

Orientation:

For most children, entry into the Children's Centre will be the first experience of being separated from their parents. Most children will experience some anxiety leaving their parents for the first time and it will be important that both parents and staff work together to build the special relationship necessary for successful transition and adjustment for all parties involved.

Even if a child has been in care before she/he will still need to time to adjust to the new staff and environment.

Procedure:

Parents are encouraged to help their child's transition by taking the child to visit the Centre a few times prior to leaving them. These visits may only be for up to a half hour or hour at a time before 10:30 or after 2pm any day.. This is also an ideal time to go over enrolment forms together - the Coordinator will help parents to complete forms and utilize an Interpreter Service if necessary at this time.

PLEASE NOTE : We recognize that sometimes parents do not have time for a period of orientation due to health, work commitments or other circumstances, but we will work together with families to ensure positive alternative strategies are put into place ie. A friend or family member may be able to assist. Whilst we aim for both parents and children to slowly and gently get to know the centre, we realize that flexibility within the orientation period is essential.

At the initial meeting, a primary caregiver will be introduced to the family and a proposed orientation period decided upon. Parents are asked to make at least two short visits with their children. More, if it is possible.

After these visits, parents may try leaving their child for shorter days ex. 4-6 hours.

Initially, try to leave the child for shorter periods during the first week of enrolment. The first day the child is left for a longer period of time ie we recommend that she/he be left for only half the day and be collected after lunch. Be confident yourself, (if you are anxious this will negatively influence the way your child feels)

Ensure your child has a security object, such as a teddy, blanket or something that

belongs to you etc. These objects help support the child through the day - they come from home and are familiar.

Always tell your child when you are going and when you will be back. It is best to first warn the child and his/her primary caregiver you will be leaving soon. Then when it is time, tell the child you will be back after lunch, afternoon tea etc., say a quick goodbye and leave the child's room promptly. Your child's primary caregiver will support your child to join the program.

During the orientation process parents and teachers will observe the child and work together to ensure the process's time period is appropriate for the child. Ie. If the child appears that she/he needs more or less time than previously arranged to settle into the program.

All parents are encouraged to phone the Centre at any time to discuss the progress of their child.

If a child is identified as having difficulty settling into the Centre by the parent, teacher or Coordinator, further discussion with the Coordinator, teacher and parent is encouraged to plan positive strategies to enable the orientation to proceed successfully.

Links:

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