



Conscious Discipline for School Drop-Off

Transitions can be challenging for children, and saying goodbye at drop-off can be particularly hard! This send-home letter from Conscious Discipline and The Playing Field models a helpful way to communicate your Conscious Discipline-based routine to families.

The Conscious Discipline Brain State Model helps us remember that safety and connection are the foundation for all learning. Meeting the brain's needs through clear, consistent routines and ample opportunities for connection can make the morning drop off easier for children (and parents!) and sets the stage for a successful day at school.

This letter is geared for schools in which families bring students inside the school building. Whether you use this letter exactly as it is or use it as a model for creating your own drop-off letter, be certain to create a visual routine that shows the steps in your letter, as well as any additional steps children will undertake. Utilizing photos of your families doing the steps is ideal, but you can also use clipart. A visual routine based on this letter might show images for the following:

1. Take three deep breaths as you enter
2. Hang your backpack and jacket on your hook
3. Do an I Love You Ritual™ with your drop-off person
4. Rub one pump of hand sanitizer on your hands
5. Go to your teacher for your greeting
6. Hug your drop-off person and have them kiss your "Bye Bye Bear"
7. Drop off person leaves
8. Play with friends
9. Listen for the signal to start school
10. Go to the circle

*NOTE: If you use this letter as it is, be certain to follow through on providing a monthly I Love You Ritual for families to practice. The ***I Love You Rituals*** book by Dr. Becky Bailey provides 75 activities that improve connection, attunement, attention and cooperation. If you don't own the book, you can use the ***Songs for I Love You Rituals Lyrics*** in our Free Resources to devise your own activities. The "Bye Bye Bear" mentioned in this letter is a small stuffed animal each child keeps at the school. The parent gives the stuffy a kiss to "hold" for the child in case the child needs a bit of loving support during the day.*

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Conscious Discipline for School Drop-off

Transitions of all kinds can be challenging for children. Saying goodbye can be particularly hard!

The Conscious Discipline Brain State Model reminds us that emotional wellness and optimal learning are built on a foundation of safety and connection. Meeting the brain's basic need for safety and connection can make the morning drop off easier for children (and parents!) and sets the stage for a successful day at school.



AM I SAFE?

Your state regulates your child's state. Be conscious of your emotional state when you enter the classroom. Your child is looking to you for cues about how to respond. Many of these cues are unspoken. Regulating your internal state is the first

step in helping children regulate theirs.

If you feel anxious about dropping off your child, take a deep breath (or two, or three) and focus on changing your internal state to calm. When you are able to remain calm, you nonverbally communicate to your child, "This is a safe place."

The brain is pattern-seeking. Predictable routines help the child feel safe. Maintaining a consistent routine and showing this routine in a visual form reinforces a sense of safety.

Each classroom has a drop-off routine schedule posted. Follow the routine each morning. Direct your child's attention to the pictures on the schedule as you complete each step together.



AM I LOVED?

Emotional connections form neural connections in the brain.

After we meet the child's need for safety, the next need is to be loved. Human connection is essential to learning, so our drop off routines include multiple opportunities to connect.

Connect with your child. Taking a few minutes to connect with your child before you leave has a lasting impact on his or her day. Each month, we will send home a new I Love You Ritual for you to enjoy with your child. There is no "wrong" way to do an I Love You Ritual; just be sure to include the connection-building components of eye contact, touch, presence and playfulness.

Help your child connect with the teacher. It is also important for your child to make a connection with the teacher each morning. As you prepare to leave the room, take your child directly to his teacher. The teacher will ask him how he wants to be greeted.

Connect while you're away. Before you leave, give your child a hug and kiss his "Bye Bye Bear." If your child needs a kiss from you during the day, the bear will have it ready to share.



WHAT CAN I LEARN?

Meeting your child's needs for safety and connection prepares the brain for a day of learning and exploration. We're going to have a great day!