

PARENT TIPSHEET: Planning an Outing

centre@hollandbloorview.ca

This tip sheet was written by a parent and reviewed by a Family Mentor to help other families prepare for outings, big or small!

One-Time Outings

Plan ahead for new experiences! Think about:

1. Location:

- Where are you going?
- What is the address?
- What is the contact information?
- Do you know how to get there?
- Do you need reservations?
- Who can answer questions when we get there?
- Is there a Guest Relations desk?

2. Admission:

- Price of admission (e.g. child fee, student fee, adult fee, senior fee)
- Admission for companion (e.g. sometimes there is a reduced admission cost of the companion or supporter)

3. Route and Transportation:

- Where is the location the attraction in relation to your house?
- How will you get there?
 - *Car*: Is there parking?
 - *Bus*: What is the nearest stop?
 - *Subway*: What is the nearest stop?
 - *Taxi/Uber/Lyft*: How much will it cost and is it accessible?
 - *Train*: At which stop do you get off?

- *Walking*: Will you be taking a wheelchair or a walker? What kind of material is the path you will walk? (e.g. cement sidewalk, dirt path, cobblestone)

Transitions

Your child might need to transition to a new experience. It's okay for your child to be scared or worried to go to a new place.

1. Talk to your child about how they can handle these fears. Some ways include:

- Visit the location and meet staff before starting the program
- Find out what a day or session looks like
- Focus on what they are looking forward to
- Talk about the fun things they will get to do
- Focus on how proud their parents will be of them

Overnight Experiences

There might be longer outings where someone else is caring for your child, or you might not be there.

1. If your child feels like they might miss you, you can encourage them to:

- Bring pictures of mom, dad, siblings, and pets
- Write a letter home if they feel sad
- Write in a diary
- Bring a flashlight or nightlight
- Let them pick one or two favourite toys, games, pillow, blanket, stuffed animal, or snacks (if allowed)

2. Let staff know what the bedtime routine is:

- Does your child read a book before bed?
- Do you give gradual "lights out" warnings or time checks?
- Does your child take a shower before bed?

Being Flexible

Outings with your child can be a new experience for both of you.

1. Focus on the benefits of the experience, like making new friends, trying new activities or learning to do things on your own.
2. Acknowledge that trying new things can be difficult.
3. Be prepared for setbacks and plan how you will manage.

4. Take it one day at a time!

Last updated by a Family Support Specialist and Family Mentor in April 2018