



Say Goodbye to the Little Bear

When your baby resists putting a toy away, turn the goodbye into a predictable routine that acknowledges the feeling and helps the transition.

Helps Your Child Grow



Emotional & Behavioral Self-Regulation

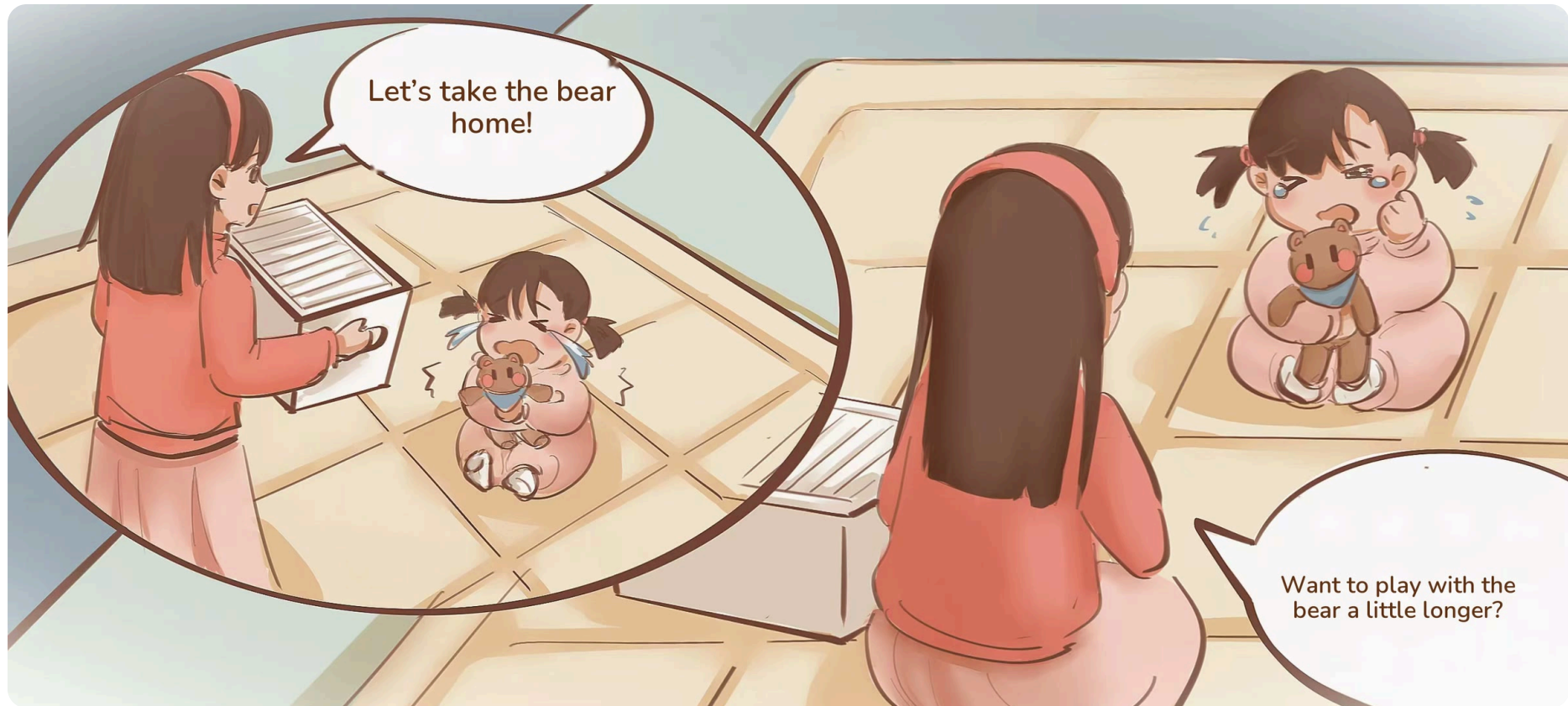
When you acknowledge your baby's feelings, offer comfort, and redirect attention as needed, they experience moving from distress toward calm with your support.



Mom's love

What You'll Need

No materials needed.



Notice Your Baby's Emotions

If your baby cries and resists putting the toys away, crouch down, meet their eyes with a gentle expression, and put their feelings into words. Let them know you understand how they feel.

Observations

- Cries loudly and resists putting the toy away
- Looks toward you while crying

Tips

- Give your baby advance notice before cleanup: "In five minutes, it will be time to say goodbye to Teddy." The warning can make the transition easier.
- Make cleanup part of the story: send the toys home or help each toy find its family.
- Abruptly taking a favorite toy away can make the transition harder and interfere with the sense of security you are building together.



Hold the Limit Gently

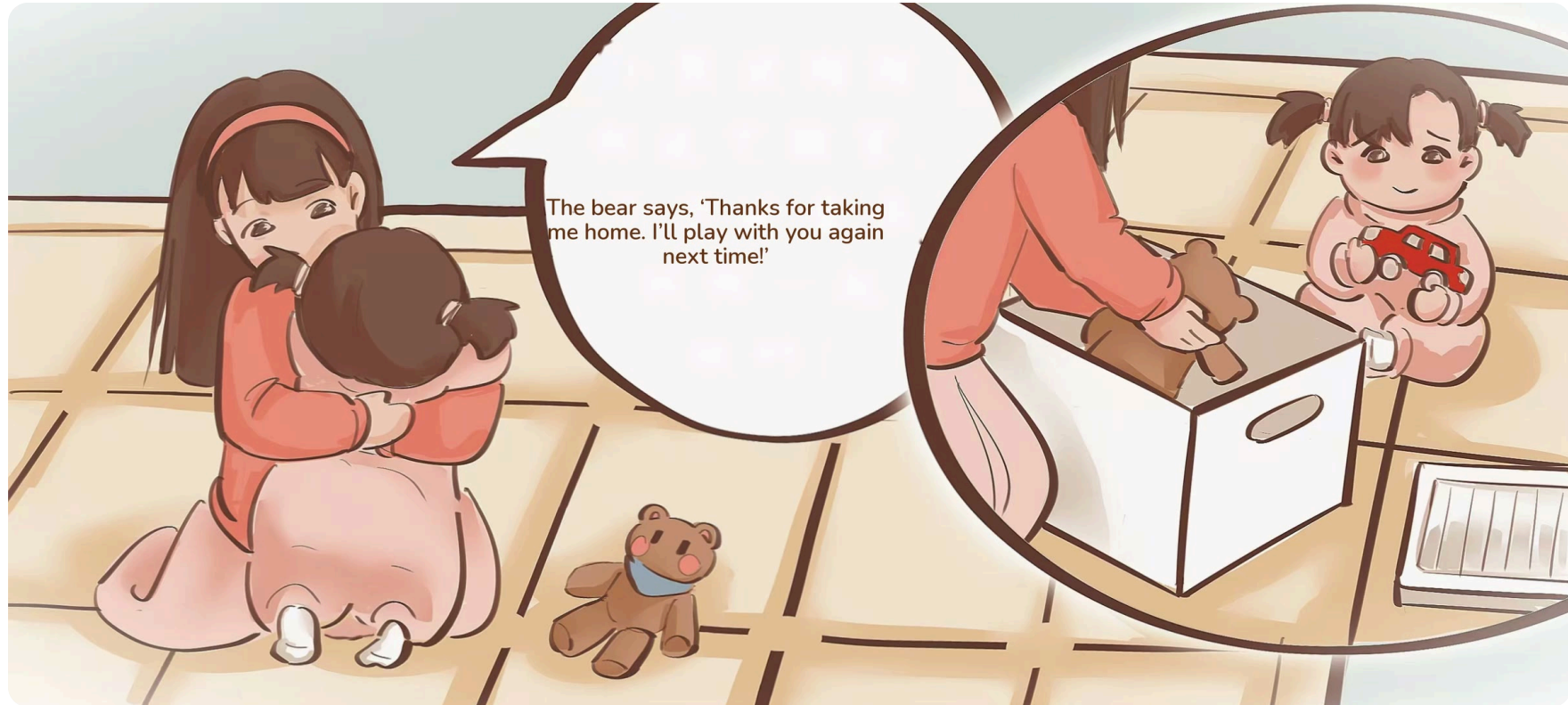
Use a warm but steady voice to acknowledge your baby's feeling while holding the limit: "You want to keep playing. It is hard to stop. The toys still need to be put away now." If they continue to resist, offer a manageable alternative, such as carrying one toy to the box together.

Observations

- ☐ Gradually calms with your comfort
- ☐ Points to a toy to show which one they want

Tips

- Your tension can affect your baby too, so try to stay calm and steady.
- If distress always changes the cleanup decision, your baby may begin using crying to seek the same change during other routines, such as bathing, getting ready to leave, or putting things away.
- Letting your baby choose a different toy lowers the difficulty of the transition. The replacement can also help them settle as cleanup begins.



Settle and Say Goodbye

If your baby is still sobbing, offer a gentle hug and stay close as they relax. Say goodbye to the toy together. When your baby settles and shifts attention, the transition is complete.

Observations

- Calmly says goodbye to the toy with you nearby
- Keeps playing with the toy alongside you

Tips

- Saying goodbye to something they love is hard for a baby. Your calm presence can help them move through the disappointment.
- Acknowledge the recovery: "You did it. Your body is getting calm again."
- With adult support, recovering from a small upset is valuable emotional practice that prepares your baby for future challenges.
- Wanting cleanup to be finished quickly is understandable. In this activity, the focus is on how your baby returns to calm.