

Settling-in Period

The settling-in period usually lasts between **1-2 weeks**. This is when your child is introduced to the day care and transitions to being alone without his or her caregiver.

Week 1

The first couple of days you are here with your child for 1-2 hours. We use these first two days to get to know you and your child (eating and sleeping habits, personality, home life, etc.). It is important that your child arrives well rested and has the energy for new experiences. A pedagogue from your child's group will call you to arrange a meeting time on the first day.

After the first day or two your child will start to practice being at the day care alone. The first time alone is usually around 20 minutes. As the days go on, we will gradually increase the time your child is here by themselves.

During the first week, your child will also try to join the group for **lunch and snacks**. Towards the end of the week, if your child is ready, they can also begin **taking naps** at the day care.

Week 2

Week two is all about your child continuing to practice being at the day care by themselves. Towards the end of the week most children are ready to be in day care for a large part of the day.

Please note: The pace at which your child is spending more and more time at the day care, and participating in our routines, is dependent on several factors – your child's personality and temperament, your family's specific needs, and your child's experience with being away from their family. **Please remember all children are different.** Some children might only need 1 week, while others will need the full two weeks or more to settle in.

Therefore, we recommend that you **set aside 2 weeks for the settling-in period**, so we can adjust to your child's needs. During the settling in period, it is important that you are nearby and ready to pick up your child if necessary.

Some keys to a successful settling-in

Saying goodbye: it is important to make eye contact and clearly say goodbye to your child. The ritual of saying goodbye teaches your child that when you say goodbye, you will eventually return, and this will help lessen separation anxiety. Adding a phrase like "mommy will be back later" will help reassure them and grasp the idea that parents always return.

Be aware of your emotions: your child will pick up on them. If you are feeling nervous and unsure your child will pick up on that and feel the same. Try to maintain a happy and upbeat face when at the day care so your child gets a sense that everything will be okay.

Continuity between day care and home life: Talk to your child about their day and mention the pedagogues and children in their group. It is a good idea to show pictures from the day

care found on AULA and perhaps sing your child's favourite song or talk about a friend from the day care. If your child has a favourite teddy/blanket from home, that provides them comfort, they are welcome to have this at the day care.

Shorter days: When possible, it is a good idea to give your child shorter days during the first month or so. Your child will be receiving many new impressions, so they will be very tired by the end of the day.

Rest and connection at home: When starting day care, your child will be filled up with new experiences, therefore it is important that you provide your child with rest and connection when at home. Focus on re-connecting with your child after long days apart and limit extra activities until your child is fully settled in.

Your child's reaction: Starting day care is a big transition and it is normal for children to express many emotions as a result. The transition will cause some children to experience sleep regressions, be more clingy, throw more tantrums and/or have changes in their eating habits. This is completely normal and will pass. Have patience and focus on providing rest and connection when at home.