



skəmxist snəcmiltŋ Aboriginal Head Start Gradual Entry

Starting a new childcare program can be an emotional experience for both children and their caregivers. To make this a positive experience, all children participate in a gradual introduction to our program.



FAQ

What is Gradual Entry?

Our approach offers a gentle introduction for children and families to childcare, focusing on building relationships gradually and thoughtfully. Educators and families work together to observe the child, understand their cues, and progress at a pace that supports the child's growing confidence and comfort.

How long will it take?

🌿 Every child is unique, and the time needed for a successful transition will depend on:

Your child's

- Comfort level
- Confidence
- Personality
- Age

And the Caregiver's ability to establish and convey trust in the Educators

The minimum requirement:

- (I/T) 4 visits
- (3-5) 2 visits

Separation Anxiety

It's natural for children to experience separation anxiety. Keep arrivals cheerful and calm and demonstrate trust in the Educators. The Caregivers confidence will help the child feel more secure and supported.

Tips

- Say "Bye, I will be back soon"
- Exit quickly without lingering. Stalling can make the child feel fearful
- Never **sneak away while your child is distracted**, as this can undermine trust and lead to greater anxiety in the future. Instead, offer a confident goodbye—just once—to reassure your child that you will return

🌿 You are welcome to stay in the lobby or in the upstairs lounge during the gradual entry process. If you choose to leave, please stay close by in case we need to call you back.



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Typical Schedules



Infant/Toddler

Day 1 / 2

60-minutes with Caregivers

- ✿ A caregiver(s) will join us, so the child can spend time in the room with the educators and their caregivers so we can get to know their routine and create a comfortable environment for them.

Day 3 / 4

30 minutes with / 60 minutes without / 30 minutes with Caregivers

- ✿ Caregiver(s) will spend approximately 30 minutes with us, then leave the child for 30-60 minutes, depending on how comfortable the child is.
- ✿ When the parent returns for pickup, they will stay in the room for an additional 30 minutes to ease any anxieties and allow the child to return to a calm state before leaving.

Next Following Days

1-3 hours without Caregivers

- ✿ Meal and nap times may be introduced during this period, allowing your child to adapt to our daily rhythm
- ✿ From this point forward, we will proceed based on the child's comfort and adjusting as needed to ensure a positive experience
- ✿ The time spent at the centre will increase slowly until the child is comfortable attending full days

Three to Five

Day 1 / 2

3-4-hour visit

- ✿ A caregiver(s) will join us, so the child can spend time in the room with the educators and their caregivers so we can get to know their routine and create a comfortable environment for them.
- ✿ Parents are required to stay for 1-2 hours depending on the child's comfort level

Next Following Days

- ✿ From here onward, we will play it by ear, depending solely on the child's comfort level
- ✿ Meal and nap times may be introduced during this period, allowing your child to adapt to our daily rhythm
- ✿ The time spent at the centre will increase slowly until the child is comfortable attending full days