



Preparing Your Baby or Toddler for Luma Childcare

Even at a young age, your infant is extremely sensitive and emotionally intelligent. When you introduce her/him to daycare, the security and comfort she/he felt at home with you is compromised. Luckily, there are many ways to help your baby adjust to his new surroundings. The younger you start this process, the easier it is. Most newborns don't really care who is feeding and holding them, just so long as someone is (with some exceptions of course). It is therefore fairly easy to get your newborn accustomed to another caregiver. This is not true for many infants older than three months of age. By this age, they often do care who is holding them, and it better be someone they are used to! This becomes even truer by 6 months of age when stranger anxiety sets in.

10 Strategies to prepare your child for an optimal childcare experience

1. Visit the childcare room at Luma and stay with the baby and caregiver for a number of introductory sessions. Let your baby see you having fun and being close and friendly with the caregiver.
2. Put your baby on a **consistent sleep schedule** before starting childcare. Regular sleep times will give him a sense of security as he transitions to another caregiver. The dependability of a consistent routine at home will help her cope with any uncertain feelings she has about childcare.
3. Prepare yourself by acknowledge your own feelings. Your child's secure attachment develops from your ability to manage your stress and respond to their cues. One way to manage your own stress is to affirming that you are doing a good thing for both you and your child. You can also attune your own nervous system through breath and movement, which will many times successfully soothe your infant or child.
4. Share your state of wellbeing with your child through language, touch and breath. Tell them what is going to happen, give them the schedule, hug and hold them to help regulate their nervous system.
5. Tell them good-bye and that you will be back in X minutes. Sometimes parents are tempted to sneak out without saying good-bye, hoping that their child can avoid crying. In



fact, children always discover that the parent is gone and then have to deal with feelings of confusion, as well as feelings of sadness. Let your child know that you can be trusted to say good-bye when you leave, this will ultimately help their successful transition to childcare.

6. Accept and acknowledge your child's tears. It is natural for both you and your child to feel some sadness when you are apart from each other. And crying is a healthy expression of that sadness. Just because saying good-bye is sad for both of you doesn't mean that you can't enjoy your separate time.

7. Allow enough time for your child to transition. Avoid doing a rushed good-bye. Many parents like to read a book with their child or to sit with their child for a few minutes before saying good-bye and heading off to class.

8. Let your child create a secure relationship with the primary caregiver by coming to the same time and class each week. This enables your child to create a relationship of trust with another consistent adult.

9. Bring special self-soothing belongings, blankets, toys, pacifier, and pictures of mom or family. "Studies have shown that babies can be calmed when there are pictures of family members or even parents' clothing items, such as a scarf or t-shirt.

10. Have a childcare bag that your child knows has everything they need. Older children can help you fill the bag.

- Special toy, picture, or other reminder of home
- Extra clothes (include extra pants if potty training)
- Bedding and blankets for naptime

Babies

- Diapers, wipes, and diaper ointment
- Pacifiers
- Bottles (an insulated bottle holder is good for transporting milk or formula)

Final Notes:

- Include above are some strategies to try to help get a high-need baby ready for the Luma childcare room. However, this plan may not work on high-need babies. You may go through all of this preparation and when it you finally try to take a yoga class, your baby won't adjust to the new environment and caregiver. He may cry and scream no matter what you or the caregiver do.



- Most children experience some tears when they begin child-care. We honor the importance of monitoring how much and how long your child is crying. Prolonged crying may indicate that our child-care situation is not a good match for your child or that your child needs more transition time. Normally, it takes a child a few weeks to adapt to child-care. Your child may cry off and on for an hour or more the first few days and after that it should decrease. If your child is continuing to cry for long periods of time after the first couple of weeks, it is important to reassess the situation.

Resources:

<http://www.askdrsears.com/content/how-do-i-help-my-high-need-baby-transition>

http://www.babyzone.com/baby/childcare/prepare-child-for-childcare_68363

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/193535-how-to-help-an-infant-adjust-to-daycare/#ixzz2LYuZYRHN>,

<http://www.ivillage.com/seven-ways-ease-transition-day-care/6-n-137360#ixzz2LYu5VdY2>