

Gradual Entry Policy

We are very excited to Welcome you to IC Early Learning Childcare. Our biggest goal during this time is to create a safe, secure place for your child grow and learn. Often it is stressful for young children to enter a new and busy environment. Starting off with short hours helps keep your child's stress levels low.

Some tips before starting would be:

- Learn what the daycare schedule is, especially for naps and meals, and try that at home as well.
- Talk positively about daycare/school with your child.
- Enter calmly and have enough time to help your child get their inside shoes on and unpack their belongings for the day.
- Have a goodbye routine: inside shoes on, a hug/kiss, say goodbye and leave. All staff are very good at distracting your child and providing comfort when you go. If the child does not settle, we will call you.
- Nap time is especially challenging for children who have not built a bond yet. Therefore, we do not try to lay a child now for nap until the second week of gradual entry and pick up will be scheduled for right after nap. Having parents here right after they wake up will help reinforce that you will return for them each day and they are safe to sleep here.

I understand that gradual entry times are a challenge. Each child is different. Some children need only a couple of short days and they feel comfortable to stay all day. Occasionally children are very anxious, and the gradual entry will need to be extended for them. It is normal to have a few tears at drop off, however if your child remains unsettled during a gradual day, the time they may attend will not increase until we have built up their security.

Gradual Entry for children under 3years.

Note: if a child is upset all of day one, they return the next day at the day one hours. Once a child is comfortable, they progress to the next day. Talk to your child's teacher at the end of the day to see if they were happy and calm enough to move on to the next day.

The First Week:

- Day 1 9-10 (One parent stay)
- Day 2 9-10 (No parent participating)
- Day 3 9-10:30 (No parent participating)
- Day 4 9-11 (or earlier if they are upset; bring snack)
- Day 5 9-11:30 (or earlier are upset; bring snack)

The Second Week:

- Day 1 9:00-11:30(or whenever you plan to regularly drop off;bring snack)
- Day 2 9:00-12:30 (or whenever you plan to regularly drop off;bring snack and lunch)
- Day 3 9:00-12:30 (or whenever you plan to regularly drop off;bring snack and lunch)
- Day 4 9:00-3:00 (or whenever you plan to regularly drop off; Bring crib size sheet, blanket, two snack and lunch)
- Day 5 9:00-3:00 (or whenever you plan to regularly drop off; bring two snacks and lunch)

The Third Week:

(Bring crib size sheet and one blanket; bring morning snack, lunch and afternoon snack)

Regular daily schedule: We open at 8:30am. Drop off before 10 AM, pick up before **3:50 PM**.

What do you need to know for gradual entry

1. **First day practice**

Since children haven't experienced separation and being away from their parents before, they might be nervous and start crying on the first day. Parents need to spend some time with them on the first day to introduce them new environment and people. By this way, children will feel comfort and they will trust daycare providers.

2. **Routine practice; quick "goodbye", quick leave; DO NOT hesitate.**

Parents' verbal explanation about daycare drop-off will help children to familiarize with this new experience. As an example, mother can say "Mommy will come with you to the daycare, , have a hug, then say goodbye and Mommy will go." These simple explanations make a child ready to know of what is expecting her and her brain will process all the steps. It is highly important for parents to stick on a routine to drop and pick up a child.

3. **Comfort items**

It is usual that children carry some items or toys for example Teddy bear to daycare and carry it in the new environment. These items are completely welcome by our center. As the security and trust are attained by the child and consequently their confidence increase, gradually they don't carry the item anymore.

4. **Hard Day: quick "goodbye", quick leave; DO NOT hesitate.**

The second day is the hardest day both for parents and children because it is the time that a child experience being away from home without her parents. It is better reminding them you will come back soon to pick them up and make them assure you will come back to pick up them.

5. Rapport

Children are likely to feel comfort in a place that their parents feel relaxed and have a good connection with the people who are there. In addition, they mostly follow their parents and model them in their relationship. As a result, parents need to establish rapport with daycare and people working there. It helps children to trust and feel relaxed in the daycare.

6. Release stress

The first days and weeks of daycare are so stressful both for kids and parents. It is recommended to be patient and try to release stress by having some group activities at night. Try to have some family activities in order to play, have fun, and transfer emotion. It can be helpful in this hard time of transition.

7. Parents instincts

Since parents know their children better than anyone. Don't hesitate to make suggestions, ask questions and check in during the day. It can be helpful for daycare providers to know and support your child better.