Adjusting to New Environment

Handling Separation Difficulties and Establishing Routine

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How to Handle Separation Difficulties

- **Why the anxiety and resistance?**
  - Young children don't know that the separation is temporary.
  - They are scared in the strange place

- **Goals:**
  - To establish a routine
  - To learn that the school is a safe and fun place
Tips for Handling Separation Difficulties: DO’s

Do keep your goodbyes brief
● Once they say goodbye, you need to leave. Do NOT to drag out a goodbye.

Do develop a ritual for leaving
● By keeping farewells the same each time, you create a familiar transition and reduces their anxiety.

Do Follow Through with the Plan
● It is important to be consistent.
Tips for Handling Separation Difficulties: DON'Ts

Do NOT sneak out on your child, always say goodbye
- Say goodbye and remind them that you’ll be back.
- When people leave without saying goodbye, they seem to disappear. This makes their recovery much harder.

Do NOT brush off their anxiety
- Try to acknowledge their separation anxiety

Do NOT apologize for leaving
- This tells the child that the parent does not want to leave them.
Routine

Routines help children learn self-control.
- Consistent routines provide comfort and a sense of safety

Routines reduce power struggles
- Routines can also limit the amount of “no’s”

Routines help children cope with transitions.
- Routines (like bedtime routines) can help make transitions easier.

Routines help parents feel organized and reduce their stress
Establishing Routine at Home

Morning Routine

● Think about things that need to get done before leaving for school
  ○ After waking up, brush teeth, comb/brush hair, put on clothes, put shoes, get the backpack, and leave

Bedtime Routine

● Preschoolers need 11 to 13 hours of sleep each night.
  ○ Starting around 7:30PM, after bath, they put on PJs, brush teeth, sit and read or listen to calming music
  ○ At 8PM, they go to bed and say goodnight