

Getting Comfortable in Preschool

Welcome to the Temple Emanuel Early Childhood Center. We are looking forward to getting to know you and your child.

Transitions to new situations vary from child to child. In addition, children may adjust to changes in different ways at different stages of their development. Sometimes a child may ease right into their first experience as a two-year old, and then have a hard time at three. Some children always have a difficult time in new environments and others seem to be comfortable immediately, wherever they are.

The first few days of school will be on an abbreviated schedule for two and three-year olds. You may want to stay with your son or daughter during that time. Since each child enters a new situation in a different way, we will develop a transition plan for your son or daughter based upon their need.

Children may be caught between their need to be close to you and their growing independence. The basis of mastering any new situation is feeling secure. Even children who have attended other programs still feel the need to know that their parent will come back to get them. They need to feel that they are safe in this new environment and that they can trust the teachers to meet their needs.

Here are some strategies to help make the transition process go more smoothly:

Decide on a special “friend,” picture or object to bring to school. During the first few weeks of school having something from home can be comforting to a child. A soft toy or family picture can be helpful.

Let your child see that you have a warm and trusting relationship with the teachers. Greet your child’s teacher warmly, and as you talk, bring your child into the conversation. Be sure to use the teacher’s name so that your child can become familiar with the staff.

Develop a special good-bye ritual. Sometimes children will need parents to spend some “special” time with them before they leave. Always take time to say good-bye. It may seem tempting to leave while your child is involved in an activity, but this does not promote trust. Clear farewells build trust and strengthen your child’s belief that you will come back. You might ask your child, “How shall we say goodbye? Do you want to give me two hugs and one kiss? Shall we read a short story?” This way your child will have a choice about what you will do and together you can build transition rituals that will lead to an easy transition for your child.

The most important thing to remember is that your child is in good hands with a warm and caring staff.