

Montessori Ivy League
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The Art of Letting Go

Transition and separation of young children ages 1- 6 years old

When parents and teachers partner up together, the transition to school becomes easier in the child's journey, towards independence and confidence. Here are some steps to make separation and transition easier:

- ✓ Prepare yourself and the child in advance for school.
- ✓ Encourage and talk about school in positive and upbeat manner.
- ✓ Visit the school at least three times with your child (Tour – Observation/Testing - Registration).
- ✓ Set up a consistent goodbye routine. "Have a good day at school. I will be back to get you after lunch or after naptime." This will give the child something very specific to look forward to.
- ✓ Know that children under the age of six are highly intuitive. They easily pick up on when parents are worried or concerned. Watch your emotions and feel good about the decision to start school.
- ✓ Understand the concept of building trust with your child. For example, start school five days part-time, to create an easy and smooth daily routine. The child will soon learn that mommy drops me, and she always picks me back up. Dad drops me, and he always picks me back up. Once the trust is developed, then you can move to full-time and beyond.
- ✓ In the safe confines and supervision of the school, the child should walk by himself/herself to the classroom. This is the child's own time, separate from mom and the teacher.
- ✓ In the beginning, when your child is in transition, do not linger around. Leave fast. This will help your child bond and develop trust with his or her teacher.
- ✓ Always communicate with your child in a way that shows you trust the school and teachers, and that they will be alright without you; follow the "goodbye" routine and walk away.
- ✓ Respect your teachers and communicate with them daily, via technology, emails, or any apps the school uses. And be aware of what lessons are presented in the school, so you can communicate specifically for your child.

Salma Ajani is the founder and the head of school of Montessori Ivy League Academy. She has been awarded lifetime AMS credential (American Montessori Society) upon completion of her Montessori Graduate Level Program. Ms. Salma is also fully accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE). She is also a graduate of University of Southern California (USC).