

SEPARATION DIFFICULTIES

Definition:

Intense fear or worry experienced by a young child when anticipating separation or when separated from a primary caregiver.

Behavior:

Why could this be happening?

- A child has experienced a significant stressful event.
- A child is fearful or nervous about a new or unfamiliar situation.
- A child is fearful or nervous when separated from a loved one.

Typical Development:

- Considered normal healthy development for young children, starting around 8 - 14 months.
- Some children are nervous in unfamiliar environments and tend to be clingy.
- As they get more familiar with a new place, children will be less clingy.

When to be Concerned:

- When this behavior occurs in children over the age of 6.
- A child refuses to go to school/daycare or separate from the caregiver.
- A child refuses to sleep without the caregiver.
- If the behavior lasts more than 4 - 6 weeks.

Possible Resources:

Help Me Grow, Early Childhood Family Education, pediatrician, mental health professional