

## **Analysis and Comparison of Existing Settling Models in the Elementary Sector of the German Education System**

**Michaela Ernstberger**

Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski

bul. "Tsar Osvoboditel" 15

1504 Sofia/Bulgaria

### **Abstract**

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*The article gives in-depth insights into two basic models for the settling of children in the elementary sector in Germany. In order for children to make a smooth transition from the family to the day care center, a well-founded settling concept is necessary. Studies to date have shown that the experiences children make during this settling process are of great importance for early childhood development and educational processes. This article explains in detail the origins, structure, goals and design of the settling models used in Germany - the Berlin Model and the Munich Model. Both models are based on scientific findings and can help reduce the stress children experience during this transition period.*

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**Keywords:** settling process in day care, settling models, transition process to day care

### **1 Introduction**

In this paper I present two fundamental models for the settling of children in the first day care center and analyze their differences. The design of a gentle transition period from the family to the day care center together with parents and children is one of the indispensable quality criteria of early education. A professional settling in a day care center makes it easier for children to get used to the new situation. Various models or concepts can help in this process - as long as the framework conditions are right. Although previous literature has dealt extensively with the transition from the parental environment to the day care center (e.g., Dalli 1999, Dalli 2000, Thyssen 2000, Xu 2006), there is a lack of explanation of exemplary models for the design of settling processes.

In the German-speaking world, two central settling models have become established, which I will present in more detail in this article: the Berlin Settling Model and the Munich Settling Model. The models are based on different theories. While the Berlin Model is based on attachment theory and brain research (Dreyer 2015), the Munich Model is based on transition theory (Dreyer 2017). Both models have a different approach to settling. In the paper I show the differences and analyze their advantages and disadvantages.

The paper contributes to the existing literature as follows. First, I introduce the Berlin and Munich Settling Models to the international scholarly discourse and link them to existing theories of pedagogy. In doing so, I aim to stimulate further research in this highly relevant area of early childhood education. Second, I discuss advantages and disadvantages of the models with reference to theoretical concepts of pedagogy, thus also contributing to theory advancement. Third, the article contributes to the practice of caring for young children by providing me with relevant guidance on settling in day care centers.

The article is structured as follows. Section 2 explains the framework conditions for settling and provides an overview of the settling models. Section 3 and section 4 present the Berlin Settling Model and the Munich Settling Model, respectively, in detail.

In each case, I discuss the concept, objectives, and structure of the models. Section 5 analyzes the main differences as well as advantages and disadvantages of the models. The article ends with a conclusion.

## **2 General conditions and overview of the models**

### ***Framework***

The framework conditions of a good settling model include the early selection of a teacher who will be the reference teacher for the respective child, i.e. who will accompany the child's settling process. This staff member should refrain from taking leave for the period of the settling and should not participate in any preliminary training (Dreyer 2015).

In addition, it is important to release the caregiver from other official obligations so that it is more possible to give the child who is settling full attention (Dreyer 2015). In the run-up to the settling situation, a teacher should be designated who can act as a substitute in case of illness of the reference teacher. This staff member is introduced to the child and its caregivers at an early stage, so that she is already known to the family in the event of a substitute assignment (Dreyer 2015).

Furthermore, it is important to involve the child's caregivers in the entire settling process. When children are accompanied by a familiar person, they find their footing in an unfamiliar environment and feel emotional security (Damen 2014). This is necessary to enter into a new sustainable relationship (Hédervári-Heller and Maywald 2009). Due to the necessity, the accompanying caregiver should already be determined in an intake interview (Damen 2014). Schaich (2011) emphasizes the establishment of a relationship triangle between the child, parents and teacher in the context of successful settling. It is necessary that the teachers communicate with the parents before and during the settling period so that questions are answered and uncertainties are eliminated as well as professionally sound explanations are provided for individual steps of the procedure. These conversations between teachers and caregivers are very helpful in building a relationship of trust. In addition, they promote the detection of signals from the children that make it clear what they need during the settling process (Dreyer 2015). It is also important that settling should be tailored to the individual and their development (Dreyer 2015). Thus, the character of young children plays an important role in the adequate design of the transition to a day care center.

### ***Overview of the two settling models***

There are currently different models of settling in Germany. Dreyer (2017) notes that two of the settling models have become most widespread in Germany - the Berlin and Munich settling models. Both models have become widely used in Germany.

The oldest and most widespread concept is the settling model developed in 1980 by Beate Andres, Hans-Joachim Laewen and Éva Hédervári-Heller at the Institute for Applied Socialization Research/Early Childhood e.V. (infans), which is based on findings from attachment and brain research (Dreyer 2015). This model was designed on the basis of attachment theory (Hédervári-Heller and Maywald 2009). It is characterized by the fact that the child is accompanied by a caregiver during the settling period. Thus, the attachment relationship between child and caregiver is at the center of the model (Skalska 2015).

The basis of the model is attention to the child's attachment to his or her mother and the different qualities of attachment. As a rule, two to about three or even four weeks are needed for the settling of a child with the application of the Berlin Settling Model (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011). It is based on the assumption that the parents accompany the child in day care, crèche or day care center during the first period. This ensures that the child to establishes a secure bond with a caregiver who was previously unknown to him or her, which is a condition for successful educational and developmental processes (Dreyer 2013).

The second so-called Munich Settling Model was conceived in the 1990s by Anna Winner and Elisabeth Erndt-Doll and has been developed further ever since (Skalska 2015a). This model was conceived on the basis of findings from transition research (Dreyer 2017). An essential element of this model is the participation of the children's group during the settling period, in addition to the actors child, caregiver, and teacher (Dreyer 2017, Skalska 2015a). Participation of the children's group means that all children of a group are present when the child to be settled in visits the day care center with the caregiver during the first days, so that a mutual getting to know is made possible (Dreyer 2017).

It is assumed that the child can form a sustainable relationship with more people from only the settling teacher (Skalska 2015a). In addition, the child being settled is role-assigned as a "strong child" who is able to navigate transitions with the help of support (Dreyer 2017). This model is even more child-centered than the Berlin Model and also somewhat more time-consuming.

The Munich Model is influenced by the "Reggio pedagogy", which assumes that the child is a social and competent being from birth, which actively controls the settling process. In addition to social pedagogical insights, ecopsychological and developmental psychological approaches are also incorporated into the model, with transition research being of particular importance in this context. If transitions are successfully managed because children are given sufficient time and support, the child emerges strengthened and will presumably also master subsequent transitions well. Both settling models have been rehearsed very frequently in practice (Skalska 2015a).

### **3 The Berlin Settling Model**

#### ***Basis of the model***

The Berlin settling model is considered the oldest and has been most widely used in Germany (Dreyer 2015). This is not only applied in its original form, but is often used as a basis for the development of other settling models. The Berlin Settling Model is also called the infans model in the literature because it was developed in the 1980s, based on findings from attachment and brain research, at the Institut für angewandte Sozialisationsforschung/Frühe Kindheit e. V. (infans) in Berlin.

Kuno Beller was also instrumental in the development of the model. He developed the Berlin Model of Early Childhood Education, a model in which, through the systematic implementation of developmentally supportive educator behaviors individualizes the development of children in day care and shapes it according to their developmental needs. The Berlin Model was empirically evaluated for its effectiveness in large-scale projects in Berlin and Munich and thus received a scientifically supported foundation. Kuno Beller has thus made an important contribution to making a strongly ideologically occupied field accessible to rational scientific discussion and to promoting concrete pedagogical practice accordingly (Tietze 1996).

In the literature, however, usually only Beate Andres, Hans-Joachim Laewen and Éva Hédervári-Heller are mentioned as the originators of the Berlin settling model (Laewen et al. 2015). The main theoretical basis is Bowlby's attachment theory (1979). The model was originally designed for day care centers, i.e., for children up to the age of three (Griebel and Niesel 2011), but is now used just as often in kindergartens with older children (Dreyer 2017). It is used nationwide, is scientifically based, and draws on experience gained from practice. Both national and international findings from research focusing on the topic of day care were incorporated into the design of the model (Hédervári-Heller and Maywald 2009).

The model is characterized by the fact that children are accompanied by a parent or other caregiver during the transition from the family to an out-of-home day care center in order to then establish an attachment relationship with an initially unfamiliar teacher. In addition, the Berlin Settling Model takes into account the different types of attachment (Dreyer 2017).

The impetus for the development of a settling model was a research project conducted by infans in Berlin in the 1980s to investigate attachment relationships (Griebel and Niesel 2011). In the study, a child accompanied by his or her mother enters an unfamiliar examination room that has, among other things, toys. Subsequently, an unknown person enters and the mother finally leaves the room (Laewen et al. 2015). The laboratory scenes can be applied to the settling process. The children are in an unfamiliar environment with unfamiliar people both in the laboratory room and during the settling period, and because of this, they will react similarly in both situations.

It shows that the children reacted with distress to the separation from the mother and calmed down when she re-entered the room. One third of the children did not react to the mother's departure and did not pay attention to her when she returned. These different behaviors of the children are due to the different attachment types (Laewen et al. 2015).

The research project provides insights into the effects of children being accompanied by a caregiver during the settling process. Securely attached children suffer from too short an accompaniment. In contrast, insecurely attached children show problems if the accompaniment lasted too long (Laewen et al. 2015).

Children with an unfavorable duration of the settling period accompanied by a parent, according to their attachment pattern, were more likely to be ill and experience developmental delays in the first seven months compared to children with a favorable duration (Laewen et al. 2015). They were also more anxious shortly after the end of the adjustment period, were less able to adjust, and showed greater insecurities in their attachment to their mothers after six months of day care attendance (Laewen et al. 2015). Regardless of attachment types, children are generally less likely to be ill when caregivers accompanied them during the first three days and no separations were completed than children who experienced separations during the first three days (Laewen et al. 2015).

The resulting Berlin Settling Model offers a conceptual framework for the exciting and sometimes difficult time of settling. It must never be lost sight of the fact that each child determines the pace of his or her own settling period. Depending on temperament, previous bonding experiences and individual child behavior, a settling takes different lengths of time. In general, the new exciting step into day care and the separation of the child from his or her parents is a stress that is significantly reduced by a slow and sensitive settling (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011). It is a great challenge for children to adapt to a new environment and establish a new relationship with strangers. They need the help and support of their caregivers (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

The infans model is based on two principles: first, it takes into account the child's attachment to its parents, and second, it generally takes into account the different qualities of attachment. Depending on the quality of the child's attachment to its parents, the infans model provides for a shorter or longer period of settling. However, the child alone determines whether the settling period lasts six, eight or 16 days. The minimum time for the core period of settling is always three days. From the first day that the child visits the day care center with the mother/father - and especially again after the fourth day - the teacher has the task of observing the child's behavior and drawing conclusions for the length of the settling period. These must be reviewed each day based on the child's behavior (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011). As a general rule, a child should only attend the day care center for half the day during the settling period. Even after the settling period is over, it makes sense to increase the child's length of stay only slowly (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

### ***Objective of the model***

The Berlin Settling Model aims to ensure that children slowly approach an unfamiliar teacher in the day care center in the presence of a caregiver and ultimately form a bonding relationship with him or her (Laewen et al. 2015). In addition, the establishment of a relationship triangle between child, caregiver, and teacher represents another goal (Griebel and Niesel 2015). The children should also get to know the new environment and unfamiliar processes and rules without time pressure (Bethke et al. 2009). The conception of the model also pursues the goal of showing employees in day care centers ways of acting in the settling process. Furthermore, it serves as a support for the teachers to make the caregivers aware that their accompaniment of the child during the settling period is important and it helps to guide the caregivers during this time (Laewen et al. 2015).

The basic goal of settling in is to establish a sustainable relationship between the teacher and the child while the caregiver is present. This relationship should have attachment-like qualities and offer the child security. The feeling of security through a good relationship with the teacher is the basis for successful educational processes in the day care center and a healthy start of the child in its new phase of life. In addition, the child should of course get to know the day care center with all its processes, rules, rituals, but also its people and rooms in peace and quiet. For the parents, the settling period offers a special form of insight into the day care center, which lays a good foundation for the following educational partnership (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

### ***Structure and action concept***

The structure of the Berlin Settling Model is shown in Figure 1. It includes a three-day basic phase, a first separation attempt on the fourth day, a shorter or longer settling, a stabilization phase, and a final phase. This table from infans serves as a compact summary and quick guide to the practical implementation of the Berlin Settling Model and is often also displayed as a large poster in the day care centers. From this, parents can always read the most important information about settling in in brief. For the teachers, there is special literature that describes the individual steps and phases in more detail.

There are different terminologies and interpretations of the Berlin Settling Model. Some authors, such as Dreyer (2017), divide it into five successive steps, which are referred to as phases.

At this point, it should be noted that the first phase, the so-called "preparation phase" (Dreyer 2017) is not named and highlighted as such in all textbooks. However, the contents of this phase are still described in these books, which is why this step of Dreyer's approach is presented as a separate phase. Other authors such as Braukhane and Knobloch break down the model into six steps (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011). In the following, both interpretations are contrasted.

**Figure 1: Structure of the Berlin Settling Model**

3 days basic phase	4.day separation attempt	Shorter settling	Longer settling	Stabilization phase	Closing phase
<p>The mother (or father) comes to the day care center together with the child (if possible always at the same time), stays together with the child in the group room for about 1 hour and then takes the child home again.</p> <p><b>Parents:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- rather passive</li> <li>- in no case urge the child to separate from him/her</li> <li>- always accept when the child seeks closeness. The <b>parents' task</b> is to be a "safe haven".</li> <li>- if possible, <b>do not</b> read, knit or play with other children. The child must feel that the mother's attention is there at all times.</li> </ul> <p><b>Notes for teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Careful contact <b>without pushing</b>. The best way to do this is through play activities or participation in the child's play.</li> <li>- Observation of behavior between mother and child. <b>Do not</b> attempt separation during these first days."</li> </ul>	<p>(if it is Monday, only on the 5th day).</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> preliminary decision on the duration of the settling period: a few minutes after arriving in the group room, the mother says goodbye to the child, leaves the room and stays nearby.</p> <p><b>The child's reactions</b> are the benchmark for continuing or stopping this separation attempt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Equanimous, continuing to be interested in the environment. Up to a maximum of 30 minutes extension of the separation.</li> <li>- This also applies if the child begins to cry, but is quickly and permanently calmed by the teacher.</li> <li>- If the child appears distraught after the mother has left (frozen posture) or begins to cry inconsolably, the mother must be brought back immediately.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Notes for teachers:</b></p> <p>Clear attempts by the children themselves to cope with stressful situations and not to turn to the mother, possibly even resistance to being taken in, few glances at the mother, and infrequent or rather random physical contact speak in favor of a <b>shorter</b> settling period, i.e. about 6 days.</p>	<p><b>Notes for teachers:</b></p> <p>Frequent eye and body contact with the mother and the fierce demand for the mother's return during the separation attempt on the 4th day are indications of the need for a <b>longer</b> settling period, i.e. approx. 2-3 weeks.</p> <p><b>It is necessary to wait a few days before the next separation attempt!</b></p>	<p>From the 4th day tries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the teacher to take over the care of the child from the mother (feeding, diapering, offering herself as a play partner)</li> <li>- the mother now more and more often leaves it to the teacher to react to the child's signals and only helps if the child does not yet accept the teacher. Only if the child allows itself to be comforted by the teacher during the separation attempt on the 4th day or reacts calmly to the separation, should the separation time be extended on the 5th day. On the 5th and 6th day, the mother's presence in the day care center is necessary so that she can be brought into the group room if necessary. If the child cannot be comforted on the 4th day, the mother should participate in the group activities on the 5th and 6th day as before and, depending on the child's condition, make another separation attempt on the 7th day.</li> </ul>	<p>The mother no longer stays at the day care center, but is available <b>at any time</b> if the viability of the new relationship with the teacher is not yet sufficient to special cases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The <b>settling period</b> is completed when the child has accepted the teacher as a "<b>secure base</b>" and allows her to comfort him.</li> <li>- This is the case, for example, when the child protests against the mother's departure (shows attachment behavior), but is quickly comforted by the teacher and plays in a good mood.</li> </ul>

The five phases of the Berlin Settling Model according to Dreyer are defined as follows (Dreyer 2017):

*Phase 1*

The preparatory phase begins before the start of the actual settling process and includes an exchange with the child's caregivers about the transition. (Dreyer 2017) The caregivers receive information in advance from the day care center staff about the procedure and the importance of the child being accompanied by a caregiver. In addition, they are advised to forego vacations or stressful situations, such as a move, for the duration of the settling period (Bethke et al. 2009). In addition, they learn in this conversation that if the child is sick at the beginning of the settling period or a few days before, the start of the settling period will be postponed. This ensures that the child is fully recovered during the settling process and is not impaired in health. The early, personal exchange of information with the caregivers aims to reduce their uncertainties and worries as well as to make clear the function of the accompanying caregiver in the settling process (Dreyer 2017).

*Phase 2*

Following the preparation phase, the actual settling process starts with the basic phase. This usually lasts three days, but can be extended to five or six days if necessary. Especially with younger children, the phase is often extended.

In this phase, the child spends one to a maximum of two hours each day in the group room of the day care center, accompanied by a caregiver. It is crucial that the caregiver does not leave the child alone in the group room, so that no separation takes place during the first three days. In addition, the caregiver should not prevent any attempts by the child to contact the teacher (Niemann 2011). The caregivers have a more passive role, so they should not seek proximity to the child on their own initiative, so that it is possible for the child to get to know the unfamiliar teacher (Dreyer 2017). At the same time, however, they act as attentive observers, so that they can react to the child's approaches (Niemann 2011). The caregivers provide the children with a secure base in the unfamiliar environment, to which they can return in order to gain security.

The teacher can approach the child through joint play activities and thus try to establish contact carefully (Laewen et al. 2015). They should identify the play activities the child enjoys and respond to the child's approaches so that the child is encouraged (Dreyer 2017). However, teachers should take care that the child is not harassed and that the teacher restrains herself in her actions. It is important to welcome the child and the caregiver in a friendly manner every day so that the child experiences harmonious interaction (Niemann 2011).

The three days of the basic phase are structured in the same way, with the only difference that on day two and three the child is fed or changed by the caregiver in the presence of the teacher. Recurring routines allow the child to grasp the structure and experience continuity (Dreyer 2017). During these first three days, the teacher observes the child's behavior in order to be able to conclude whether a longer settling period is necessary (Laewen et al. 2015).

### *Phase 3*

The next step is the first attempt to separate the caregiver and the child and is usually completed on the fourth day. If the fourth day is a Monday, the separation attempt does not occur until the fifth day (Laewen et al. 2015). No separations are initiated on Mondays, as the intervening weekend represents too long a break during which the child was not in the day care center (Niemann 2011).

Shortly after the caregiver and the child have arrived in the group room, they wait until the child has turned to a new situation (Dreyer 2017). Only then does a brief farewell occur and the caregiver removes himself from the group room, even if the child expresses dissatisfaction. The child's behavior determines the duration of the separation situation. If it is possible to comfort the child, the time of separation comprises 30 minutes, otherwise the caregiver re-enters the group room after approximately three minutes (Laewen et al. 2015). Upon return, the child usually tries to establish physical closeness and the caregiver is able to reassure the child. If the child has not accepted the separation situation, further separation should not be done until the following week. The total settling period is prolonged and will last three to four weeks (Dreyer 2017). If children have an insecure-avoidant or an insecure-ambivalent attachment to the caregiver, a shorter settling period of one and a half to two weeks is sufficient (Dreyer 2017, Bethke et al. 2009). The decision about the length of the settling period on day four is based on observations of the child's behavior during the first three days as well as during the separation attempt on the part of the teacher. However, teachers should correct this decision if the child's behavior changes in the following days and eventually points to the opposite duration (Laewen et al. 2015).

### *Phase 4*

Following the three-day basic phase and the subsequent first accepted separation attempt, the stabilization phase begins on the fifth day. This usually lasts two days, but is extended if a longer settling period is generally planned (Niemann 2011).

In the presence of the caregiver, the teacher diapers and feeds the child. In addition, the teacher assumes the role of a play partner (Laewen et al. 2015). The caregiver gives the teacher the task of responding to the child's signals and only offers assistance if the child does not yet recognize her as a secure base (Dreyer 2017). In this phase, the duration of the separation situation is increased. Short goodbyes, completed identically every day, make the separation easier for the child. During the separation situation, the premises of the day care center represent the place of stay for the caregiver, so that he or she can quickly return to the group room if necessary. The duration of the separation does not exceed one hour (Laewen et al. 2015).

If the child accepts the renewed separations, the child is put to sleep, provided that it is planned to care for the child in the day care center for the entire day after the settling period has been completed. Putting the child to sleep is done by the caregiver accompanied by the teacher. The same applies to the waking process of the child. If the child still seems satisfied at the end of the stabilization phase, the caregiver can leave the day care center. However, the caregiver should be contacted by telephone (Dreyer 2017).

In the case of children who go through a longer settling process and do not initially experience any separations, an attempt is made to develop the relationship with the teacher to such an extent that the child can be fed and changed by the teacher in the presence of the caregiver on the eighth day (Dreyer 2017).

If there is then another attempt at separation that is not accepted, another attempt in the following days is waived again. If there is still no improvement in the situation in week three, a discussion with the caregiver takes place. Possibly an improvement could be achieved if the caregiver is exchanged (e.g. change of the parent). As a rule, the children stay in the day care center for the most part during the third week without the accompaniment of a caregiver. Thus, the duration of settling for children with a longer settling period is a maximum of three to four weeks (Laewen et al. 2015).

#### *Phase 5*

The final phase of settling according to the Berlin Model is the final phase. This phase, in which the child stays in the day care center without a caregiver, lasts two weeks (Dreyer 2017). The beginning of the final phase and thus the end of the settling period is characterized by the fact that the teacher is able to comfort the child and is recognized by him or her as a play partner as well as a "secure base". However, it is important that the caregivers can be reached by telephone, as situations (e.g., injuries) can arise in which the child can only be comforted by them (Niemann 2011).

Within the day care center, it must be organized who will substitute for the child's primary caregiver if the latter is not available. In the first period, the child is confronted with unfamiliar rules and daily structures to which he or she must become accustomed (Dreyer 2017). Due to this, it takes several weeks until the child has become a stable, full-fledged group member (Dreyer 2017). It often makes sense and is beneficial for the settled children if they only spend half the day in the day care center in the first weeks after the completion of the settling, even if a longer care time is generally scheduled (Laewen et al. 2015).

According to Braukhane and Knobloch (2011), the Berlin Settling Model is implemented in six steps:

#### *Step 1: Timely information to parents*

Parents are informed about the importance and the process of settling in at an early stage. Ideally, the importance of the parents' presence is clearly explained to them in writing, as well as the planned, detailed procedure - in accordance with the conceptual anchoring - and the parental role during the accompaniment of the child (keyword "safe haven"). Parents should plan two to four weeks for the settling period and not schedule (short) vacations or special stressful situations (e.g., moving house, birth of a sibling) during this time (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

A good start is easier if the teacher already has information about the child. A questionnaire that the parents can fill out at home is a good way to do this. Special preferences of the child for toys and food, but also the first use of words help the teacher to establish a good contact with the child, e.g. sometimes the teat has its own name. Knowing what allergies the child has is critical, as is knowing who is authorized to pick up. The extent to which this questionnaire is placed in the office or later perhaps even in the child's portfolio depends on the content (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

#### *Step 2: The three-day basic phase*

The caregiver should stay in the day care center with the child for one to two hours. During this time, the caregiver is passive but attentive to the child's signals. He or she is the child's "safe haven," i.e., he or she does not follow the child, but is always easily accessible and attentive (reading the newspaper and playing with other children is very counterproductive here). The teacher carefully tries to establish contact with the child through play activities. There are no attempts at separation. The mother/father carries out the care routines. The staffing ratio should be adapted to the special situation of settling, so that the teacher has time for the child and can observe the interaction between parent and child (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

In infants, the sense of smell is very well developed and represents an intense access to the world. Therefore, the teacher should ideally wear no perfume or only a very discreet scent that is consistent so that the child can associate it with the person (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

An object that smells like mother or father (comforter, worn T-shirt) can make it easier for the child to settle. Especially during the first sleep attempts, it is usually very helpful for the child to snuggle up in it (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

*Step 3: The first separation attempt*

On the fourth day, the caregiver leaves the group room after saying goodbye to the child. If the child can be quickly calmed by the caregiver or is rather calm, the first separation period should be 30 minutes. If, on the other hand, the child seems distraught or begins to cry without being quickly comforted, the separation period should not be longer than two to three minutes. Experience has shown that the child's behavior in this situation has a certain predictive value for the further course of the settling period (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

*Step 4: The length of settling*

Securely attached children (frequent eye contact with the caregiver, vigorous crying when being left and open approach/body contact when the caregiver returns) need a longer settling period of two to three or even four weeks. Insecurely attached children (depending on attachment type, rather indifferent at separation and return of the caregiver or great excitement at separation but ambivalent behavior at return) tend to need a shorter settling period of about one and a half to two weeks (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

*Step 5: The stabilization phase*

The stabilization phase begins on the fifth day (the sixth if the fifth day is a Monday). The teacher increasingly takes over the care of the child (feeding, diapering, etc.) - only in the presence of the caregiver. She specifically offers herself as a play partner and reacts to the child's signals. The separation times are extended daily, taking into account the needs of the child. If the child does not yet accept the separation, it should wait until the second week before a new separation. However, a new step is never started on a Monday (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

According to the infans concept, children can also sleep in the day care center from the fifth day, but they are put down by the caregiver, accompanied by the teacher, and when they wake up, the caregiver should greet the child. Practical reports speak of letting the children sleep in the day care center only a little later; then with the support of the teacher, so that they can develop their own sleep system or ritual with the child (Bethke et al. 2009).

*Step 6: Conclusion of the settling*

Settling in is considered complete when the child allows itself to be comforted by the teacher, but is also basically willing and happy to come to the day care center. This can be easily recognized by the fact that the child has fun and enjoys everyday life, actively participates in group processes, knows the typical rules of the house, but also questions them from time to time (Bethke et al. 2009).

If we compare the contents of the phases and steps of the practical implementation variations of the Berlin Model according to Dreyer (2017) and Braukhane and Knobloch (2011) described above, we find that they are very similar. The different names of the individual phases and steps could be accepted as a free interpretation of the underlying Berlin Model. This free interpretation is also often found in practice. Many day care centers make their own visualization collages of the Berlin Model by adding pictures of the children, the parents, the educators and the care rooms. This makes the process seem even friendlier and more trusting. New names for the individual steps are also created in the process.

The children who are new to the day care center need a framework that is as constant and stable as possible. A regular and thus predictable daily routine is important for children to get used to the many changes in their lives. The flood of new stimuli (smell, noise, etc.) should be kept to a minimum, without the routines for the new children being completely different from normal everyday life. For example, excursions or special activities (e.g. carnival during the settling period) should be avoided if possible. The child should bring a so-called transitional object (e.g., the favorite teddy bear, a cuddle cloth) with him or her to the day care center to calm him or her down when stressed. A small photo album of the child, with pictures of their own family, pets, etc., can also ease the transition. It can be used as a conversation starter and the child has a 'piece of support' with them, so to speak (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

The educator must inform the parents in advance about the process and explain the expectations and tasks placed on them during the settling period. In this way, she gives the parents time to organize.

For the settling period, she must plan and coordinate the day-to-day life of the day care center in such a way that she has the freedom to be there completely for the child settling in and his parents. The next steps of the settling process are flexibly adapted to the needs of the child and the accompanying parent. This is done in close consultation with the parent. Thus, the Berlin Settling Model according to infans is only an orientation (Laewen et al. 1994). For the parents, too, day care is often something new, so it is also a settling for them. It is the goal of the educator during the settling period to become the "safe haven" while the parents are away. To do this, she must sensitively adjust her approach to the child and its accompanying parent. Through transparency and openness of her actions during the settling period, the educator usually lays the foundation for a future harmonious educational partnership.

Teachers should try to adapt their working conditions beforehand so that, among other things, a colleague is available for the group and arrangements for parent meetings are made in good time. In the interest of all involved, the parent meetings should take place in a separate room, without disturbances from telephones or other people, and ideally without the child settling in. This extra time increases the chances that the child will be able to settle in well at the day care center, that the parents will be able to let go with peace of mind, and that the stresses and strains will be reduced for the teachers as well (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

In order for parents to facilitate their child's entry into the day care center, the settling period should not immediately coincide with other major changes, such as a sibling birth or a move. Unfortunately, this is not always avoidable in practice. Family vacations should also be planned so that they do not coincide with the adjustment period or shortly thereafter, in order to avoid exposing the child to additional stress and to allow the child to fully settle into the day care center. Only in this way can the child become accustomed to the fact that the stay at the day care center is an integral part of the daily routine.

The settling parent must be present in the room for the first few days so that the child can retreat to his or her "safe haven" at any time. Especially at the beginning of the settling period, this is associated with considerable time and financial effort for the parents (travel, staying on site for an hour, return trip) and definitely requires a restructuring of the usual daily routine, for example, getting up earlier. In the later course of the settling period, the amount of time spent on site by the accompanying parent increases as the separation times are extended. It is important that the parents arrive at the day care center at the agreed times, as the educator plans the daily routine accordingly and cannot withdraw from the group activities at any time.

The educator plans a period of time to be able to concentrate completely on the settling child and his or her accompanying parent. Another important aspect is that this makes it easier for parents to introduce their child to the group. As far as possible, the child arrives in familiar situations. These serve as orientation and give the child a structure for everyday life (Laewen et al. 1994). During the first days of settling in, parents may have to "translate" their child for the educator. This continues only until the educator knows the child better and understands the signals and expressions sent (Beier 2004).

While their child is attending the day care center, parents want to be assured of their child's well-being. They want to leave the day care center with a positive feeling. This requires that they are taken seriously and noticed with their wishes and concerns. Here, an intensive and honest exchange with the educators is required from the very beginning, also on the part of the parents (Kobelt Neuhaus 2014).

In order to go through a successful settling period and thus lay the foundation for a future harmonious educational partnership, parents must in any case be willing to place their child in the day care center. Only in this way can they convey their goodwill to the day care center toward their child (Laewen et al. 1994). If the parents feel they are in good hands, the child will sense this as well.

For parents it is helpful to get a lot of information, but also support to move safely in the day care center. For example, they should know when to take off their shoes, which chair or place on the floor is most convenient, and where parents can best stay when the first separation attempts are made. The day care center may also be able to provide a cell phone to support parent accessibility during the initial period (Braukhane and Knobloch 2011).

#### **4 The Munich Settling Model**

##### ***Basis of the model***

The Munich Model represents the second important settling model. It incorporates more strongly the findings from transition research and assumes that all those involved in the settling process play an important role from the very beginning and that they must be actively involved in it. The children's group plays a central role in the well-being of the child being settled. The basis is the concept of transition, a concept of coping with the transition. The focus is on the "strong" child who can cope with these transitions if he or she receives support in the process. If this transition is successful, it is assumed that the child is strengthened as a result and will also successfully manage further transitions. In addition, the Munich Settling Model does not focus so much on the teacher who is settling the child in, but assumes that children can also build a good relationship with several people, as in this case not only the teacher but the entire group of children are meant (Dreyer 2013).

The Munich Settling Model is based on the results of the scientific project led by Prof. E. Kuno Beller in Munich from 1987 to 1991 and was further developed in theory and practice in the following years (Winner and Erndt-Doll 2013). Under the leadership of Kuno Beller, the project with the programmatic name "Model Project Early Support of Very Young Children by Supporting Young Families in their Educational Tasks and by Pedagogical Qualification of Day Care Centers" initiated a quality offensive in almost all day care centers in Munich. Good pedagogical practice was developed and tested in the everyday life of the crèches as well as theoretically founded, evaluated and documented (Beller 1994). The basis was the "Berlin Model of Early Childhood Education", which Kuno Beller had developed with staff at the FU Berlin (Beller 1998).

Like early childhood education as a whole, the Munich Settling Model has been influenced by many different theories, and this process is by no means complete. Among other things, the Munich Settling Model has been strongly influenced by Reggio pedagogy. The child is perceived as a competent, individual subject who also actively participates in the settling process together with others. From birth at the latest, the human being is an individual subject, rich in competencies and possibilities, by no means passive and absolutely helpless. The infant powerfully expresses his individual needs, actively and curiously explores his environment. From the beginning, he or she actively enters into relationships, he or she is compassionate and social. Naturally, infants need a community. They cannot survive without the support of others, but this is also true for adults. Adults are also helpless without a community to support them. Even adults cannot survive a complete breakdown in communication. Helplessness is not a characteristic of a developmental phase; people always become helpless when they are objectified. People can best develop and qualitatively advance their abilities when they experience themselves as subjects and can actively shape their development (Winner 2015).

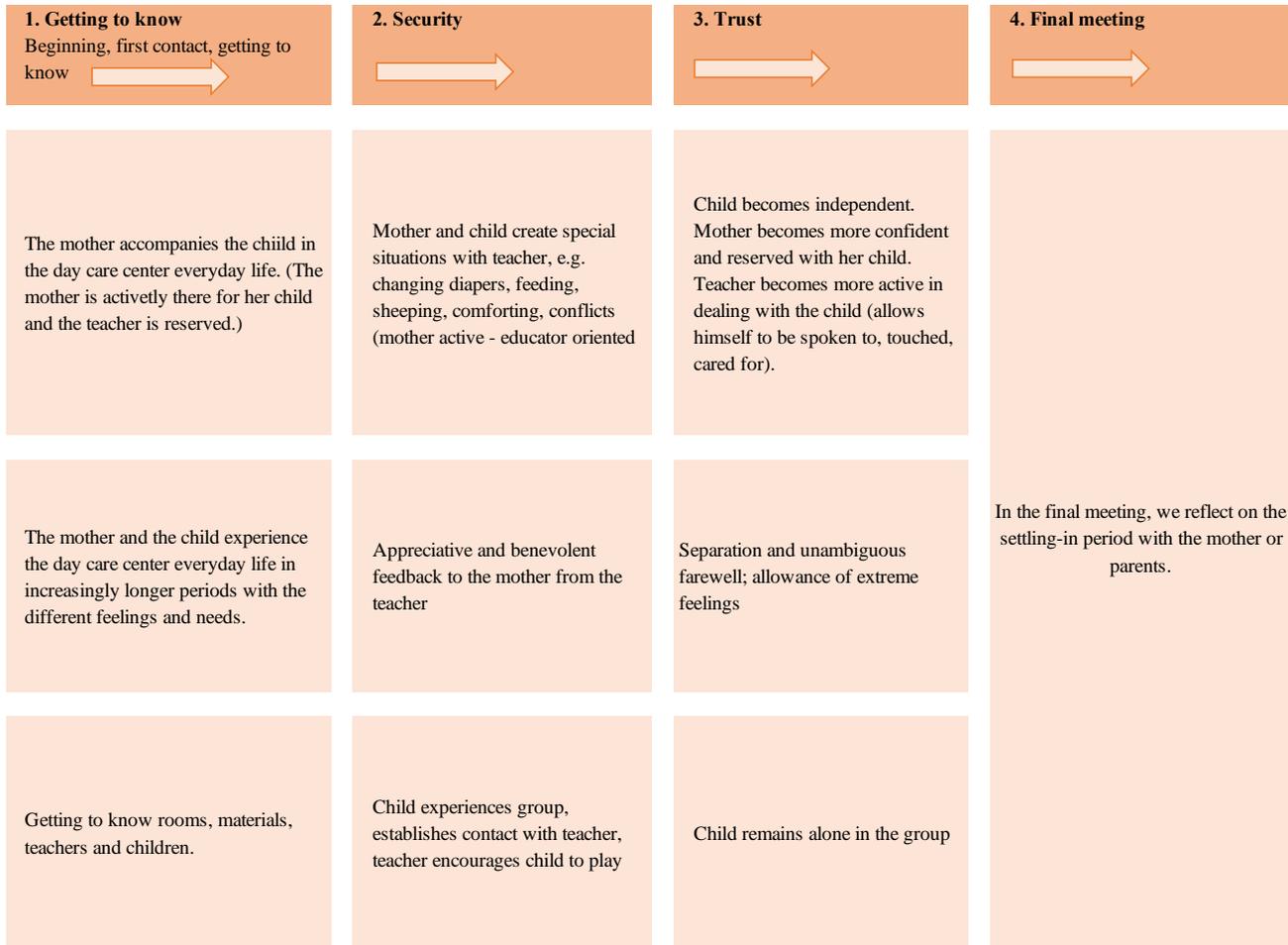
According to infant research, there are no biologically determined behaviors that automatically indicate a specific motive, an inner experience. Infants cry for different reasons, they cling to objects to explore them, they look and listen and sometimes they smile inside themselves. So it is necessary to get to know the individual child in order to interpret his or her behaviors. Careful observation and reflective assessment therefore take on professional importance (Winner 2015). In this context, Sander says: "As far as I am concerned, this contradiction begins with the indispensable fact that our long-term study has hammered into us: the singularity, the distinctiveness of each individual, of each newborn, of each developmental course" (Sander 2009).

##### ***Objective of the model***

The following goals for settling result from the above theoretical considerations: All persons affected by the settling actively shape this time and support each other in coping with this transitional phase. Only when the day care center no longer represents a "foreign situation" for the child do the parents say goodbye to their child. The settling child actively participates in deciding the course of events, copes with the transition at his or her own pace, and learns to manage it well. Settling is therefore educational time (Winner 2015).

The toddler is not settled, it settles actively. The children (groups) in the day care center are considered the "first educators". They also play a prominent role during the settling period. Parents, teachers and children meet as equals, all competences should become visible and effective in the pedagogical process. The Reggians do not describe their pedagogy as a concept, but as an experience. And so the Munich Settling Model does not want to be understood as a recipe that has to be implemented in everyday life, but as a model and source of inspiration from which teachers can draw and develop their own concept for action (Winner 2015).

**Figure 2: Phases of the Munich Settling Model**



**Structure and action concept**

The settling period of the Munich Model, which usually lasts three to four weeks, is divided into five phases, whereby, similar to the Berlin settling concept, the preparation phase is not always explicitly defined or depicted as such. Figure 2 shows the five phases of the model, with getting to know - security - trust comprising the core period of settling (Winner 2015).

Settling takes place in the everyday life of the day care center, and the group of children is actively involved in shaping it (Winner 2015). The five phases of the Munich Settling Model are described in detail below:

*Phase 1: Preparation phase*

The purpose of the preparation phase is for the parents and the reference educator to inform each other about the child's habits, attitudes and expectations, and the statutes and conception of the day care center, among other things. The reference educator should definitely be included in these discussions, because the parents are in transition and therefore have to cope with the double challenge of managing the transition and supporting their child in the process. The reference educator becomes a "safe haven" for the parents in these preliminary discussions; they turn to her if they become uncertain or have questions during the getting-to-know-you phase. Evaluation and reflection are also important, especially for the adults involved, and serve to further develop the educational partnership between parents and the day care center (Winner 2015).

*Phase 2: Getting to know each other phase*

During the settling phase, which lasts about one week, the mother and/or father visit the day care center together with their child to get to know the daily routine. In some day care centers, this phase is also called a "taster week". In the presence of the parents, the child should calmly find out what this day care center/day care center has to offer.

In order for the child to understand procedures, he or she must be allowed to run through them repeatedly. This requires longer periods of attendance and several days. It is important that the child is allowed to explore the day care center according to his or her interests and pace. The child is invited to participate in a friendly manner, but is neither encouraged nor pressured to do so. Humans are self-sufficient learners from birth; anything new triggers a strong impulse to explore. Curiosity and exploratory behavior are among the basic abilities of humans. At the same time, new situations unsettle us. "Will I be able to master this situation, or will this overwhelm me?" Curiosity and uncertainty are thus the two sides of the urge to explore (Winner 2015).

The presence of the parents is indispensable for the child in this phase of getting to know the world. The parents have so far enabled and secured this exploration of the world. It was the parents who offered the child objects to explore or withheld them if this object was not suitable for exploration. So the child can be assured that the parents will continue to play this role in the new environment. They will say "no" if there is danger here. Therefore, there must be no separations between parent and child at this stage. The danger of a loss of control and the resulting panic is simply too great (Winner 2015).

It is also important that the child can really experience everyday life, because in a sense it informs itself through two channels, on the one hand the child itself explores the materials, the rooms, the interactions, on the other hand it observes the other children and the teachers and discovers from these models what it can expect here in the future (Winner 2015).

In this way, the child can see that the teachers take on the role that he or she has previously known from the parents, namely enabling experiences and setting limits when necessary. The child and parents can observe from the teacher-child interactions whether children are perceived as subjects here and how their individual needs are met. It is therefore primarily the other children who accept and integrate "the newcomer" or "the newcomer" into their group and show them that it is possible to feel comfortable and develop well here. But the "old" children also need this phase of getting to know each other. They, too, want to experience that they are still subjects and can count on their teachers. Again and again, settling in is made more difficult because the teacher focuses only on the new child and the "old" children are supposed to be considerate above all (Winner 2015).

*Phase 3: Safety phase*

Also in the second week, the parents stay together with their child for several hours a day in the day care center. During the settling phase, the teacher was able to observe how the child approaches new things and new people, which situations stimulate it, which children it makes contact with, when it becomes tired and hungry, which situations perhaps even frighten it, which materials particularly motivate it, in which areas of development the child puts a lot of energy, i.e. it shows its current strengths. The teacher can now use this knowledge to show the child that they are the person in charge here, that they can competently accompany development. Now the educator actively approaches the child and increasingly takes over the tasks that were reserved for the parents in the first week. She now supports the child with eating, personal hygiene, resting needs and exploration. All of this is done under the benevolent gaze of the parents, who signal to their child that they agree with this division of labor (Winner 2015).

The other children in the day care center are an important resource during this phase if they are actively involved in the settling process. The children demonstrate to the new child that he or she can feel safe and comfortable here and that he or she can experience something with other children that adults cannot offer. Children need peers and that in every phase of life (Winner 2015). According to Schneider and Wüstenberg (2014) children in the first three years of life, especially if they know each other well and meet regularly, seek contact, imitate each other, develop their own games, and encourage each other to have more and qualitatively new experiences.

A child alone would not run, hop, fall down, stand up, dance, sing, and investigate things as much for a long time. Learning from each other is a holistic process, touching emotional, social, cognitive, and physical areas of their development simultaneously (Schneider and Wüstenberg 2014).

Observing the children's group also offers an opportunity for parents. The "adultistic" view is usually put into perspective. Parents thus understand more easily why children want and need to move so much and why bruises and dirty clothes are part of growing up (Winner 2015).

Security comes from being able to anticipate events. After about two weeks, most children know the routine of everyday life in the day care center. They can now anticipate and also influence the processes. Trust can now develop (Winner 2015).

#### *Phase 4: Trust phase*

Trust grows when the child can be sure that everyone in this day care center will act in his or her best interest, even if there are conflicts or minor accidents. It is precisely in difficult situations that trust develops. The child now feels that the boundaries that adults set here are functional and not arbitrary. That all children are protected, that there is a community here that is led by adults and co-created by children. Now the child can let the parents go without this being a breach of trust. The child now has the confidence to spend the day here without parents. With such young children, careful professional observation is necessary in order to be able to interpret the child's state of mind correctly (Winner and Erndt-Doll 2013). The parents also know that their child is in good hands here and that the child is provided with complementary family experiences that he or she would not be able to have at home. They, too, can now say goodbye to their child for some time with peace of mind (Winner 2015).

Separations usually mean stress. This concept of action offers no guarantee that the parents' parting will be without tears or angry protest. It can also be difficult for the parents to say goodbye. But neither the child's nor the parent's behavior allows conclusions to be drawn about the parent-child relationship; it is neither a demonstration of love nor a particular sign of bravery. Children as well as parents are individuals and behave very differently. What is important is that the situation has been talked through beforehand with those involved, that the criteria for the decision as to why the parents can now leave is understandable to all involved. The parents can also explain this to their child in this way, even if the child does not understand the words, he or she understands the intention. "My parents are not leaving for no reason, I can trust that this is okay and that they will be back."

The trust phase and thus the settling period is completed when the child agrees with this decision of the adults, when he or she calms down again after saying goodbye, resumes activities, goes into contact with other children. If this is not the case, parents should remain at the day care center for additional days. It is by no means the case that the child then gets used to the parents' presence and they can then never leave (Winner 2014). Usually a few more days are enough and the child can let his parents go. After all, it has experienced that its statements are heard and taken seriously. This strengthens trust (Zeller 2013). This shows how important the image of the competent child is for pedagogical action (Winner 2015).

In the trust phase, the first separation takes place. Now the child knows that he or she is in good hands at the day care center and that he or she has contacts there who can help or comfort him or her in difficult situations. The parents also have a good feeling when they leave the child at the day care center.

At the first attempt, the mother or father says goodbye for 30-60 minutes. The attempt is also not interrupted if the child does not calm down. This is to give him or her the opportunity to process the pain of separation. If the separation has worked, the child calms down again after a few minutes and starts to play with other children. Thus, the separation time can be extended over the next few days.

#### *Phase 5: Phase of joint evaluation and reflection.*

In the weeks after settling in, parents who previously cared for the child can resume their employment. If they stay at home, they get used to the new daily routine and the gain in free time. The child takes the day care center routine for granted and enjoys interacting with his or her new caregivers and the other children.

After a few weeks, a parent meeting takes place in which the teachers can openly discuss with the parents the process of settling in, how they felt then and now, the child's further development, and the new daily routine (Spieß 2016).

During the entire settling period, there are repeated conversations between parents and the teachers in which the current status of the settling is discussed and you as a parent also receive tips on how to deal with your child in order to make the transition process positive.

If the settling is considered complete, there is a final evaluation, which should lay the foundation for further cooperation. The duration of settling according to the Munich Model can be up to four or five weeks, depending on the situation.

## **5 A comparison of the Berlin and Munich settling models**

Based on the attachment theory, infans has developed the Berlin Settling Model for settling in crèches and day care in order to create a good transition for children into day care (Laewen et al. 2003). Here, the support of the attachment figure, i.e., accompanying the child to the childcare day care center for several days, is indispensable. The period of settling should be individually adapted, but the basic phase should never be less than three days. Depending on the quality of the bond, a longer settling period (for securely bonded children) is assumed to be about three to four weeks; even for a shorter settling period (for insecurely bonded children or even siblings), everyone involved should expect at least one and a half to two weeks of settling time. A settling period should never be waived in order to spare the child the stress of the situation, but also other negative consequences. For example, empirical studies have found more frequent and longer periods of illness in unsettled children, as well as anxious behavior and developmental delays (Laewen et al. 2003).

Laewen, Andres and Hédervári point out that many years of practical experience with the model make it clear that a positive response can be noted from the children's caregivers. Overall, the model seems to provide a reliable basis for designing the reception of children so that hardly any additions have been necessary in the last two decades (Laewen et al. 2015). To date, however, no targeted studies on the effectiveness of the Berlin Model are available (Dreyer 2017).

Characteristic of the Munich Settling Model is that all those involved, especially the children who already attend the day care center, are actively involved in shaping the transition, and parents and children experience the daily routine of the day care center for about two weeks before a first separation takes place (Winner 2015).

The action concept is divided into three core phases: Getting to know each other - Security - Trust. Goals are linked to each phase. Depending on age, family situation, conditions in the day care center, these goals are achieved methodically in different ways (Winner 2015).

A development-oriented and individualized settling period is a fundamental prerequisite for children to have a good start in the day care center and to benefit from the educational offerings as well as from the exchange with the other children.

A good staffing ratio and highly qualified teachers who work according to a recognized settling concept make it easier for children to get used to the new situation (Dreyer 2013).

Van Dieken (2012) states that practical experience with both the Berlin and Munich Models is very positive. With the gentle and cautious settling model, which is based on the two models, children show less stress. However, there have not yet been any systematic studies to determine which of the two settling models produces better results. In practice, successful settling is characterized by the child being comforted by the teacher after separation, then curiously exploring the room and taking an interest in the other children, eating together with the others, and allowing the educator to change him or her and put him or her to sleep without fears (Dreyer 2013). Originally, both settling models were developed for the crèche area and are currently used just as much in the kindergarten area.

The cautious approach as well as the parental work within the framework of the settling have a high relevance in both models and yet these are different. Table 1 compares the Berlin and Munich Model. It provides an overview of the fundamental differences between the two models, especially with regard to theoretical reference, methodological approach, family involvement, phases and duration.

**Table 1: Comparison of the Berlin and Munich settling models**

	Berlin Settling Model	Munich Settling Model
Founder:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beate Andres, Hans-Joachim Laewen and Prof. Dr. Éva Hédervári-Heller in the 1980s at the Berlin infans-Institut für angewandte Sozialisationsforschung/Frühe Kindheit e.V. (Institute for Applied Socialization Research/Early Childhood).</li> <li>• Preliminary work: Prof. E. Kuno Beller (FU Berlin) in Munich</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prof. E. Kuno Beller in Munich from 1987 to 1991</li> <li>• Further development Dr. Anna Winner and Elisabeth Erndt-Doll</li> </ul>
Theoretical reference:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethological findings</li> <li>• Attachment theory: secure (attachment) relationship as a prerequisite for successful processes</li> <li>• Brain Research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ecopsychological findings</li> <li>• Brain Research</li> <li>• Findings from transition research: settling as coping with transitions</li> </ul>
Methodological approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual settling</li> <li>• Central: Designing the settling process as a relationship triangle (child, caregiver, teacher)</li> <li>• Cooperation with all stakeholders</li> <li>• Slowly increasing periods of absence of the caregiver</li> <li>• Timing of separation depends on attachment quality and child's behavior</li> <li>• Settling is complete when the child recognizes the teacher as a "safe haven".</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress reduction for all involved through gradual settling</li> <li>• Focus: "the strong/competent child" as an active cope gets used to the group of children (and not vice versa)</li> </ul>
Phases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation phase</li> <li>• three-day basic phase</li> <li>• first separation attempt</li> <li>• Stabilization phase</li> <li>• Closing phase</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation phase</li> <li>• Get-to-know phase</li> <li>• Safety phase</li> <li>• Trust phase</li> <li>• Phase of joint evaluation and reflection</li> </ul>
Family involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform parents early on about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ importance of settling</li> <li>○ importance of their presence</li> <li>○ their role for the child</li> <li>○ the process of settling</li> <li>○ importance of building a relationship with the teacher</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Active involvement of parents in the settling process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants can experience and shape the settling process actively, adaptively and successfully</li> <li>• Regular parent meetings during the settling period (not only initial and final meetings)</li> <li>• Settling notebook for parents</li> </ul>
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-3/4 weeks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2-4/5 weeks</li> </ul>

Application area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crèche and kindergarten</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crèche and kindergarten</li> </ul>
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Considered the oldest model, often tested and very reliable.</li> <li>• Good overview due to clear phase structure.</li> <li>• Good for working parents who don't have as much time for a very intensive settling period.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The concept actively involves the children and parents in the settling process.</li> <li>• Regular parent meetings to provide feedback on settling in.</li> </ul>
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For children in part-time care, the model must be set longer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very long and intensive settling period, which poses time problems for working parents</li> </ul>

It is not possible to give a general answer as to which model is more suitable for a child or a particular age. Every child is different and every settling process is individual. Settling in day care centers is influenced by numerous factors: age, developmental stage of the child, existing separation experiences, parents' time resources (many have to return to work quickly or take care of younger siblings) or the framework conditions of the respective day care center. For this reason, hybrid settling models are also found in practice, which combine elements of the Berlin and Munich Settling Model.

**6 Conclusion**

In this article, I analyze the two most important settling models in Germany: the Berlin Model and the Munich Model. It is very important for the child that his transition from the family to the day care center is accompanied by a professional settling process and that his individual needs are taken into account. Settling in is a very sensitive phase in the child's life, which plays a decisive role in its further development. A successful settling encourages the child and a failed settling can have a negative impact on the health and even the development of the child.

The Berlin Model is based on ethological findings, attachment theory and the results of brain research. The focus is on the relationship triangle between the child, the parents and the teachers. The time of separation is determined individually according to the quality of the bond between mother and child. After a few attempts at separation, the settling process is considered complete when the child can be comforted and fed by the teacher/educator.

The Munich Model is based on ecopsychological findings, results of brain research and findings of transition research. The focus is on "the strong/competent child" as an active cope who settles to the group of children (and not vice versa). Stress reduction for all involved is achieved through gradual settling.

The advantages of the Berlin Model are the many years of positive practical experience; clear phase structure, the child sets the pace, good for working parents who do not have so much time for a very intensive settling. The advantages of the Munich Model are the active involvement of the children and the parents in the settling process with purely both the regular parent meetings as feedback on the settling process.

It is very difficult to say in advance which of the two models is more suitable for a child. It is much more important that the parents deal with the topic of settling and consciously decide on one of the models that they personally favor and can or want to handle better in terms of time. The choice of day care center including staff, concept and location should also be carefully considered by the parents. If all of the above factors are right and the parents feel comfortable, their well-being will be transferred to the child and will support his or her settling enormously. The teachers and the whole group will also benefit from the trust and positive mood of the family, which in turn can also have a very positive influence on the settling process.

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## 8 About the Author(s)

Michaela Ernstberger is doing her doctorate at the University of Sofia in the field of preschool education. This article is part of her dissertation on "Settling models and standards for children with a migration background in the German education system with a focus on the state of Bavaria".

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