

NEW BEGINNINGS!

A new experience, such as beginning Head Start, is exciting for most everyone, but especially for the very young! Here are some ideas that will make for a smoother transition...

Notice how many of these ideas also apply to older students. Young children's thinking is somewhat different than ours, but their emotions are very similar!



BEFORE BEGINNING

1. **If possible, attend Open House with your child.** Help your child figure out where important areas are, for instance, the bathroom and the playground.



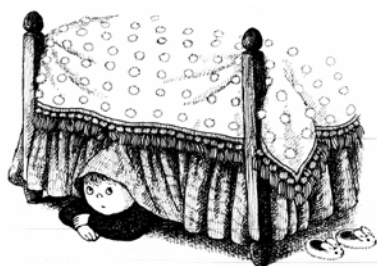
2. **Describe the basics of the daily routine to your child.**



Teachers will be happy to inform you of the daily schedule. The routine is the only way young children have to tell time, especially the BIG question of when they will go home.

IT'S ALMOST TIME!

3. **It is not a good idea to put excited human beings to bed early.** Try to have your child go to bed at the usual time. If your child must get up earlier than usual the next day, the following night (s)he will go to sleep earlier!



4. **Serve a favorite nutritious breakfast, but don't be surprised if your child does not eat much.**



SAYING GOOD-BYE

5. **Establish the same good-bye routine** for every day so your child knows when you are *really* leaving.



6. **Never sneak away** without saying good-bye.



7. **Know that some children cry on that first day and some parents cry on that first day.**

That's O.K. Let your child know that that is O.K. ...even if it is repeated for several days.



PROBLEMS SEPARATING

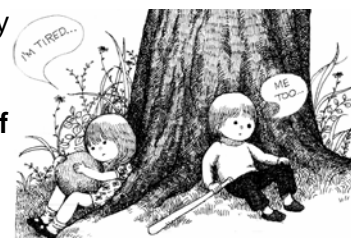
8. For children who have problems separating:

- a. Give your child something of yours that your child knows you value, such as Dad's favorite boots, or Mom's purse—so therefore, you will have to re-connect, in a child's thinking.
- b. A security object may help.
- c. A family picture can be consoling.
- d. Have someone else bring your child to school.
- e. Pick up your child—a little early.



LITTLE EXTRAS

9. Some children are happy for the first few days. **Then after the newsness has worn off there is a letdown effect** and they are unhappy for a few days.



10. **Finally, give extra time and hugs these first days.** *It's better not to question your child too much.* Just be there.



Illustrations came from: *Oh, What a Busy Day!* by Gyo Fujikawa (Grosset & Dunlap, 1976)