

Settling-in at family day care with the Berlin adjustment model

General information	Duty of childminder	Duty of parent or any other person with close relationship
<p>The Berlin adjustment model offers a conceptual frame for the settling-in period at day care. Every child has its own pace depending on his/her temperament, bonding experiences and individual behaviour.</p> <p>The main goal is to develop a trusting relationship between childminder and child which offers enough safety to the child to experience his/her surrounding. At the same time the child gets to know the new environment with all its rules, rituals, people and rooms.</p> <p>It may take up to six weeks to get your child settled in.</p>	<p>During the adjustment phase the childminder observes the child carefully. He/she determines the length of settling-in period on the basis of the child behaviour.</p> <p>He/she slowly makes contact with the child, offers some toys or games.</p> <p>It is important for the child to develop a trusting relationship with the carer. The childminder is helping but not comparing with the parents.</p>	<p>It is very important that only one person goes along during the settling-in period. This could be a parent or any other close attachment figure like a grandparent, aunt etc.</p> <p>It is a huge challenge for the child to get used to the new situation so avoid other big changes as even a short holiday, birth of a sibling or moving.</p> <p>The parents have to support their child during settling-in period. This means to let the child explore and be there as a "safe harbour". Every now and then the child will make sure that the parent is still there by looking or sitting on his/her lap. Don't rush the child, be patient.</p>
3-day-initiation phase		
<p>During the first three days the parent visits the day care together with the child for approx. one hour. They spend the time together in the group room with the other children as well as the childminder. If possible always at the same time of day.</p> <p>In the first three days, no separation is attempted.</p>	<p>The childminder approaches the child without putting any pressure on him or her. He/she offers to play or takes part in the child's play. The childminder observes any parent-child interaction.</p>	<p>It is very important for your child that you act in a rather passive way. Don't push the child away from you and always accept that the child wants to be close to you. Pay attention to the child while staying in the background and are always there for your child. Don't get distracted by using your phone or playing with other children. Maybe it helps to bring a toy or favourite cloth from home or a picture of your family.</p>
First attempt at separation (4th day)		
<p>If the 4th day is a Monday, the first separation takes place on the 5th day. After a few minutes in day care the parent says good-bye to the child and leaves the room but stays nearby. The child's behaviour determines</p>	<p>At the first attempt of separation the childminder supports the child by saying good-bye with the child. He/she explains that the parent will return and accepts the</p>	<p>The parent says emphatically and short good-bye to the child and leaves the room even if the child cries. He/she stays nearby and returns no later than 30 minutes. Have your phone close to you and return immediately if the childminder calls you.</p>

<p>whether the attempt is continued or suspended.</p> <p>(1) If the child shows an interest in its environment and keeps on playing the separation is extended to up to 30 minutes. Even if the child starts to cry but the childminder can comfort it quickly and long term. If this is the case the stabilisation phase can start the following day.</p> <p>(2) Should the child show signs of distress like stiffening of the body, crying inconsolably or strongly demand the return of the parent he/she must be called back immediately. Several days like the initiation phase must pass before another attempt of separation (not before the seventh day) may take place.</p>	<p>pain of separation. He/she comforts the child and directs the child's attention to play.</p> <p>(2) If the child needs a longer settling-in period, the childminder comes into closer contact with the child and offers playing together. He/she slowly takes over all the responsibilities for the child like changing diapers or feeding the child in presence of the parent.</p>	
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Stabilisation phase

<p>During this phase the contact between child and caregiver must be intensified so that the child grows attached to the caregiver. The time of separation is getting longer but no more than half a day.</p> <p>Depending on the child's age and development, the stabilisation phase continues until the child's tenth or twentieth day in day care.</p>	<p>The carer tries to take full care of the child like changing diapers and feeding the child. He/she includes the child in group activities.</p>	<p>The first nap at day care should not be before the 9th day and never on a Monday. The parent puts the child to bed and stays at day care so he/she is there when the child wakes up.</p>
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Final phase

<p>Adjustment is completed once the child has accepted the childminder as a "safe base" and accepts comfort from him/her. This is the case even if the child protests against the parents departure but quickly accepts comfort from its carer and plays cheerfully.</p>		<p>The parent will no longer be present during day care but is always available should the newly formed relationship is not yet strong enough in special circumstances.</p>
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