

Top 10 Tips

settling your baby into childcare

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic this has been an exceptionally hard year for many. If your baby or toddler now needs to go to a nursery/carer and you are feeling a bit worried about leaving them, here are few tips to help you.

1. Acknowledge your own feelings

Feeling worried, guilty or even tearful is natural. This is how most parents feel. Give yourself time and don't be hard on yourself. You will appreciate your time together even more! You can bring reminders such as a photo of your little one or their toy to work to help you through the day.

2. Meet up with other mums and babies

Try meeting up with other families so your child can get used to seeing other children. You can attend Children's centre baby activities and join Us Mums sessions such as Buggy Push.

3. Contact your nursery/carer beforehand

Speak with your childcare setting about any questions you might have. Ask what policies they have in place and if there is anything specific they do to help a child settle in. Can you call during the day to ask how they are doing? Will they send you updates, pictures etc.?

4. Consider 'comforters'

See if your childcare setting will allow your child to have a 'transitional object'. This could be the child's toy or anything else that smells of their home and wash powder etc. Perhaps your nursery/carer encourages to bring pictures so they can show them to the child and chat about them?

5. Test it!

Drive or take a walk to the childcare setting so you both get familiar with the journey and your new routine. Make this a positive experience for both of you, smile and talk with your child on the way.

6. Manage your morning routine

You might be used to a quite relaxed morning routine. However, it can become more challenging if you have to stick to specific times and schedule. Pack your and baby's bag and set out both of your clothes the night before. Plan to leave earlier but remember, life with children doesn't always go to plan. So if the unexpected happens and you're running late, try not to panic!

7. Phased introduction if you can

If it is possible and suitable for your child's age, you might want to start with leaving you child for short periods of time and then gradually build it up to a full day.

8. On the day

Be quick in saying goodbye as your presence can make it harder for your baby to settle. Try to smile even if it is hard for you, this will help them to feel more relaxed.

9. Accepting your child's emotions

How your child settles into the childcare setting might differ from other children. Everyone responds in their own way! Your childcare provider is professional and experienced, trust them. Babies are easily distracted and they will know how to comfort your little one.

10. Stay realistic

You might miss your little one during the day and cannot wait to pick them up! However, keep in mind that they might feel tired and might sometimes even cry as they are 'letting go' of emotions. Just smile, hug them and say that you love them!