



EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

MOVING LIVES FORWARD

SEPARATION ANXIETY IN YOUNG CHILDREN

Separation anxiety is a very typical part of a child's development. When your child is going off to school or daycare for the first time they have many emotions. This may be your child's first time away from you and they are probably feeling nervous, scared, and overwhelmed by a new environment. Your child may cry, kick, scream, and show a large amount of emotions through their actions. Don't worry, generally this will pass. Your child is just trying to express that they are feeling nervous about this new situation.

Some ways you can make the transition easier from home to a child care center are...

1. PREPARE YOUR CHILD. Talk about school! Make them excited about going to school and learning. Let them know that they will be attending school in a few weeks. If your child is old enough, you can talk and discuss different feelings they may have. Explain to them that it is okay to feel scared or nervous.

2. VISIT THE SCHOOL. If the school or classroom allows you to visit ahead of time, go and visit! This will get your child familiar with the new environment and the teacher. This will possibly make the transition smoother when the first day of drop off comes.

3. CREATE A SCHEDULE. A good way to make children feel more at ease about what is going on in their world is to provide them with a visual schedule. The schedule will allow your children to identify what their day looks like and if they will be going to school. Schedules will allow them to see what is coming next, therefore reducing anxiety.

4. ADDRESS FEELINGS AND WORRIES AT DROP OFF. If your child is crying at drop off and doesn't want to let go of you. It is okay to let them know that you understand that they are upset or nervous. Always remind them that you will be back. If you pick them up right after snack time, remind them, "I will be here to pick you up after snack time".

5. GOODBYE RITUALS. When children are showing signs of separation anxiety saying goodbye the same way everyday can help reduce anxiety because it is what is familiar to them.

6. NEVER SNEAK OUT!!! Your child is already nervous about you leaving. Always be clear about when you will be back and that you are coming back. Being left alone for the first time can be scary. Reassuring them that you will be back will help reduce separation anxiety.

Separation Anxiety will generally reduce shortly after the child gets use to the new routine. They will make relationships with their teachers and friends at school allowing them to feel safe and comfortable within this new environment.

For more information on this article visit:

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/expert-tipsadvice/2015/09/helping-preschoolers-copeseperation-anxiety/>

MEET CENTENNIAL'S EARLY CHILDHOOD CONSULTATION TEAM



AMY NATION, MA
EARLY CHILDHOOD
MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

821 E Railroad Ave
Fort Morgan, CO 80701
Phone (970) 867-4924 Ext.2231
Cell (970) 571-2174
amyn@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-5

Covers the following
counties:
Logan, Morgan



ERIN POUNDS, MS
EARLY CHILDHOOD
MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

821 E Railroad Ave
Fort Morgan, CO 80701
Phone (970) 867-4924 Ext.1152
Cell (970) 520-3320
erinp@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-8

Covers the following
counties:
Morgan, Washington
& Yuma



CHERYL BILLS, BSSW, MS
EARLY CHILDHOOD
MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

211 W Main St
Sterling, CO 80751
Phone (970) 522-4549 Ext.291
Cell (970) 762-8044
cherylbi@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-5

Covers the following counties:
Logan, Phillips, Sedgwick



DANIELLE STOREVIK, MA
EARLY CHILDHOOD
MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

650 E Walnut
Elizabeth, CO 80107
Phone (303) 646-4519
Cell (970) 571-4224
danielles@centennialmhc.org

Ages 0-8

Covers the following counties:
Cheyenne, Elbert, Kit Carson,
Lincoln & Yuma

Contact your local Centennial Mental Health Center for assistance with any Early Childhood need.

WWW.CENTENNIALMHC.ORG

Centennial is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Centennial Mental Health Center es un proveedor y una empresa de igualdad de oportunidades