

WHEN SAYING GOODBYE IS HARD

The challenge with young children is their attachment needs are high, their immaturity renders them highly dependent on their caretakers, and they live in a world that is full of separation.

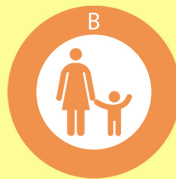


Children only miss the people they are attached to and while this makes it hard to say goodbye, it doesn't mean it is bad that they miss us.

WE NEED TO HELP CHILDREN SEPARATE FROM US BY



Making sure they are cared for by people they are attached to



Drawing attention to the next point of connection instead of our separation



Giving them something to hold onto that represents our connection

20 WAYS TO BRIDGE THE DAYTIME SEPARATION



Give the child an object to hold onto that reminds them of their parent, e.g., keychain, engraved rock or gem



Tell the child the plan for the day and what you will do when you pick them up



Give them a locket necklace with family pictures in it



Tell the child there are never ending kisses and hugs in the locket should they need them



Write a note and put it in their pocket for later



Put their favourite homemade food in their lunch and tell them you put love in it when you made it



Put a picture of their parents in their pocket for easy access throughout the day



Have the school or daycare display family photos and encourage the child to look at them as needed



Have a quick visit at lunchtime to say hello or drop off their food



Spray a scent on the child that will remind them of the people they are close to



Wear matching colours for the day and tell them you will be wearing the same colour as them



Blow kisses into their pockets and tell them they will be there in case they miss you



Tell them you will be having the same lunch as them at the same time of the day



Encourage them to talk to you in their head and that you will answer their questions



Tell the child there are invisible strings that will connect you to each other throughout the day and pretend to connect them before you leave.



Put a picture in their lunch box of what you will do after school or that evening together



Get matching bracelets or bands to wear while separated from each other



Cut their snack into the shape of a heart and tell them you put lots of love in it



Tell them that when they come home they can check the mailbox for 'mail' you have written for them



Tell them a secret to hold onto for the day and that they can share it with everyone at dinner

DEBORAH MACNAMARA, PhD
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