

Exploring

infants and toddlers

Capital District Child Care Council

a tipsheet for parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2

The Art of Hi and 'Bye

15 Tips to Ease the Stress of Separation Anxiety

Separation anxiety can be frustrating for babies and parents. Try these techniques to make the "Hi's & 'Bye's" easier for everyone.

Caregivers can...

- Before care is started, be sure to discuss how parents feel about their child reaching developmental milestones. (i.e., Do they want to know if their child took her first step while in care?)
- Share detailed examples of children's strengths and gifts with anxious parents regularly to give them insight into their child's day (art work or classroom photos).
- Anxious parents may feel better about saying good-bye to children when given the opportunity to share in decision-making over what happens during their baby's day.
- Ask parents how they feel when they must leave their baby. Sometimes they just need a minute to talk about their protective feelings.
- Offer a specific "check-in-time" when parents can call, text or receive a cell phone picture to confirm their baby is content and at play.
- Encourage parents to avoid sneaking out.
- Read a homemade family photo book with the baby throughout the day.
- Establish a hello and good-bye space for parents and children that can include a comfy chair, family photos, and books.
- Reassure even the youngest baby that her parents will return.
- Be flexible, some babies need more time to "settle in" than others.



Separation anxiety lets the world know who they love the best

It is important that both the caregiver and parent feel comfortable working together. Open and honest communication is key when developing relationships between parents, babies, and caregivers.

Parents can:

- Be sure to express their needs to their child's provider.
- Read their child's cues, make good-byes short and sweet or take the time they need to ease into and out of child care.

Together you can...

- Take time to ease in and out of child care.
- Have a daily routine that babies can rely on.
- Upon the baby's arrival at care you can encourage her to join friends in play, start an activity, or go to a favorite center.