

Welcome to ESF International Kindergarten (Wu Kai Sha)



Settling-In to Kindergarten and Hints for Separation



INTERNATIONAL
KINDERGARTENS
國際幼稚園

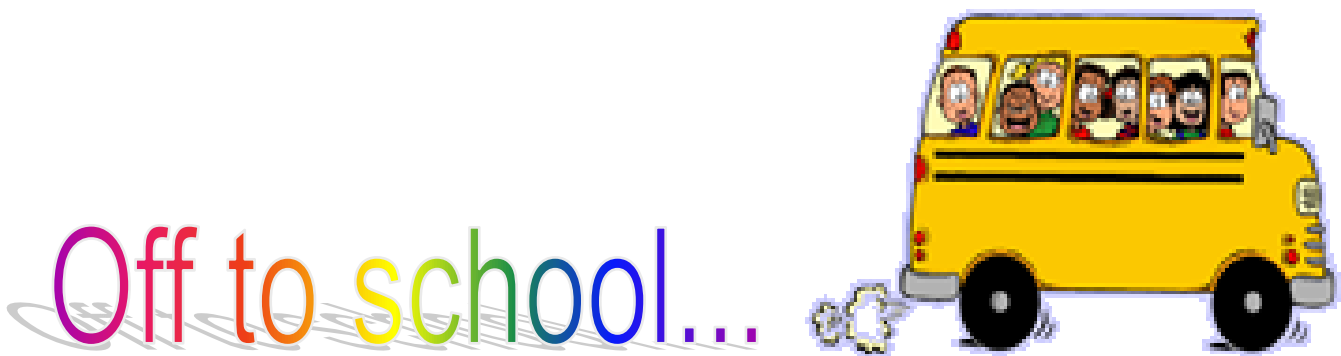
ESF International Kindergarten, Wu Kai Sha
Level One, Lake Silver, 599 Sai Sha Road, Shatin, N.T
Tel: 2435 5291 Fax: 2435 6322
Email: kinder@wks.esf.org.hk
Website: <http://kindergartens.esf.org.hk>

SETTLING INTO KINDERGARTEN

Often first impressions shape our lasting opinions and this has particular relevance for young children entering kindergarten. Their early classroom experiences may set an enduring pattern that will structure their reactions to later school life, either enhancing or hindering their attitudes and feelings.

Assisting children to cope well with the series of transitions from one educational setting to another is an important responsibility for both teachers and parents. It must be handled with dignity, sensitivity and respect.

At ESF International Kindergartens, our goal is to create a smooth transition - build a link not a break - between home and school.



SEPARATION

The separation period for parents, helpers and children can be a complex one and often takes time and effort to work through satisfactorily.

Staff members acknowledge and respect this process and are ready to offer support in creating a smooth and harmonious transition from home to kindergarten.



FOR CHILDREN...

Teachers will respond to each individual child in a way that they see as most appropriate. This will be different for each child. Some children will most certainly take longer than others to settle in. Some will be happy to have reassuring hugs from teachers when parents leave. Others will prefer some personal space and time, before feeling ready to join in with activities. In this case, teachers will appear to stand back to give them time to recoup and observe others. Some children will not 'let go' until they feel secure, familiar with routines and have developed a rapport and sense of trust with teachers.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CHILDREN HAVING DIFFICULTY SETTLING:

- ☺ Aim for small steps at a time - try leaving for 10 minutes initially. Go for a walk, grab a cup of coffee to drink outside the school, or make a phone call, and then return to your child. Each day increase the time that you are away.
- ☺ Consider inviting a school friend home to play - especially before and after a session.
- ☺ Let teachers know if your child has a favourite comfort toy or any favourite activities to help them settle.
- ☺ Consider having somebody else bringing your child to kindergarten - for example another child's parent, or relative.
- ☺ Before coming to kindergarten, sit with your child and 'map out' their day ahead. For example, "Today is Wednesday. I wonder what story you will hear."



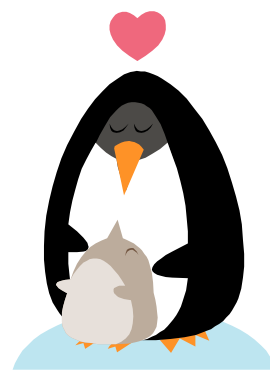
SEPARATION

FOR PARENTS..

At ESF International Kindergartens, the separation process for parents is supported and acknowledged, too.

In some cases, it is an easy and comfortable separation for both parent and child. Often, parents are taken aback by their child's immediate need for independence from Day 1! For others, 'letting go' and allowing their children to function independently in a new environment can be a difficult adjustment.

Experiencing feelings of guilt about the sense of relief and freedom gained from a few hours to oneself can be confusing, too!



HELPFUL HINTS WHEN LEAVING YOUR CHILD FOR THE FIRST TIME...

- ☺ Always say goodbye when leaving - never leave without your child knowing, because this affects their trust and the next time you need to leave, they will not let you out of their sight or grip.
- ☺ If you are ready to leave, don't give your child a choice in the matter. That is, rather than asking "is it all right if I go now?" say "I'm going now. I'll see you after school. Have fun."
- ☺ Give your child some measure of when you will return - i.e. "I will be back after I make a phone call" or "I will be back after story time."
- ☺ If you are worried about your child, ring the school for an update of how they are settling in (phone number: 2435 5291).
- ☺ Please make sure we have an up-to-date contact number, so that you can be contacted if necessary.
- ☺ Never be late in picking up your child - this can cause your child great anxiety - especially when watching other children and adults leaving the school.



PERPARING YOUR CHILD AT HOME

In the months before entry to kindergarten, the process of helping your child prepare for the transition is important. If handled effectively, careful preparation can contribute to a happy and relaxed beginning to the school year.

HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL HINTS...

DEVELOPING SLEEP PATTERNS

SLEEP IS A TOP PRIORITY!! Please adjust routines to accommodate adequate sleep. An increasing number of kindergarten children suffer from sleep deprivation.

It is recommended that children from 3 to 5 years have between 11 to 13 hours of **continuous uninterrupted** sleep each day. When children do not get enough sleep, it can have negative effects on their overall health.

Sleep deprivation in children has been linked to lowered immune systems, diabetes, depression, obesity, hindered physical development, stress and anxiety.

Signs of Sleep Deprivation in Children

When children are sleep deprived, they can exhibit any combination of these symptoms:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| → irritability | → temper tantrums |
| → decreased patience | → hyperactivity |
| → crying and fussiness | → tired when they wake-up in the mornings |
| → poor concentration | → poor school performance |
| → poor impulse control | → clumsiness |

How to Avoid Sleep Deprivation in Children

- Try to put your children to bed at the same time every night. If they usually have a difficult time falling asleep, try putting them to bed a little sooner than their actual bedtime. 7pm is best.
- Stick to a regular bedtime routine that will help your children relax. You can let them take a warm bath and read them a story.
- Make sure that your child's bedroom is quiet and comfortable.
- Make sure children eat a well-balanced, nutritious diet.
- Avoid letting your child consume caffeinated beverages, especially in during the hours proceeding bedtime.
- Television sets, computers and video games have been linked to poor sleeping habits in children and should be kept out of your their bedrooms.
- You should avoid letting children perform high energy activities before bedtime because it may cause difficulty sleeping.
- Try not to let your children sleep with a bunch of toys in the bed. One favorite teddy bear or blanket should be enough.

If you have serious concerns about your child's sleeping habits, you should talk to his pediatrician.

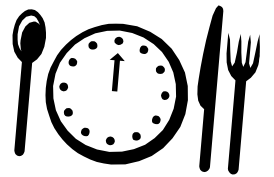




Getting good sleep increases cognitive ability.

ORGANIZING ROUTINES

- ☺ Work on before - school routines in the weeks leading up to the start of term. Even doing a few 'dummy runs' to school in the morning can help.
- ☺ Talk to your child about the kindergarten routines they may expect - circle time, open-play time, snack time, story time, Putonghua, music and art activities, etc.....
- ☺ Reinforce the names of teachers in your child's group. A photograph of your child's teachers will be provided over the summer holiday.
- ☺ Morning and Night: Get your child to pack their bag the night before and lay out their school clothes with them.
- ☺ Meal Times: To accustom your child to more structured eating times in the school day, eat at set times before school starts. Later in the year, when children begin to take their own snacks to kindergarten, make sure they can recognize their own snack boxes, open and unwrap the contents.



DEVELOPING INDEPENDENCE

During the summer holiday, devote some time to encouraging independence. Often, it is tempting to do things for your child but they will make a more confident start to school if they can do things for themselves.

Some suggestions...

- ☺ Ensure they can toilet themselves independently
- ☺ Wash and dry their hands and turn taps on and off
- ☺ Blow their noses with tissue
- ☺ Dress and undress, including shoes and socks
- ☺ Unpack their own bag
- ☺ Put away their own possessions



DO NOT FORGET TO PRAISE THEIR EFFORTS!!

FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS

Being able to follow instructions will be of great benefit to your child at kindergarten. Positional words help children follow instructions to get in a line, find a place to sit, and to read, write and learn about maths. They are important words! So, before your child starts school, make sure they understand the meaning of:

- behind
- in front
- beside
- through
- below
- underneath
- on top
- above
- in the middle
- next to
- to the right/left



Try to use them in your instructions with children so they can practise following instructions.

HOW MUCH SHOULD I TALK ABOUT GOING TO SCHOOL?



It is important not to saturate your child with information too far ahead. Some children want to talk about going to school and ask lots of questions or insist that you buy their uniform immediately. Others may not seem interested, and so taking a low-key approach may be best.

Whatever you decide, talk about school positively and do not use school as a threat. The 'you won't be able to do that at school!' type of expression can create fear and anxiety and should be avoided.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD IS WORRIED?

Think about your own reaction to your child starting school. If you are feeling nervous, this might reflect back to your child. Try to anticipate what your child might be concerned about, and talk through it with them. Common fears include not having friends, not finding the toilet or being told off.

Reassurance and encouragement will help to ease your child's fears.





Finally, it is worth remembering that children do settle into their kindergarten very well. By the end of first term, the vast majority of children are merrily swimming along.

If we all work together during this milestone in your child's life, then hopefully we can settle your child smoothly and happily.

