



Preparing Your Child for a New Caregiver

It is important for children to have as much consistency and stability in their care arrangements as possible. In the best of all worlds, your nanny will stay until your child goes off to college! Unfortunately, all parents know that even the best planned childcare arrangements are fragile and that transitions from one caregiver to another are inevitable.

Some Parents in a Pinch ideas:

- Communicate with the new caregiver, even a temporary one, about the child's daily routine and do your best to help keep this routine unchanged.
- Have your new caregiver meet the child in a calm, relaxed manner - when you are not in a rush. For temporary childcare, have the caregiver come early enough for your child to play with her as you're getting ready.
- Explain to your child why the change in caregiver is necessary and encourage her to express her feelings about it. She may be sad, angry, frustrated or frightened. Don't tell her that she'll "love" the new nanny or babysitter. Don't tell her that she's "silly" to make such a fuss. Do tell her that you know the new nanny is very nice and loves to play.
- Be positive. Your child will look to you for emotional signals. If you are happy and enthusiastic, she is more likely to take the transition in stride. Conversely, your anxiety will rub off.
- Suggest that your child select her favorite game, toy, book or stuffed animal to show her new caregiver. Let the new nanny know that the child picked out something very special to show her.
- Call once you are at work. Your day will be much more productive if you hear happy sounds in the background, even if the separation was tough as you left the house.
- When you come home, take 10 minutes to give your undivided attention to your child. Research shows that it is not the fact that parents work or have a nanny that has a negative impact on children, but the fact that they are ignored when tired parents come home and immediately start the dinner rush. Therefore, when you come home take a few minutes to read, snuggle, or share a hot chocolate together.

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