

How to make the initial "drop off" as easy as possible

That morning you send your baby/toddler off to the Baby House for the first time, there's often tummies filled with butterflies, tears and anxious goodbyes – and that's just the parents! It can be an anxious time for everyone, but there's ways to help make introducing your little one to the Baby House a smooth process for the whole family.

Please remember that all babies/toddlers differ. Some of them will be settled in within the first few days, others might take longer. It can take up to a month to be settled completely. **We will phone you immediately if your little one doesn't seem to want to settle down.**

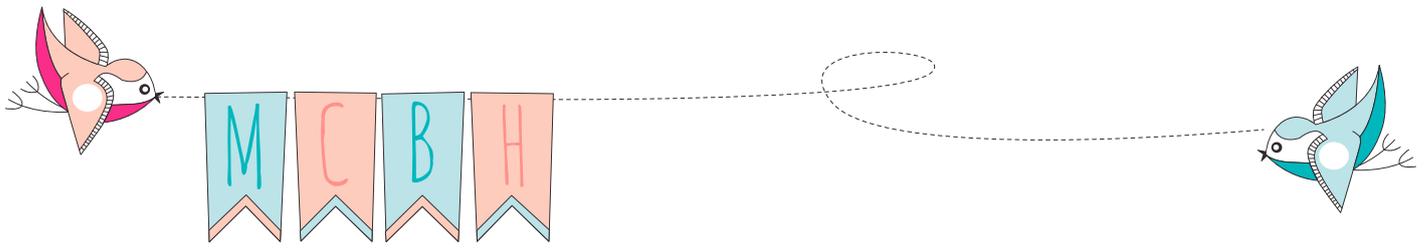
Before the big day

Preparation is the key for a painless start to formal care such as the Baby House. Start talking to your toddler early on about where he/she is going, how much fun it is and what he/she will do there. Explain what the child care routine will be and reassure him/her that you'll be there to pick him/her up in the afternoons.

On the first day

- Please start talking to your child when you are driving to the Baby House and explain what is going to happen.
- On the first day, make sure you're organised so that you're not rushing around.
- Arrive early so you have time to settle your baby/toddler in.
- Please don't spend too much time talking to the teacher as there will be a lot of new children to attend to. You can rather **write down ANY and EVERYTHING you want to tell her in the communication book** – if you forgot to write something, you can phone or e-mail the Baby House and we will make sure the message gets to the correct teacher in a timely manner.
- When the teacher takes your child from you and they are unhappy/crying, please try not to take them back into your arms – say your goodbyes and leave the classroom.
- When you drop them off, PLEASE make it easier for the teachers and say a quick goodbye – do not "hang around", this will just make the separation and the anxiety some children feel worse.
- When it's time to go, give him/her a confident goodbye and let him/her know you'll be back later in the day to collect him/her.
- **Don't sneak out of the Baby House without him/her knowing - this will make him/her anxious at future drop-offs.**
- We know that it is hard to drop your little one off, but if they feel that you are anxious or see you cry it will only make the situation worse and they will feel unsure. Try to "contain" yourself until you are out of sight.

If your departure from the Baby House is traumatic, resist the temptation to go back and check on your little one. He/ she may have settled in and you only risk upsetting him/her again. If you're worried, give the Baby House a call to see how he/she is. Be prepared, sometimes a child may have settled in fine and been happy all day, but will dissolve into tears when the parent comes to collect them.



After the first day

While your baby/toddler is settling into his/her new routine, try and keep home life as calm and consistent as possible. Now is not the time to transition them into a big bed or toilet train him/her. Also, try and keep your child care routine the same – how and when you drop him/her off. This will give a sense of security.

If the drop-offs are very distressful, your toddler is showing signs of separation anxiety, or just not improving there are steps you can take:

- See if it's possible if your partner, parent or a friend can drop your toddler off. He/she may be more upset about your departure than actually staying at the Baby House.
- Talk to his/her carers and see if there's anything happening during the day that may be upsetting, or what he/she is like after you leave. The carers may have some helpful suggestions.
- Talk to your baby/toddler about what is upsetting him/her about child care, make sure you listen and reassure your child.

This is a new chapter for you and your little one – it might be hard at first, but it is worth the effort and tears.

When your child is settled in and you are both happy, the family will adapt quite quickly and the Baby House will become like a second home for your little one. We pray that this BIG step in your lives will be extremely blessed and that your child will be very happy at our Baby House.

Please remember that we are always here to help. Don't hesitate to ask questions or talk about things that you are unsure/ unhappy about. We will try to assist you as far as possible.