

Remember...

Do not be alarmed if you try these suggestions and your child still cries at the door.

Separation anxiety can be a brief period in your child's development or it may last months. Regular attendance at school helps your child overcome this anxious stage.

Your child's teacher provides many opportunities for your child to have a happy time.

She also prays for the children. With your encouragement and the teacher's care, your child will come to realize that school is indeed a loving, happy place.

Jesus said, "Anyone who takes care of a little child like this is caring for me! And whoever cares for me is caring for God who sent me. Your care for others is the measure of your greatness."

Luke 9:48 (TLB)

Leaving Your Child at the Door

Leaving your child at the door of their classroom does not have to be a stressful experience for you or your child. Separation anxiety is a normal step in a child's emotional development during the preschool years. The following steps can help your preschooler have a happy start to their day at school!

Set a Happy Tone Before Arrival

Make the morning less stressful.

Children can sense your stress. Set out your child's clothes the night before. Label your child's belongings and pack diapers and a change of clothes in his/her bag.

Feed your child before leaving home.

Separation is more difficult when a child is hungry.

Sing a song about school, Jesus, or their friends while dressing your child.

Make up words to a song using a familiar tune.

Sing these words:

We are getting dressed for school, dressed for school, dressed for school. We are getting dressed for school. We like to go to school. (Tune: Mary Had a Little Lamb.)

Talk about your child's teacher and friends while traveling to school.

Arrival at Your Child's Room

Arrive on time.

Fifteen to twenty minutes before class time, the teachers are eagerly awaiting the arrival of children at the door to welcome them. When you arrive after that time, the teacher is often involved in classroom activities that may prevent her from the normal welcoming process. A timely arrival also helps your child adjust to the schedule and routine.

Encourage a child who is walking to walk to the door and into the classroom.

Separation is easier for your child if he is not in your arms.

Notify teachers of changes in your child's routine or conditions that may affect their behavior.

For example, inform the teacher if your child did not sleep as long as normal or is taking an antibiotic or other medicine. This information will help the teacher understand your child's actions during the day.

Follow the security instructions outlined in your parent handbook.

Children will only be released to adults that you have authorized.

What to Do If Your Child Cries

Tell your child you love them and reassure them that you will be back later.

Then say goodbye and leave. Prolonged separations make it more difficult for your child to adjust.

Avoid returning to your child's classroom.

If your child sees you, he may become upset again. You are welcome to call the preschool office to check on your child.

Know that your child's teacher will contact you if she is unable to comfort your preschooler after a reasonable amount of time.

What to Do When You Return

Return on time to pick up your child.

Show your child that he/she is more important to you than anything else.

Be excited to see your child. Show interest by asking about their day. Avoid talking on your cell phone.