



## Factsheet for Families

### Settling Children into Child Care

Settling children into child care can be an emotional experience for both children and families. Whether they are attending child care for the first time, moving to a new room or section of the service or commencing care in a different service, children often experience some difficulties in settling, particularly when they find it hard to separate from their family or familiar caregivers. Each child's reaction to this, and the length of time they take to settle into care, depends on the individual child, their age, and their past experiences. However, there are some strategies that families and services can adopt to support children to settle successfully into new care situations.

#### What can families do?

- Try to spend some time with children as they settle in to the new care setting
- For younger children in particular, try to allow them to spend shorter days in the unfamiliar care setting and gradually increase as the child settles
- Inform carers and staff about what comforts your child or makes them happy
- Advise carers and staff of routines, activities or times of the day that your child finds difficult or unsettling, and discuss how you manage these
- Show your child that you feel secure about leaving them at the service and that you trust carers and staff. Confidently say 'goodbye' to your child and reassure them that you will be back later. While it may be tempting to leave while they are happily engaged in play, it can be very distressing for a child to realise that you have left them without saying goodbye

#### Would you like information about how your child is settling in to this Service?

- To discuss how your child is settling, please speak to:

- The telephone number to contact us during the day to ask how your child is settling is:

#### What can child care services do?

- Have clear, effective procedures for enrolling and orienting children and families in the service
- Have clear, effective procedures for children moving to a new room or area of the service
- Ensure that orientation is flexible to meet the varying needs of individual children and families
- Strive to keep staffing consistent for new children and families

#### What can carers and staff do?

- Find out about each child's interests and needs and cater for these in the child care setting
- Provide honest and sensitive feedback to families about how their child is settling
- Tell families about specific experiences or activities that their child has enjoyed or experienced success in while in care
- Encourage families to settle their child in the way that suits their family's needs
- Ensure that new children feel welcome and accepted by other children, staff, carers and families
- Encourage families to telephone to check how their child is settling
- Enable families to spend time at the service with their child if they wish
- Be sensitive and supportive of families