



5 Parent-Tested Ways to Ease Separation Anxiety

Ease school drop-offs and more with coping strategies to make it less stressful for children when parents leave.

By Scholastic Parents Staff



No mom or dad likes to hear that sad cry: "Don't leave me!" So we polled parents for advice on how to handle tough morning transitions. Here are some of their great ideas:

1. **A Kiss to Keep.** "I use the cute technique found in the book *The Kissing Hand*. I plant a kiss on my daughter's palm, and it comforts her to know a part of mom is with her during the day." — *Lori P., Carlisle, Pennsylvania*

2. **Secret Picture.** "Both of my children had to bring in a plastic box to put their crayons in, so I taped a laminated picture of our family signing 'I Love You' into the bottom of it. Now they always have us with them and can discreetly look at us for support whenever they need it." — *Crystal S., Duncan, South Carolina*
3. **Goodbye Game.** "Every morning before school, I pull out ten cards showing a picture of lips (indicating a kiss) and a mom hugging a child. Next to each picture there is a number, which tells my daughter how many kisses and hugs she will get from Mommy. Every morning I shuffle the cards and have her choose one. We exchange kisses and hugs and she goes to school much happier." — *Wanda S., Brooklyn, New York*
4. **Brag Book.** "We bought a small plastic photo album and filled it with pictures of our family. When we drop off our son at school, if he starts to cry, his teacher says, 'Come show me your pictures.' He says goodbye to us and brings his album to his teacher. He loves naming everyone in the album for his teachers and friends." — *Randi O., Highland Park, New Jersey*
5. **Change the Subject.** "What works best with my kids is to distract them. On the way to school, my son used to get upset and talk about how he didn't want to go to school. To distract him, we started to look for school buses and count how many we saw. He loved it and would talk about riding one when he got older." — *Tina C., Ocean Springs, Mississippi*