

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD RETURNING TO CHILDCARE & NURSERY



Parents Plus & Parents First Psychology Led Service



There will be lots of differences in families experiences of lockdown and children's anxieties about returning to, or starting, childcare or nursery . For many children returning to childcare after a long time at home will be difficult and upsetting. For others, it will be a welcome reunion with friends! New research finds that half of UK parents feel uncomfortable with children returning to school/childcare after the Covid-19 lockdown (University of Oxford, 2020).

Some children will need more support with this transition than others, such as children who are experiencing grief, children with additional learning needs, and children with lower levels of wellbeing. For all children, it will be a change from being with their families at home for long periods of time, to now being in a setting with other adults and children. Let your child's setting know what Lockdown looked like for your family, considering the big changes in routine that may have happened in your home.



Supporting me with this change

- Will childcare/nursery look different now? Speak to my setting in advance, look on their website, social media pages and share whatever photos or descriptions they have provided, with me, so that I am prepared to see any changes in the way the room is laid out. Use my photo in the newly arranged room so that I see myself as belonging to a new space.
- Will I be with different adults? Provide me a photo of my new keyworker, with their name, so I can talk about them at home beforehand.
- Will I see my friends? Talk with me about the children I will be playing with and help me feel connected with this group.
- Will I have a new routine? Use visuals (photos or drawing) to show what the new routine is and provide me as much predictability and consistency as possible.
- Help me feel safe. Try and use a way to say goodbye that we have used before, so that I know that you will be back later. Let's say hello to my keyworker together who can greet me and lead me to an activity that I enjoy. Help me by staying calm and supportive.



Created by Educational Psychologists @ Cardiff Parenting Service

For more information, advice or support please contact Cardiff Family Gateway:

Telephone 03000 133 133 Email ContactFAS@Cardiff.gov.uk

www.cardiffamilies.co.uk

- Understand that I have feelings that I will not be able to tell you about and that I may show in my behaviour. Notice my feelings and help me to feel understood. My behaviour is a form of communication.
- If I feel unsettled, can I bring something familiar with me? Transition objects (i.e. something from home) can be very useful in supporting me and helping me feel safe if I am feeling particularly anxious. (This will need to comply with the current guidance for infection prevention control. safely e.g., using a wipe clean object that is cleaned on arrival and going home). If I cant take an object, then maybe it could be a piece of clothing I wear, a sticker on my top or a little drawing on my hand.



- Support me to play! Play helps us to work through emotions, to make sense of things that are hard to understand, and it supports my coping and emotional resilience. Can we play together before and after childcare, on the walk, in the car or at home? Play is especially beneficial when I am feeling anxious or stressed.

- Take me outdoors! Outdoor play, in particular, is linked to improved physical health as well as social and emotional health.
- Follow my lead, strengths and interests. This will help me to feel safe and build up a relationship with new adults in the setting, and for when I return home to you.
- Allow me to feel a sense of control. You could do this by offering limited choices of things to eat, wear, play with.
- Let my childcare/nursery setting know what worked for me during lockdown. There may be new activities, songs, games that I find calming and familiar, that I have been used to doing at home.

- Be aware of your own feelings too. As my parent, you may be feeling a bit anxious at the moment and that might be changing the way you behave too. I will be able to pick up on your feelings, so its good for you to have some one to talk to and ways to help you feel better too.



- Cardiff Family Gateway is available on 03000 133 133 and offers a range of information, advice and assistance for children, young people and their families living in Cardiff, and can refer you on to other teams, including Cardiff Parenting.

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