

Nurturing New Beginnings

The transition to a new learning environment can be an exciting milestone for our children, but it can also bring a host of other feelings, emotions and behaviours.

We're here to provide practical tips and tricks, ensuring both you and your child feel well-prepared and confident as you navigate this exciting transition together.


PRACTICE MAKES PROGRESS



- In the week leading up to your child's transition, practice alongside them putting on their shoes and socks, doing up zippers and buttons, applying sunscreen, opening and closing their lunchbox and any little containers you might include
- Bring your child into the process of labelling and personalising their belongings so they are more likely to be able to identify them

NORMALISE ASKING FOR HELP

If your child is struggling with a particular task, practice asking for help and chat about who might be available to help them with tasks at their new learning environment. Reassure and normalise that it's okay to not be able to do everything and that their teachers will be able to support them.



SHARE MEMORIES




Sharing your own photos and memories from your first day of school or Kindy allows your child to experience and learn how someone they love and trust navigated new beginnings.



STORY BOOKS

Read story books about going to school. Chat about how you might feel if you were the characters in the book.

EXPLORE 'REALITY' THROUGH PLAY

- Play 'schools' at home and take turns exploring the role of the student and teacher.
 - Try to model different scenarios such as asking for the bathroom or having trouble completing a task.
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NAVIGATING THE POST-SCHOOL MELTDOWNS

- Allow downtime- avoid scheduling too many activities immediately after their day
- Consider delaying asking about their day as they may already be too emotionally spent. You could share something that happened during your day or share how much you missed them.
- It's likely your child may not get through their entire lunchbox in the early days- don't forget to pack some snacks for the trip home.

FIND WAYS TO 'SEND' YOURSELF TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD:

- Add a note, a funny joke or a photo into their lunchbox
- Attach a keyring containing a photo of your family to their bag
- Create matching bracelets to wear throughout the day
- Draw a matching symbol on each other's hands at the start of each day



APPROACH WITH EMPATHY

Acknowledge your child's feelings directly, rather than trying to distract them:

e.g. "I get it, saying goodbye is hard. I'm going to be missing you today too and can't wait to see you this afternoon".

Help your child identify their feelings (when they're in a calm state) so they can talk about what might be making them feel worried or upset. You can then come up with ways to cope and help them from feeling so overwhelmed.



PREDICTABLE & PERSONALISED

- Plan and practice a loving goodbye ritual- the length of the routine will depend on your child's temperament and needs
- Hand your child over to a relationship, not a room- orientate your child to the person that will be responsible for their emotional wellbeing whilst you aren't available:

"Mummy is going to go now. Katelyn is going to take care of you today. I know you are safe and will see you this afternoon"





BE A CONFIDENT LEADER

Your child will be looking to you for guidance on whether their new space is safe. Being a confident and calm leader throughout the transition process will be key. Once you've decided it's time to say goodbye and have made the choice to leave, don't linger- this may prolong the emotional stress associated with saying goodbye. Meaning what you say helps your child to learn to trust that your departure is a regular part of the routine and that you will return as promised, fostering a secure attachment.



PLEASE GET IN TOUCH IF YOU WOULD LIKE SOME MORE HELP OR INFORMATION

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Sunshine Coast Child Play Therapy provides mobile Play Therapy support for children aged 2 to 12 in the Sunshine Coast region.

Our unique approach brings play therapy directly to your doorstep, creating a safe and familiar environment for children to express themselves.

Our Masters qualified Play Therapists utilise a variety of play therapy modalities & techniques to address emotional challenges and foster healthy development.

DISCLAIMER

This handout is generalised advice for informational purposes and is not intended as a 'to do' list for parenting or child development. It should also not be used as a substitute for seeking out individualised support and guidance from a health professional- because every child is going to experience and navigate the transition to school in their own unique way.