



Help Ease the Transition to Child Care Tips for Families!



Once you have found and enrolled in a child care program, the next step is to start! All children react differently to starting in a new environment. Some are teary, while others happily run to the toys, and some go through phases for months! Here are a few tips *from families to families!*

- ✓ Visit the child care you have chosen with your child. Be enthusiastic, your child will feel this.
- ✓ Start Slow: most child care providers recommend a staggered start. A few hours each day, building to a full day.
- ✓ On the first few days, spend a couple of extra minutes helping your child feel comfortable but remember not to prolong the goodbye. Most children improve once you have left. (remember to say goodbye! It's part of the routine, don't sneak away).
- ✓ Never ridicule a child for crying. Instead make supportive statements like "it's hard to say goodbye."
- ✓ Pack their favourite foods! And lots of variety.
- ✓ Send a lovey with them (a stuffy, blanket, doll, a favourite little car, whatever they are attached too!). It will act as a security item.
- ✓ Talk to them: even little ones need to hear that it's a child care day, child care and friends are fun, Mommy/Daddy always come back, etc.
- ✓ Be prepared for a tired child! Starting child care is often stimulating for little ones, they may be pretty pooped by the time you pick them up. You may have to shift your dinner, bath, and bed schedule.
- ✓ Hungry monkey! Some children burn more energy than they are used to at child care. Ensure you have a little snack/bottle in the car for the ride home, just in case!
- ✓ Like any change in life, we sometimes see developmental regression. For example, if your child is potty trained you *may* see them regress slightly. Also consider if they have a favourite potty seat, ask the child care provider if you can bring it to child care.
- ✓ And last but not least...be good to yourself! Balancing work/school and childcare is a busy and emotional time of life. Parents need to take care of themselves, ask for help, simplify your life, and adjust expectations (aka your house may not be perfect!). Remember change takes time to adjust to.
- ✓ Not wanting to leave child care! Some of the reasons for the behavior include an assertion of independence, wanting parents to experience their world, sudden interruption of their play, or separation emotions that may translate into trying behavior when they see the one person in the world they are closest to.

The Child Care Resource & Referral program looks forward to assisting you in choosing child care.