

Helping Your Child Through Feelings of Loss and Change

A parent guide for school closures and transitions

A school change can feel like a real loss.

Children may miss the people, routines, memories, and sense of belonging connected to their school.

What your child may be losing

Teachers and trusted adults
Friends and classmates
Familiar routines
Traditions and activities
School identity and belonging
A place connected to memories



Many feelings are normal

Sad
Angry
Worried
Confused
Excited
Not affected
Several at once

Feelings may show up through behavior

Some children may not say, “I’m sad” or “I’m worried.” You may notice:

Irritability or stronger reactions Clinginess or withdrawal Trouble sleeping
Headaches or stomachaches Difficulty concentrating Repeated questions

What parents can do

Listen first

Let feelings be heard before trying to solve them.

Be honest

Say what you know and what is not decided.

Offer choices

Let your child help plan a goodbye or visit.

Keep routines

Familiar routines provide stability.

Stay connected

Support important friendships.

Explore the new school

Visit and find important places together.

When Your Child May Need Additional Support

If anxiety, sadness, or behavior changes persist or interfere with daily life, contact your child’s school counselor, school social worker, or school psychologist.

Instead of: “You’ll love your new school. Don’t worry.”

Try: “It’s okay to miss your school. We’ll learn about your new school together.”