresources

What will your first transition into our classroom look like?

First, you will come to the back door with your child. A teacher will open the door and you will walk down the hallway to hang up any coats or bookbags. Second, you will walk your child over to the classroom door and say goodbye to them swiftly. A teacher will be at the door to greet your child and walk them inside. Third, you will exit the building while your child begins an exciting adventure!

A Few Things to Keep In Mind:

1. Your child might need time to feel comfortable in their new surroundings. Show them you have confidence in them by resisting the urge to go back to check on them.
2. Special toys from home should stay in backpacks. If a child feels safer packing a special item from home in the beginning of school, tell them it must stay in their bag so that the item does not get broken.
3. Some children melt down at pick up time. This is likely because once they see you they are reminded of the separation. It does not mean they had a hard day, but rather that they are still developing their feelings.
4. Work together with your child's teacher. The teachers in your child's classroom are your partners! Reach out to them and make a plan to help your child adjust.

Excerpts from The LEAP Clinic, Stephanie Gold
www.leapclinic.ca

