

# **Please Don't Leave Me!**

## **Understanding Separation Anxiety**

*It is sometimes difficult for a parent or guardian to leave a child who is upset and cries or clings. The child may not understand that you will return. This information may help you deal with separation anxiety.*

### **Separation anxiety is normal.**

It shows that your child recognizes you and has formed close attachments.

### **Separation anxiety is predictable.**

Children as young as 5 months may be fearful of unfamiliar faces and places. Anxiety may peak between 10-18 months. It may intensify at any age or return with change, such as the birth of a new baby.

### **These measures may help:**

- Stay until the new place/person is familiar.
- Reassure your child that you will return.
- Describe a benchmark, such as, "After snacks Mommy/Daddy will be back." Keep your word.
- Avoid leaving a child who is hungry, tired, or sick.
- Never tease or scold your child for upset feelings.
- Don't bribe the child not to cry.
- Create a routine or pattern for good-byes.

### **Your stress can contribute to separation anxiety.**

Stay positive. Express your feelings in a way that reduces your child's distress. There are benefits to some time apart.

### **The KiDS COR team sincerely cares for your child!**

We will contact you if your child cannot be calmed.

We want your child to enjoy coming to church.