



Getting your child to school without tears

September 2016

Many children have difficulties with tears at the start of school, often resulting in yelling, crying and frustration for all. You may understand this situation from personal experience with your own child or from seeing friends or relatives working to address this challenge. What is a parent to do? The first (and often hardest part) is for the parent to be *calm*. If you need to, leave the room and take a few deep breaths. Many children have experienced difficulties separating at some point and *you will get through it*.



Here are a few strategies you might try:

- 1. Plan for a smooth morning.** Lay out clothes the night before; make sure your child gets enough sleep; have fast and easy breakfasts available.
- 2. Connect with your child at home.** Get down to her level, look into her eyes, put a hand on her shoulder, and say, "It will be okay!"
- 3. Find ways for your child to stay connected to you throughout the school day.** Write notes for his lunch box, give him a lipstick kiss on his hand, or give him a picture he can hang on to at school.
- 4. Schedule some special time with your child after school.** This time could include playing a game or helping you with dinner.
- 5. Leave your child at school *even with tears*.** The crying usually stops when the parent leaves and children are focused on school.
- 6. Get help.** A counselor can develop strategies that will work for you and your child when nothing else has seemed to work.

Remember, getting used to school can take some time. **Notice the small changes** your child makes to get acclimated to school and **praise his or her independence**. Recognize that transition can be hard, but that you are so proud of your child for learning how to be in school and every day will get a bit easier.

For more ideas, and research on this topic, explore this resource:
www.helpguide.org/articles/anxiety/separation-anxiety-in-children.htm

You and your family do not have to struggle alone. LCFS counselors help families generate hope and cope with life's challenges. Most insurance plans accepted; sliding-scale fees are available on a case-by-case basis. For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact us at lcfs_info@lcfs.org or 800-363-LCFS (5237). Discover LCFS and the services we offer at www.lcfs.org and www.facebook.com/LCFSIL.



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Central Illinois

Trinity Lutheran School, Bloomington

LCFS office, Decatur

LCFS office, Springfield

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LCFS office, Belleville

LCFS office, Mt. Vernon

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Lutheran Child and
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