



SEPARATION STRATEGIES

We answer a lot of questions from parents about separation anxiety! You are not alone if you have wondered about how your child will adjust to a preschool learning environment. Some children do require some time and additional help in the transition from home to school. It is very common to experience some initial fears and anxiety because it

is a new experience! Kidslink Staff want to do everything we can to facilitate successful beginnings at preschool, but we need to enlist parents help as well! A big part of having success at transitioning to school is behind the scenes "prep" work! Will you partner together with us to help get your child ready for preschool so he/she can jump over the hurdle of first of the year preschool jitters?

Use some of the following separation strategies as a springboard to get started. We realize that all children handle transitions differently due to individual temperaments, experiences, and ages. A strategy that is very helpful for one preschooler may not be work for another child. We encourage parents to also come up with additional ideas that will make a positive difference in adjusting to school for your child!

SUMMER STRATEGY "GAME PLAN" (PRIOR TO SCHOOL STARTING):

1. Be intentional about driving by the Pathway Church building occasionally throughout the summer. Excitedly share that this will be their school very soon! Talk about how happy you are that they can go to preschool, all the things they will be learning, their special classroom, making new friends, etc.
2. Pull into our parking lot and point out our playground. You might even drive around the south parking lot loop to get a better look! Going to the playground is a highlight for many of our preschoolers. We try to go out every day, but we also have a Gym & Ball Park (multipurpose room) when the Kansas weather isn't as nice!
3. Express confidence and enthusiasm when talking to your child about school!
4. Have several snuggling times where you & your child can sit together and look at previous posts from our Kidslink Facebook or Instagram Page. This will help your child have a visual concept of what they might do in preschool.
5. Make school supply shopping a fun event! Encourage your child to help select items or carry a small supply to the check out. Celebrate afterwards with a special treat!
6. Plan out and talk about your child's daily school routine.
7. Brainstorm with your child to come up with a very short goodbye ritual. (One BIG bear hug, a fist bump, butterfly kisses, a big wave goodbye)
8. Make it a fun game to "practice" your special goodbye ritual before school starts!
9. "Meet Your Teacher" is a **VERY** important event to begin the transition to preschool. Spending time in the classroom with your child's teacher reduces first day anxieties. We also recommend that when you come to Meet Your Teacher that you show them the entrance door where you will say goodbye when coming to preschool and where you will be waiting to pick them up and hear about their exciting day!

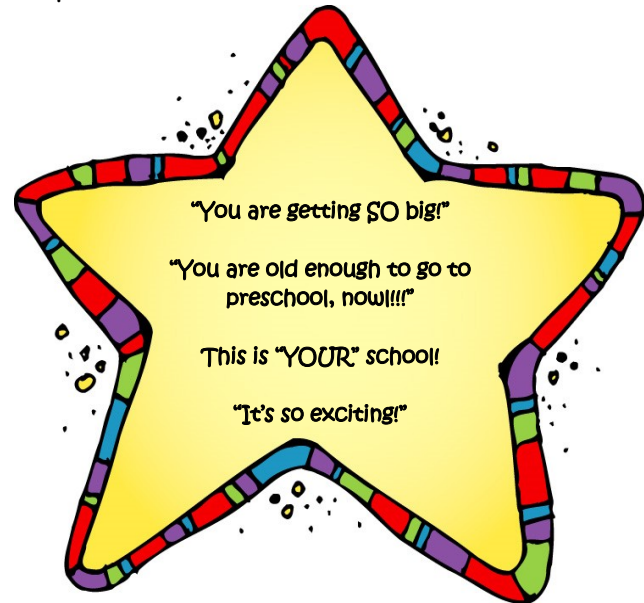




TRANSITION TO PRESCHOOL FIRST DAY & BEYOND "GAME PLAN":

- On the first day of school, convey to your preschooler confidence in their ability to handle this new experience. Be positive!

- Make it a goal not to linger when saying goodbye, show apprehension or sadness that they are growing, or that they will be away from you for a while.
- Show excitement for their new adventure!
- Bring your child to building entrance door - greet the teacher - give your child a goodbye hug/kiss and always say good-bye, never sneak out, and return when promised.
- Do your good-bye ritual together. Example: say hello to the teacher, hug, blow 3 good-bye kisses. Remember to keep it short & sweet!
- Kidslink teachers have experience with separation anxiety and stand ready to offer tender loving care to any child who needs extra support. Allow our staff to lend a helping hand!
- It is our experience that a child may cry briefly for the first few minutes and then they are off and playing happily within a few minutes!
- Give it some time! Most children make the transition into preschool after a few weeks, can easily say good-bye and join their class.
- We may deal with separation anxiety on and off throughout the year, but it is very beneficial for your child to have faced this challenge and experience success before Kindergarten!
- Remember that this is a common anxiety that preschoolers experience. It is not just your child - many others have gone through these challenges & have emerged successfully on the other side! Hang in there! We are in this together and will keep encouraging and loving you & your child through this process!



OUR KIDSLINK STAFF WILL:

- warmly welcome your child
- understand that being separated from your child can be an emotional journey for parents, too!
- give emotional support for parents and children
- hug and reassure your child
- provide places for children to find comfort
 - ~ fun learning centers
 - ~ dolls for hugging
 - ~ engaging sensory play
 - ~ time near the teacher if they are struggling
- validate preschooler's feelings, letting them know it's okay to be sad or to miss Mom/Dad
- encourage friendships and help children find activities they enjoy together
- **CALL PARENT IF CHILD REMAINS UPSET AND ANXIOUS AND IS STRUGGLING TO TRANSITION INTO THE CLASSROOM!**

