

Caregiver Chronicle

Managing Separation Anxiety in Preschool-Aged Children

The full article can be found at:

<https://blog.himama.com/managing-preschooler-separation-anxiety/>

POSTED BY CARMEN CHOI

AUGUST 16, 2019

Every preschool teacher has been there. School has just started, you have a new group of children, everyone is excited and a little anxious about their new environment, new friends, new teacher, new everything!



Separation anxiety is a very normal part of early childhood development and it happens at all ages and stages. Handling separation anxiety isn't only about managing an individual child, it is also about working with their parents through it all, creating a safe and welcoming environment for your kids to come back to, and most importantly, teaching the children how to process, articulate and work through their feelings!

The Facts by Age Group

Separation anxiety develops as a child

begins to understand the concept of object permanence, which is the idea that something continues to exist when it can't be seen or heard.

The thought process goes something like:

Wait, dad was there a second ago. I know he's somewhere, but where is he now? Will he come back? Where is dad?!

It can be pretty stressful on a child, but the good news is that it will pass and there are systems in place that you as an early childhood educator can use to help teach them that it's okay! While it is common for separation anxiety to be most prominent between 18-months and 3 years of age, children of all ages go through it to a certain degree.

Separation Anxiety in Babies

Four- to Five-month old babies can show an understanding of object per-

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September Professional Learning Communities

Concept Development

Experts* from the Center for Early Education and Development at the U of M will lead our conversation to help us understand what Concept Development is and how we can improve our practice to support this vital part of a child's development.

Concept Development is one of the Dimensions of the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System). CLASS is a tool developed to evaluate the level of interactions in early education classrooms. While it is developed for center and preschool assessment, the concepts are equally important in family child care early education programs.

*Ashley Midthun (Woodbury) and Kristina Erstad-Sankey (Blaine)

Thursday, September 12, 2019

6:30-8:30pm

Jerry's Food Store

7760 Hargis Parkway

Room 2

Woodbury MN 55129

Please RSVP to:

Annette Borman

aborman@accap.org

763-783-4711

Tuesday, September 17, 2019

6:30-8:30pm

Blaine Human Service Center

1201 89th Ave NE

Room 204

Blaine MN 55434

If you will need an interpreter please contact us seven (7) days before event

**Learn more about how you can be
Parent Aware Rated by attending
one of our information sessions**



November 12, 2019

1:30-3:00pm

6:30-8:00pm

Information sessions will be held in Anoka County and in Washington County

Locations to be announced

Dates for online webinar information sessions will also be announced soon!

Typical Development at 9-months

Find out more about typical development at 9-months, including a short video explaining typical development and things you can do to support the baby's healthy growth and development.

<http://helpmegrowmn.org/HMG/DevelopMilestone/9Months/index.html>



Separation Anxiety continued

manence, but 9 months is usually when they start responding to it. . .

Separation Anxiety in Toddlers

As a baby grows into the toddler stage, separation anxiety becomes more difficult, especially around the 18-month mark. We are all familiar with the Terrible Twos and separation anxiety can be particularly challenging at this age. . .

Separation Anxiety in Preschoolers

By the time they turn 3, most children will grasp an understanding of how their behavior is affecting the adults around them. Consistency is key at this stage as young children can and will push their boundaries by pleading with their parents or throwing tantrums to get their way. . .

What Can I Do as A Preschool Teacher?

Now that we've gone through what to expect at each stage, let's look at what you can do as a teacher to work through separation anxiety when it does happen!

Clarify Expectations to Parents and Preschoolers

Sometimes, parents can encourage separation anxiety without intending to. The first day of preschool is an emotional day. However, by indulging their child's plea to stay longer, they are prolonging the feeling of anxiety *and* disrupting the class. . .

Encourage Goodbye Rituals and Transitions

Part of being a preschool teacher is supporting new young parents too! You can suggest goodbye rituals that are fun for kids and parents to take the stress out of having to leave. . .

Be Attentive and Present With Young Children

Drop-off is one of the most hectic parts of the day in child care. You're talking to parents, checking the kids in, making sure everyone is accounted for and settling everyone down. Take a breath here and be present with your classroom. . .

Once the Preschool Activity Starts, It Starts

We've all been there when there's a parent who comes back for their child. This usually happens after a rough drop-off and if the child is having a particularly rough morning. . .

Talk About Emotions with Young Children

Okay, so tantrums happen and sometimes they happen a lot. That's totally normal! Set your kids up for success by talking about their feelings. Do this consistently as part of your teaching process a few times a week. . .

Know Your Preschool Group

The start of each new school year brings a new group dynamic for you to navigate. Knowing each child in your class is important – what delights them, what triggers them and how they prefer to be comforted is so key to working with your children and their families. . .

Keep Your Cool

Things can quickly get out of hand if you have a hysterical child. But remember, it's your classroom and you are in control. Keeping your cool and remembering that the kids are just figuring things out is so important. Create some space by having a calm zone in your classroom where an overstimulated child can remove themselves from the group and calm down. Make this space known to the group as somewhere they can go to be alone if they need some space. Once the child has calmed down enough to have a conversation, address the elephant in the room and talk about the outburst. It's not always easy, but this helps with a child's socioemotional development. Explain that their parent will come back for them just as they did yesterday. Maintaining empathy and relating to the child helps them feel supported and safe in your class!

Building a trust-based relationship is important to make sure that everyone (parents and kiddos) is feeling alright at drop-off. What are your strategies for supporting children with separation anxiety? Do you have fun activities or smart transitions that you use?

Special Days in September

- 3rd Skyscraper Day
- 5th Cheese Pizza Day
- 6th Read a Book Day
- 9th Teddy Bear Day
- 10th Swap Ideas Day
- 12th Chocolate Milk Shake Day
- 13th Fortune Cookie Day
- 15th Make a Hat Day
- 16th Collect Rocks Day
- 16th National Play Doh Day
- 18th National Cheeseburger Day
- 19TH International Talk Like A Pirate Day
- 21st Miniature Golf Day
- 22nd Elephant Appreciation Day
- 23rd Checkers Day
- 25th National Comic Book Day
- 28th International Rabbit Day

BUILD A SKYSCRAPER!

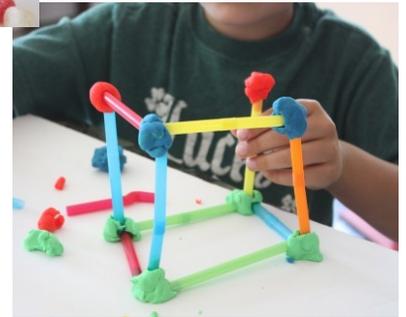
EDIBLE ENGINEERING

Use toothpicks and a variety of foods to build a skyscraper. You can use gum drops, apples, cheese cubes, marshmallows, etc.



USE STRAWS FOR BUILDING STRUCTURES

Straws can be used with play dough, tape, or pipe cleaners to support your skyscraper.



TOOTHPICKS AND POOL NOODLES, STYROFOAM CHUNKS, OR STYROFOAM PEANUTS

If you want to use toothpicks and something other than candy or food items, try pool noodles or any other styrofoam that is chunky. Slice up a pool noodle to make pool noodle structures.

“Shake It”

(Share this rhyme in a quiet voice)

Shake it baby, shake it (Wiggle hips side to side)

Shake it if you can (Keep wiggling)

Shake it like a milkshake and do the best you can
(Wiggle hips some more)

Rumble to the bottom and rumble to the top
(Wiggle down to the ground rolling, arms in front, then wiggle back up rolling arms)

Turn around and turn around until you make it **STOP**
(Spin around with one arm extended until you shout the word STOP)

Ahoy, Matey! Avast! Arrr!



“Round and Round the Garden”

Round and round the garden (circle fingers on baby’s palm)

Like the teddy bear

One step, two steps, (walk fingers up baby’s arm)

Tickly under there. (tickle under arm)