

# Drop-Off Ritual Tips

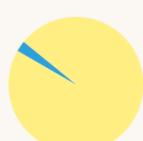


Separation anxiety is a natural part of development and how parents respond to it is essential to setting children up for successful future drop-off experiences at school, sleepovers, summer camp and beyond. Creating a reliable and consistent drop-off ritual helps kids make healthy and positive transitions while they learn to develop trust with both parents and teachers.



■ 54.1%

Married couples who have children under 6 years old with both parents working.



■ 4-5%

Children and adolescents who suffer from separation anxiety disorder.

**7-18 months**

The age in which separation anxiety is most common for young children.

## Sound Familiar?

Drop off drama is about a young person experiencing a painful transition from their beloved parent to a room full of new kids and adults. This is very stressful for some children, especially those who prefer to be at home.



- Hysterical crying (5-10 minutes)
- Repeated temper tantrums or pleading
- Nightmares about being separated
- Grabbing at a parent or caregiver's legs and holding on so they can't leave
- Refusal to go to school in order to stay with a parent or primary caregiver

## Kiddie Academy's Tested Ritual Tips

Working with more than 20,000 families nationwide, Kiddie Academy teachers and directors have a lot of experience helping parents get comfortable with the drop-off process so it becomes smooth and routine for parents, children and staff.



**Time it right.** Schedule morning drop-offs after a breakfast since your child will be more susceptible to separation anxiety when tired, hungry, or sick.



**Expect some tears.** Be flexible. This might be a big transition for your child and patience goes a long way to helping them through it.



**Watch them learn.** Tune into Kiddie Academy's WatchMeGrow broadcast to see how quickly your child got over separation anxiety and is starting to have a great time!



**Never sneak away.** It's hard on every working parent to say goodbye to their kids, but sneaking away can cause additional anxiety for your little ones.



**Emphasize short and sweet.** The best goodbyes are short and upbeat! Don't linger with any "sweet sorrows."

## Bonus Tips From the Professionals: Moms & Dads!



**Ask for a text.** If your drop-off time is up and your child is still inconsolable, ask your child care provider to send you a text when your little one has stopped crying and started playing. It will probably be five minutes after you leave, but the piece of mind is treasured.



**Keep flat shoes in the car.** For moms headed to the office after drop-off, keep a pair of flat slippers in the car to slip on when heading in and out of school with kids, then slip your shoes back on after drop-off is complete and head to the office.



**Leave toys from home in the car.** Some schools have rules about not bringing toys into the classroom where they could get lost, broken or fought over. The car is a good place to create a habit that leaves toys from home behind with less to "say goodbye" to when you get inside.