

## Kindergartens South Tips & Strategies for Tamariki and Whānau Returning to Kindergarten

### 1 – Understanding emotions & feelings:

Currently we are all experiencing MANY emotions and the COVID-19 situation has felt like a roller-coaster. All feelings are natural and a response to keep ourselves safe. Feel comfortable to help your tamariki, and yourself to name the emotions – happy, nervous, excited, angry - as a way of understanding and making sense of them. Share this with kindergarten teachers either before, or when your whānau returns to kindergarten. Teachers can then prepare and respond to support the transition back.

### 2 – Encouraging and role modelling feeling calm:

Tamariki are amazing at picking up on the vibes and feelings of the adults around them. You may have noticed that often when you (adults) are feeling stressed/stretched/busy etc, that your tamariki will be seeking your attention, perhaps not making positive choices which adds to the stress for all. As adults, look after yourself and do activities that help you in feeling calm. When you feel calm, your tamariki are more likely to feel calm, and this will support a positive transition back from your home bubble to your kindergarten community.

### 3 – Calming experiences to enjoy as a whānau when returning to Kindergarten:

Sing or listen to a familiar song as you walk, drive, bike to kindergarten together. Try to be prepared as much as you can the night before kindergarten so there will not be a rush in the morning. After returning to kindergarten, and perhaps work, at the end of the day you may feel tired and exhausted after returning to stimulating environments. Enjoy a quiet activity together when you are home before starting the tea/night/sleep routines.

### 4 – Togetherness while apart:

As whānau, you may have spent a LOT of time together and very little time apart while in your bubble during Alert Level 4 and 3. As a whānau you may feel a little anxious about being apart and the farewell. Please have a chat with the teachers as we have learned and strengthened many ways of communicating. You may like for the teachers to text, phone, send a photo or video to show your tamariki settled into the kindergarten programme. You may wish to bring a whānau photo that teachers can display on the wall so your tamariki can have a sense of you close by. You may have your own idea that you can share with the teachers. The teachers would love to hear them.

### 5 – What is different and what is the same at kindergarten:

Enjoy korero/conversations as a whānau to prepare for things that will be different and what will be the same at kindergarten. This may support a sense of predictability and comfort. You could talk about washing hands, coughing and sneezing into elbows, that the teachers will be there to support your child in saying goodbye in the mornings as whānau will head off, different things to play with may be out on different days so they can be cleaned at the end of the day, some furniture may have been moved. At the end of the day your tamariki will be able to share with you – what was new/different and what was the same