

Quick Reference Sheet: Managing Expectations

MANAGING CHILD EXPECTATIONS

- Respect the child's feelings
- Ensure that both yourself and the parents follow through on any promises to the child
 - Follow goodbye ritual
 - Understand separation schedule and returns at set times
- Encourage the use of the child's home language until the child settles in
- When possible, assign the same caregiver until the child settles in
- Try to encourage parents to come regularly, so that the child can expect and establish a routine

MANAGING PARENT EXPECTATIONS

- Ensure parents understand and see importance of gradual separation process
- If possible, provide an orientation for your facility and involve them in the creation of a separation plan
- Ensure they understand potential timelines:
 - Children 17 – 30 months: may need 5-6 days
 - Children 2 – 4: may need 3-4 days, longer if never separated before
 - Children 5 – 5: separation on the second day if they have some English and have been in child care before
 - Longer than 3 weeks will not ease the situation
- Ensure parents understand separation takes time Explain the child will eventually want to come
- Introduce the new parent to another parent whose child is now settled
- Let them know that English can be practiced while they are helping their child settle

MANAGING THE ESL TEACHER'S EXPECTATIONS

- Communicate the importance for gradual separation process and the short and long term impact on the parent's learning
- If possible, discuss tentative separation plan and schedule

MANAGING THE ORGANIZATION'S EXPECTATIONS

- Not all program structures or policies make it possible to follow optimal gradual separation procedures
- Do your best to explain process and importance of gradual separation, as well as the long term benefits to the organization
- If possible, work with your organization towards accommodating gradual separations

MANAGING YOUR EXPECTATIONS

- Going through a separation can be very traumatic, even for you
- Important not to take the child's reaction personally as it may relate to past trauma, a parent's irritation or lack of transitional time

Reference: Julie Dotsch

