

Children's Adjustment to Preschool

At the beginning of the school year, preschool children sometimes have trouble separating from their parent or carpool driver. Be prepared to attend class sessions with your child (but without other siblings) during the opening week or two, if you anticipate your child needing you.

If possible, avoid using carpools for the first week or so, unless your child is familiar with the drivers and other children. During the first days, do not push your child into activities. Allow him/her to observe the other children, if he/she feels more comfortable doing so. Remain in the background as much as possible, but please do not sneak away while your child isn't looking. Tell your child when it is time for you to leave and let them know that you will be back again at "going home time". Remember that the teacher has had experience helping children adjust to preschool and enlist her/his help.

Another time of adjustment, for both the parent and the child, is the parent's first participation days in the classroom. The child may behave in ways that aren't typical to his/her usual classroom behavior such as: clinging to the parent, calling the parent away from assigned work activities, shunning friends to stay near the parent, demanding to be the parent's helper at inappropriate times, or demanding extra attention from the parent. Be prepared to diffuse any of these behaviors.

One of the advantages of participating in a cooperative preschool environment is that parents have the opportunity to share in a child's school time. Therefore, we encourage parents to show their child some special attention during their participation hours. Get another parent to cover you for a few minutes so that you can share a special activity with your child. Let your child know that you welcome his/her help and attention while you are sharing your time with other children, too. Try to look for opportunities to share activities with your own child, while including other children in the activities as well.