



Preparing Your Child for Child Care

Most infants, up to 7 months of age, adjust well to good child care. Older infants may get upset when left with strangers. They will need extra time and your support to get to know the caregiver and to understand that you will pick them up at the end of the day. Starting new child care is often harder on the parents than it is on the child.

Being prepared makes any new experience easier. You can help your child adjust to a new child care arrangement. Try the following:



- Arrange a visit with in-home caregivers while you are at home or when you need child care for a short time.
- Visit the center or home with your child before beginning care. Show your child that you like and trust the caregiver.
- Check with the caregiver or center staff about the best time of the month or year for children to begin attending the program.
- Allow your child to carry a reminder of home to child care. A family photograph or small toy can be helpful.
- Talk with your child about child care and the caregiver.
- Read books about child care. (Check with your local library.)

Sudden changes in caregivers may be upsetting to a child. This can happen even if the new caregiver is kind and competent. You may want to arrange a meeting with the new caregiver or ask your child's doctor for advice. Parents need to help caregivers and the child deal with any changes in the child's routine at home or child care.

Additional Resources:

- AAP Healthy Child Care America Early Education and Child Care Initiatives (/index.html)
- Child Care Aware of America (<http://www.childcareaware.org/>) (formerly National Association of Child Care Resource & Referral Agencies [NACCRRA])
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) (<http://www.naeyc.org/>)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC) (<http://www.nafcc.org/>)
- National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (NRC) (<http://nrckids.org/>)

Last Updated 3/8/2022

Source Choosing Quality Child Care: What's Best for Your Family? (Copyright ? 2009 American Academy of Pediatrics, Updated 8/2012)

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