Preparing Your Baby for Your Transition Back to Work

Both parents and babies face a difficult time of transition when parents return to work after leave. Learn how you can make this transition easy on yourself and your child.

Choose the Right Child Care Provider

Babies will more-easily adapt to new environments if the child care provider is experienced and familiar with watching very young children. Having a reliable and trusted care provider will help parents feel more comfortable about leaving a baby with somebody while at work. Here are some important characteristics to look for in a child care provider:

- **Experience.** Look for a child care provider with at least several years of experience with caring for newborn babies.
- **Good referrals.** Talk with other parents that the child care provider has worked for in the past. Get their honest opinion on how the provider is with newborns.
- **Reliability.** Ask current and former clients about the provider's reliability. Are they available when they say they will be? Do they show up on time?
- **Convenient location.** Is the provider close to where you live so you do not have to spend an excessive amount of time traveling between your home and their location?
- **Licensed and trained.** Is the child care provider licensed to take care of newborns, and are they trained in CPR and first aid?

Do a Trial Run

Do not let the first time you leave your baby with their care provider be the day you are returning to work. Start leaving your child with the care provider a week before you return to work, maybe just for a few hours at a time at first and then for longer periods of time as the week goes on. This will help you and your baby establish a routine.

When Dropping Your Baby Off

The easiest way to drop a child off with a care provider is the "adhesive bandage removal" way: fast and quick. Parents should bring their child inside, give the provider any information they need about how the baby has been, give the baby a kiss and leave. The more a parent lingers in the care environment, the more the baby will expect to see them there all the time. If a parent hangs around for too long when dropping off the baby, they may get accustomed to seeing them in the environment. This causes the baby to be more upset when the parent actually does leave for work.

Make sure you bring the appropriate supplies that your baby and the child care provider will need for the day. This could include:

- Diapers.
- Toys.
- A pacifier.
- Formula or breast milk.
- A blanket.
- A change of clothes.
- Any medication the child is taking.

When Picking Up Your Baby

Ask your child care provider how your baby behaved during the day and how they are adapting to the new environment. See if they are running low on any supplies you provide. If you are not going to see the provider for a few days, make sure you gather together any toys your baby will need during their time away.

Evaluate the Situation after a Few Weeks

It is important to assess your routine and the child care situation after a few weeks to see if there is anything you should change or do differently. The child care provider may also have some concerns that need addressing, or ideas for how to make the transition easier on you and your baby. If things are going well, the process can probably stay much as it is with a few minor adjustments. If larger problems exist, an evaluation could be a good opportunity to find common ground with the care provider, alter your routine or try new approaches. If your baby is not adapting well to the child care provider, you may have to consider finding a new one.

Resources

- Office on Women's Health: www.womenshealth.gov
- USA.gov - Child Care and Related Issues: www.usa.gov/child-care

Here when you need us.

Call: 844-207-5465

Online: guidanceresources.com

App: GuidanceNow SM

Web ID: LivingME

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