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Preparing Your Child For Daycare

Find a Childcare Center You Trust

The first step is to be sure you are comfortable with the childcare setting. An important decision like this cannot be made in haste. Whether you are choosing a childcare center or in-home caregiver, you need to trust the professionals that will be caring for your child. Interview them, check references, and stop in unannounced to see how the provider interacts with children.

Tell Your Child What is Happening

Next, talk to your child about what is going to happen. It does not matter the age of the child, though the older the child, the more he will understand.

Make sure your child understands when he will be dropped off, for how long, and that you will always pick him up.

Visit the Day Care Facility

If possible, visit the childcare facility with your child beforehand. Share with your child the fun things that happen. Show off all of the fun toys, the different types of kids that are there, and the nice staff that will be in charge.

Ease Into the New Routine

Start the new routine gradually. This can ease the stress of the new situation for the child.

Try just leaving her for a few hours for a few days at first, and build up to your regular routine. If it is OK with the provider, find something that she can bring from home, such as a favorite teddy bear or a toy.

Spend Time at the Day Care Center

If this is not possible, you can also help the transition by spending some time at the childcare site yourself, both when you drop off and pick up. Work together with the childcare provider to make a plan that will work well for you and your child.

The start of any new routine can be hard, so do not be discouraged if the first goodbyes bring tears. With comfort and familiarity, your child will be eager to play at this fun new place in no time.