

2-10

Endings age

1

Practical ending ideas

Endings to prepare for (if possible)

In all of these situations, there should be at least a few weeks to prepare our child for the changes and ending may bring.

Try to organise logistics early, give your children time to ask questions and remind them of the new and positive things even if they are not ready to hear about them yet.

Why not try...

- Making a timetable of events so that your children know what is going to happen and when
- Making a send-off box with all of the person's favourite things to take with them to the new place
- Make a time capsule
- Make cards and letters
- Organise a weekly/monthly Facetime date to chat to keep in contact
- Send photos between the families
- Have a party to celebrate the friendship
- Get each other presents
- Write a letter to your house thanking it for all the good times
- Make a list of new things you would like to have in your new house and then pick one to be there when you arrive
- Plan a housewarming party
- Get your child prepared for their new school with school uniform and things they need early



2

Endings to make time to celebrate

In these easy and positive endings, model celebrating the good times and giving space for positive memories.

Try to think of ways to celebrate to show your children endings and change are not all bad and can actually be savoured and enjoyed.



"I may regret the way we ended, but I will never regret what we had."

- Drake

Why not try...

- making a photo book of any photos of the experience
- plan an ending performance or show
- give a certificate or a medal of participation
- hold a reunion
- make food you used to eat with a person or in a place
- hold a ritual event like end-of-year movie night or end-of-project picnic
- make cards and presents for the person who is not there and read them out
- meet up one more time with an ex-teacher to share only positive memories



3

Endings to commemorate (this could be each year)

This section of ending is focused on endings that are inherently sad, but can be transformed through ritual or experiences into a positive memory, a person or an event.



"The best endings resonate because they echo a word, phrase, or image from earlier in the story, and the reader is prompted to think back to that reference and speculate on a deeper meaning."
- James Plath

"It is always important to know when something has reached its end. Closing circles, shutting doors, finishing chapters, it doesn't matter what we call it; what matters is to leave in the past those moments in life that are over."

- Paulo Coelho

Why not try...

- Saying a prayer for that person at bedtime
- Reading a book of bedtime stories about the person
- Planting a tree or build a bench outside where any family member can go to talk to them or think about them
- Having a box that your kids can write questions in for you to answer about the person when they come up
- Having a special outing to commemorate the person each year.
- Singing or play their favourite songs



Endings to grieve

Major losses need time to grieve

Grief is a pain that doesn't ever disappear, the loss of a close family member or the loss of stability or normality in one's life always remain in the body. Lauren Herschel's analogy of the ball in the jar states, the grief is like a ball in a small jar. At the beginning of our grief, the ball takes up all the space in the jar the way that the grief, shock and sadness take up the space in our life, which means it is very hard to do anything without being overcome with sadness and pain. Over time the size of our capacity for other thoughts, feelings and activities increases. The loss is still there but we are more able to bear it.

To help our children pass through this painful part and help them move to the more positive and productive parts of life, we have to give them space to be sad or angry or any of the other feelings that may come up for them.

It is common for people to grieve differently. One person may immerse themselves in memories and photographs, whilst another might need some space away from the reminders. Both of these are normal and fine but what it might mean, is that parents cannot help one another with their grief. If you find this to be the case, talk to your partner about this and come up with a plan as to how to support the children through this difficult time.

If you are struggling to support your child as you are also grieving, speak to your GP about therapy or support for you or your child.

Why not try...

- **setting up a den in your home that you can all meet in to cuddle without any need to go anywhere or do anything**
- **having time each week to talk about all the feelings of the week**
- **give your child a diary to write down their feelings**
- **give them a choice to talk or not talk, to spend the evening close or for time alone**
- **surround your child with others who also love them, think of nice things to do to look forward to**
- **give your children a photo book or an iPad with video memories**
- **write letters**
- **plant a memory garden and paint stones with memories**
- **ask your children how they would like to grieve, celebrate or remember**