

## ● Saying Hello!



**“Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me” (Mark 9:37, NIV).**

- Protect yourself and your children with a security check-in and check-out system. Try to make your check-in system short and sweet.
- Provide three security tags for each child. A simple numbering system works well as do permanent name tags. Ask the parent to pin one tag on the child, pin one on the diaper bag and keep one for pickup identification.
- Develop a registration form or card. Gather helpful information such as name, address, telephone number, birth date, parents’ names, names of those in the household, special needs (allergies, disabilities), names of people who may pick up the child.
- Identify teachers and helpers with name tags, aprons, or smocks.
- Name tags for children will help teachers and helpers to easily call children by name. Use adhesive labels for young children. Older children will enjoy shapes cut from colorful paper. Add the child’s schedule and special needs to the tag. Name tags for children up to two years of age should be placed on the children’s backs.
- Provide a weekly parent sign-in sheet for children’s names and parents’ locations in case parents must be contacted by a helper or teacher.
- Schedule greeters to:
  - Assist with visitor and new member registration.
  - Make children and parents feel welcome, secure, and familiar.
  - Give newcomers and “reluctants” attention and reassurance.
- Direct children to learning centers or activities by explaining choices.
- Provide coat hooks at the child’s level and cubbyholes for storing belongings and take-home papers. Personalize hooks and cubbyholes so that children can identify their own. Use photos, pictures, colors, stickers, shapes, letters, or first names. Sheets from seasonal thematic note pads also can make good labels. Don’t forget to provide a special section for visitors and newcomers. Create cubbyholes from shoe organizers, ice cream tubs, or detergent boxes.
- Respect other children by having parents say good-bye at the door. Reassure parents and offer to take a reluctant child. Be quick with a smile and slow with the child.
- Remove criers from the doorway. Express sad feelings back to the child. “It’s sad to say good-bye.” Comfort, distract, and attempt to get the child involved.
- Remember that first impressions happen only once.
- Teaching starts when the first child enters the room. Teaching stops when the last child leaves—or does it ever stop?

Toddlers & 2s



## ● Saying Good-bye

- At check-out time, involve the children in an activity that will allow them to drop out as parents arrive.
- One or more teachers should be at the door to greet parents and ask the child's name or request a security identifier given at check-in time. Take your time. Most parents will be very patient.
- Quietly (you're not a short-order cook) remove each child from the activity as parents arrive. Follow through, checking out one child at a time, to avoid confusion and forgotten take-home papers.
- This can be a very anxious time for children if activity stops and everyone is waiting by the door. Keep children involved, preferably facing away from the door. Involved, interested children eliminate the chance of an anxious "escapee" or overly concerned parents.
- Be sensitive to parents' needs. There are special occasions when they must leave quickly.
- Remove name tags and collect take-home papers. Help older children do these things themselves. It's slower, but it teaches. Having crafts and take-home papers in cubbyholes ahead of time makes the pickup time smoother.
- For a safer, smoother check-out system, parents and family should remain outside the classroom.
- Call each child by name as you say good-bye at the child's eye level. Good-byes are the last impression and should be pleasant.
- Show excitement as you anticipate seeing the child next week. Hugs may be in order.
- Insist that adults, rather than children or siblings, pick up and bring early childhood children. List authorized persons on the registration form and on the back of the name tag.
- Suggest something from the lesson that children can tell to their families (a song, a name, an event).
- Always be ready to share something positive about each child, such as "Tony was a good listener today." Remember, all the flowers of tomorrow are in the seeds of today!

