

Recommendations for Adaptation

Dear Parents, the adjustment process isn't just about your child—it's a change for the whole family. We'd like to offer you some recommendations for the period before your child starts school, as well as for the start and ongoing course of their schooling.

Preparation at Home

- **Set clear rules** for your child (failure to follow them, frequent changes, and making exceptions can confuse children).
- Encourage your child to be **independent**, especially when it comes to personal hygiene, getting dressed, and eating.
- Practice with your child how to ask for **help**.
- Look for opportunities for your child to **interact with other children** (playgrounds, visits, play areas).
- Talk to your child positively about the preschool group—what they can look forward to (friends, toys)—and look at and discuss with your child what it's like here: [What does it look like here? - Children's Groups of the CAS](#)
- Incorporate repetitive routines, or "**rituals**," into your daily schedule.
- Establish a **schedule similar** to that at the childcare center (wake-up time, snack/lunch/nap times) [Education and Care Plan.pdf](#)
- Practice an afternoon nap/rest **ritual** (e.g., with a story, with a stuffed animal).
- Prepare your child for separation. Establish a "**goodbye ritual**" (e.g., a hug, a kiss); do not leave in a hurry, secretly, or angrily. Don't drag out the goodbye; if your child cries, be kind but firm. Long goodbyes and negotiations aren't good for either of you.
- Keep your promises so your child can trust that you'll return (e.g., after a snack).
- Let your child know that you understand any fears they may have about starting daycare. Reassure them that you believe in them and that they'll manage just fine. This will boost their **self-confidence**.
- **Don't plan any other major life changes** besides starting daycare (such as moving or joining an after-school club).
- **Prepare yourself as well**—being confident that the decision to enroll your child in preschool was the right one, and trusting the staff, will help ensure a successful adjustment period. A parent's uncertainty is passed on to the child.

Preparing for the First Day at DayCare

- Try to stay relaxed the night before so that the morning goes smoothly.
- Make sure your child knows where they're going and who will pick them up and when.
- Talk to each other on the way to the daycare center.
- To help calm your child, bring along a favorite (stuffed) toy or a family photo.

The Adaptation Process

During the adaptation period, the child realizes that they are **no longer the center of attention**, as they were in the family, but are becoming part of a group of children of similar ages, where they must **follow certain rules together**. During this time, the child must cope with a range of emotions and learn to process them.

- We recommend establishing a **morning ritual**, such as singing a song on the way or telling a story (this will help the child cope better with arrival).
- **Do not interrupt the adjustment process** with unnecessary absences (e.g., vacation or a scheduled doctor's visit). It is better to postpone the child's start in the preschool group.
- Stay **calm** and be a source of support for your child (a sensitive and patient parent is key to your child's peace of mind).
- If a **crisis** arises, redirect their attention to another, more positive, or more neutral thought.
- **Reassure your child that you'll pick them up again soon.**
- Don't drag out the goodbye; avoid emotional expressions ("I'll miss you too," "I'll be sad without you"), and don't go back. Even if your child is crying, there's no need to let yourself become unsettled (relieving your own anxiety means relieving your child's anxiety). Caregivers can handle these situations. You can also agree that the person who has less trouble with separation will be the one to take the child to the childcare group.
- Do not make the child's stay in the childcare group contingent on bribes (toys, candy, etc.).
- **Keep your promises.**
- **Pick up your child on time, as agreed with the caregivers.**
- **Do not leave your child at the childcare group longer than necessary.**
- **Ask for any necessary information when picking up your child.**
- **Listen to your child** when they start talking, and acknowledge their feelings.
- **Make time for your child** so you can spend quiet, relaxing moments together.
- **Speak kindly** about the caregivers.
- Your child's adjustment to the new situation is essential for a successful experience at the daycare center,
- so be sure to set aside enough time for this within your family. Not every child will get involved right away; it's important to give them the opportunity to get to know the new environment, the other children, and the caregivers, so **don't rush the adjustment process.**