

Q&A HOW TO EASE TRANSITIONS FOR INFANTS AND EDUCATORS.

FOR PARENTS



Q How do I address my baby's separation anxiety in starting infant care?

Babies form emotional attachments to their primary caregivers from birth. As infants grow aware of their surroundings and the presence of strangers, they get anxious when their primary caregivers are not around. During this time, they may become distressed, clingy or cry.

Separation anxiety is a normal experience between the ages of 6 months and 3 years, but it is important to manage it appropriately. Otherwise, the child may feel lost or abandoned, affecting their ability to trust and self-regulate.

- **Gradually introduce infant care** to your baby. Visit the centre together in advance and start with short sessions before increasing the duration. Transitional objects such as a favourite stuffed toy may bring comfort to your baby.
- **Show confidence** in the new caregiver/ environment. Maintain a relaxed body posture and facial expression during drop-offs. Be positive and do not show anxiety, as babies can sense this.
- **Always say goodbye.** Do not sneak off as it can cause infants to become more anxious and less trusting of people. Establish a consistent goodbye ritual using the same words, gestures or song. It reassures your baby that you will be back to pick them up.

Q What are some strategies to help teachers prepare for transitions at work?

Preschool educators experience many transitions, be it managing children as they go from one activity to the next, teaching a different age level, or adopting a new teaching approach. It is important for educators to be transition-ready so that they can be better prepared and connect more effectively with children.

Some issues for educators to consider:

- 1. Children's profile.** Check out the class you will be taking over to understand the children's development, family backgrounds, dispositions, as well as strengths and dislikes. This will help you get to know them better and design appropriate experiences from the outset.
- 2. Communication.** A good home-centre partnership influences the educator's relationship with children, so connect with parents early and build a trusting relationship. Send a friendly note to parents to introduce yourself, explain what you intend to do in the coming school year, and how they can be engaged in their child's preschool experience. It will be even more impressive if you personalise the message, such as highlighting an activity their child would enjoy, as it shows you care and have done your research.
- 3. Collaboration.** Connect with other educators regularly for professional growth and support. Also consider co-teaching your new class with your fellow teacher. It is easier to build rapport with children in a secure environment with a familiar classroom and caregivers.



FOR EDUCATORS



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