

What to Expect When You and the One You Care for First Experience Adult Day Services

With the many positive aspects of having a loved one come to Day Break, there are also some potential challenges. Not knowing what it will mean for that person and what reactions they could have, could leave you with apprehensive and guilt filled feelings. It's one more challenge to manage and one more change indicating life is not what it used to be. You want to protect the person from further feelings of loss, but know you need the respite and care adult day services can provide. Here are some thoughts that can help you feel more confident that you are doing the right thing for the both of you.

- First, know that even making the call to find out more is a huge step and to be commended. Even if its not the right time you have information that can help you make a more informed decision down the road.
- If a trial or tour is done its normal to have uncomfortable feelings if you should think the person you are caring for does not fit in because they are not exactly like the others in the program. What you will find is that the community of people in Adult Day Services are a lot like one's community. A diverse group with more in common than not.
- There are opportunities to connect meaningfully with others which is a basic human need. Their uniqueness is celebrated in a supportive atmosphere.
- Despite the positives while at the program it is normal for the one you are caring for to make negative statements regarding their day. The separation from what they know and are used to triggers uncomfortable feelings for many.
- Validating these feeling versus dismissing or ignoring them is key in these transition periods. Saying "that must have been scary", "I understand that was hard" are validating statements that can help a person feel heard. Once they feel heard they are more apt to listen to the positives that did occur and gradually adjust to the changes. Expect that each time will probably bring similar comments and behaviors for a time.
- However, once through the transition of bringing them and having them welcomed by skillful staff and familiar people who are kind and fun, they tend to develop trusting relationships and fall into a routine that gets more comfortable as time goes on.
- Having a plan and being consistent with your words when getting them ready to come and dropping them off will help ease any resistance. Saying this is what we have scheduled for today and not lingering as you say a warm goodbye and will be back later, can help.
- Although each situation is different, if you are hearing things that are concerning, please just call to discuss whatever it is. Working as a team is valued here.
- Staff will ask you many questions to get to know the person you are caring for so they can incorporate what is familiar into their time at ADS. This builds relationships and trust.