

# The Art of Creating the Perfect Arrival

Everything that is worth doing is worth doing well, or so my dear mother always said. Whether it is a holiday celebration, a dinner for 2 or 6, a trip to the Bahamas or the preparing of a perfect soufflé, each endeavor demands forethought, planning and the execution of those plans to ensure success. Although some of us seem to do this naturally and effortlessly, closer inspection would probably reveal the secret to success: hard work and prior planning. Similarly your child's successful arrival at school is much depended on the preparation you put in to it. It is definitely worth planning for because the child's arrival defines the child's day. Here are some tips for a successful arrival.



## The Night Before the Perfect Arrival

- Provide a nutritious evening meal free of harmful additives (screen time, devices, toys etc.) but accompanied by interested and interesting family members.
- Arrange the next day's uniform items/ clothing for easy access.
- Gather and place all necessary items the child will need for school in one prepared place that is used consistently (Communication Folder, school bag, lunch box, jacket, a book to read while waiting in the drop-off line).
- Provide a soothing, unhurried bedtime preparation (bath, story-time, lights out).
- Ensure ample, undisturbed sleep for child and self; Casa children need 10-12 hours of uninterrupted sleep.

## The Next Day

- Arise early enough to greet your child with genuine warmth.
- Assist only as needed as your child dresses for school (no switching outfits, stick to the plan!).
- Provide ample time for routine chores (making the bed, eating breakfast, grooming, assembling lunch).

- Provide a nutritious breakfast free of harmful additives (screen time, toys, etc.) yet injected with authentic camaraderie (no eating in the car en route).
- Provide ample time for your child to collect items from the pre-arranged storage space, all assembled neatly in appropriate containers (totes, lunchboxes).
- Provide ample time for your child to put on cardigans, outdoor shoes, and assist only as needed. The key to success is AMPLE TIME.
- Be sure your child knows that he is expected to be ready. We do not accept children in pajamas!
- Have everyone assemble at a pre-designated place, make a quick survey to note that all is in readiness, lock up and load up.
- A VERY IMPORTANT STEP: Provide plenty of travel time for unhurried and safe travel.
- Arrive on time! You are not only getting to school on time, you are building an awareness in your child of responsibility, reliability and respect for his/her school community and its expectations. You are also setting the tone for the child's entire school day.
- Wait patiently for the bus or building doors to open. Perhaps read quietly from the book you so wisely planned for the night before, or have quiet conversation about what you see about you. It is a wonderful time to play "I spy something that begins with the sound (phonetic letter sound)!"
- Children are amazingly intuitive about our true feelings. Say a brief goodbye to your child. Make it upbeat and cheerful. Prolonged goodbyes and hand-holding increase the child's anxiety about separating from you. A brief, uplifting goodbye says, "I have confidence in you and your school. You will have a fine day!"
- Recognize that, if you have done all of the afore-mentioned items, the remainder of arrival is the work of the teacher and the child.
- Allow the teacher to accept your child. If there is something you would like to tell the teacher, make an appointment through email or call after 3:00pm. The teacher wants to spend every moment with the children.
- As soon as the teacher and child have connected, walk away with complete confidence that you have worked hard to create an arrival that will start your child's day off beautifully.
- Repeat daily because, as every Montessorian knows (parent as well as guide), repetition leads to mastery.

*Adapted from an article written by Charlotte Kroger. Charlotte is the Consultant/Mentor for Children's House Level at [Austin Montessori School](#), Austin, Texas. Following her 14 years of leading Children's House communities in both Oregon and Texas, she retired, only to return shortly after to her current role.*