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# A Letter to Families About Hellos and Good-Byes

Dear Families,

Every day, you and your child say good-bye to one another in the morning and hello again in the afternoon. These hellos and good-byes are children's first steps on a lifelong journey of learning how to separate from and reunite with important people in their lives.

Learning to say hello and good-bye to people we love is a process, not something to be achieved in the first week or month or even year of child care. Indeed, after many years of experience, we adults sometimes find it difficult to separate and reunite.

I make time for hellos and good-byes each day because they will always be an important part of your child's life. Being able to separate is necessary if children are going to develop as independent, competent people. Being able to reunite is necessary to building and maintaining caring, long-term relationships.

Here are some ways for us to work together:

- **Try to spend some time each morning and afternoon here with your child.** Your presence will help make the transition between home and child care easier for your child.
- **Never leave without saying good-bye.** It's tempting to want to leave quietly if your child is busy and not noticing you. By saying good-bye, you strengthen your child's trust in you. Your child can count on the fact you will not disappear without warning. When you are about to leave in the morning, I can help you and your child say good-bye.
- **Create good-bye rituals.** This may be as simple as walking to the door with your child, giving your child a giant hug before you leave, or waving good-bye near the living room window. Having a ritual offers you both the comfort of knowing what to do.
- **Bring familiar items from home.** I welcome family photos and other reminders of home that you want to share. Seeing these special objects will help your child feel connected to you throughout the day.
- **Make a special arrangement with your school-age child.** Children often want to connect with their families when they arrive after school. If you want a phone call or an e-mail message, we can make an arrangement.

By working together, we can help your child feel comfortable, secure, and confident about being in family child care.

Sincerely,

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