

Quick Reference Sheet: Your Role in the Separation Process

ROLE WITH CHILD

Build relationship with parent present	Your role as a caregiver is to respect the child's feeling of anxiety and gradually build your relationship while the parent is still in the room.
Enter into play with the parent and child	Enter into play with both the parent and child so that the child can see that you, the new person, are "OK".
Adjust your communication style	Adjust your communication style to the child's, so they can relate more strongly with you. Use simple words and phrases they can understand.
Give the child space and time to warm up	Make sure to give the child some space and time to warm up to you and the new environment.
Let the child come to you when they are ready	Let the child come to you when they are ready, by making the contact interesting to them.

ROLE WITH PARENT

Reinforce the importance of a gradual separation	Work with parents and reinforce the importance of a gradual separation process from your first meeting.
Make the family feel welcome	Give the family a tour and show them where their belongings can be stored or offer a space, like a cubby hole or box, to help the family feel like they belong. When there are simple refreshments offered—even a glass of water—and when the space is especially adapted to be more welcoming, families feel valued and worthy.
Use the parent's knowledge of their child	Draw on the parent's knowledge of their child and what they think would be best. Past experience is relevant. Find out from the parent what the child's experience with separation has been and what methods they used for the process.
Observe/understand routines and rituals	Even if language is a barrier, try to observe and understand their routines and rituals with their child.
Explain the impacts of potentially harmful actions	If the parent suggests something that could be harmful, like allowing no transition period or sneaking out of the room, explain to them why it could have negative impacts.
Work out a compromise	If your ideas for the separation differ from the parent, try to work out a compromise.

ROLE WITH TEACHER

Work with their teacher	Speak with the parent's ESL teacher to explain the separation process and discuss how all of you can work together towards a smooth transition.
Work out a compromise	If your ideas for the separation process differ from the teacher, try to work out a compromise.



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