



# PRESCHOOL PARENT PRESS

A bi-monthly publication brought to you by the exceptional children's assistance center.

## Tips on Handling Separation Anxiety

Many children experience separation anxiety at the start of a new school year. This is normal and considered healthy. It is a developmental step that parents and caregivers simply have to work through. Your child is realizing that they are separate from their parents.

A child may show his distress by becoming apprehensive about entering a new setting, refusing to make eye contact, clinging to a parent, throwing a temper tantrum, or having trouble sleeping and experiencing nightmares. Some additional factors that may contribute to this behavior include: tiredness, illness, changes in household routine, changes in the family structure. If separation anxiety occurs here

are some tips to try :

- Recognize how you are feeling. Are you tense or apprehensive? Your child can sense your feelings about leaving him or her. Try to project a positive attitude.
- Talk with your child about what to expect during their school day. Talk about the activities they will engage in, and fun they will have playing with new toys. Include the time that mom or dad will be returning (after snack time), etc. The unknown is most frightening and can contribute to unwanted reactions.
- Allow the child to bring something special into the classroom that may help alleviate his or her fears. This could be a special stuffed animal, blanket, Lego block, favorite stone for their pocket, or picture of the family.



- Be sure not to bribe or reward your child with a special activity, but feel free to talk about something special that they can look forward to after school. ( i.e. walk to the park, going to the library etc.
- As tough as it may be, don't prolong the good-byes. Make a ritual such as two "bear" hugs, and one "monkey" smooch. Then say good-bye and mean good-bye.
- Lastly, at the end of the school day, ask the teacher if you can take a "happy walk "with your child. Ask your child to show you the things in the classroom that make him or her happy. Familiarize yourself with the surroundings and talk about all the fun things in the classroom. This may give your child something to look forward to next time he or she goes to class.



## Parent Teacher Relationships are Key

Having a good relationship with your child's teacher is important. As with any good relationship, it is important to stay in touch, and keep the lines of communication open. Most teachers welcome the involvement of parents and want to hear your ideas.

- Begin your communication with a positive attitude.
- Ask the teacher what is the easiest and most helpful way to

communicate. Is it by email, notes, or a call at a certain time of day? Share with the teacher your best mode of communication too.

- Discuss and then agree on what concerns or problems that your child may be experiencing.
- Consider a daily journal that could go back and forth between home and school in a backpack to record daily activities that are in need of monitoring.
- Let the teacher know that you are eager to participate in educating your child and willing to do what you can.

- Offer your time and talents in the classroom, parent teacher organizations, or with various volunteer opportunities as your schedule permits.
- Remember to first discuss any concerns that you may have with the teacher before involving others.

Relationships are built on partnerships. It is extremely important for parents and teachers to work together to provide a good school experience for your child.



# Cooking 101:

Children learn by touching, tasting, feeling, smelling and listening. They love to help prepare food, because they can use all their senses.

**Three Year Olds** are learning to use their hands. They can help with:

- Pouring liquids into a batter
- Mixing muffin batter ( stirring)
- Shaking a milk drink
- Spreading peanut butter
- Kneading bread dough.

**Four and Five Year Olds** are learning to control smaller muscles in their fingers. Offer them fun cooking experiences such as:

- Juicing oranges, lemons, and limes.
- Measuring ingredients
- Mashing vegetables (potatoes)
- Grinding graham crackers for a crust
- Beating eggs with an eggbeater.

## *“Work it Out” Cookies*

*You will need:* Rolled Oats, Packed Brown Sugar, Butter, Flour and Baking Soda.



*What you will do:*

All cooks need to wash and dry their hands.

Give each child a bowl and have available all the ingredients listed. Help each child measure **1 cup oatmeal, 1/2 cup brown sugar, 1/2 cup butter or margarine, 1/2 cup flour, and 1/2 tsp. of baking soda** into their bowl.

Encourage them to mash, knead and squeeze using their hands until there aren't any lumps of butter. Form into small balls and put on an ungreased cookie sheet. Have each child press their cookie down with their hands.

Bake at 350 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on a cookie rack.

*This recipe is great for increasing strength in little hands.*

## I spy a happy thing



Start by decorating a toilet paper or paper towel tube with ribbon, yarn, colored noodles, etc. This will be your child's very own spy glass in which to search out things that make him or her happy. Explain to your child that they are going on a search. Help your child to spying for the things that are fun or make him or her happy in various places throughout your home. Give toddlers the words to help them name things if they need help.

**This Activity Increases Communication and Helps Develop a Sense of Optimism.**

### HELPING YOUR CHILDREN LEARN TO READ STARTS BEFORE YOU KNOW IT

Responding to your infant's cooing, talking to your infant or toddler, singing songs and reciting rhymes, making the sounds of animals as you see them in books, moving or clapping to the beat of music, and reading stories to your child are all listening skills that contribute to your child's ability to read when he or she gets older.

Early literacy skills include listening, speaking, reading and writing. When children are young, the four skills develop at the same time. Among developmentally delayed

children these skills may develop more slowly. It is necessary that parents recognize the importance of these four skills and support various literacy building activities in their home.

~ Be sure to encourage your child to ask for what they want, and not just point. ~ Engage and ask your child about their day, and stories they heard. ~ Teach children manners, sing rhymes, explain new vocabulary in books, and show interest in what they have to say. ~ Ask children to participate in making phone calls. ~ Use communication boards for children who cannot speak. ~READ TO YOUR CHILD, and expose your child to as many books words, and

signs as possible. ~Provide lots of opportunities to play with toys that develop grasp and fine motor control like puzzles, Play Dough, beads, etc. ~ Provide opportunities for your child to draw and write. All these things & more will contribute to their ability to read later.



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Children need your presence more than presents.

~ Jesse Jackson

