



Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Vol. IX, No. 2

10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

This Month's Hallmark of Quality Child Care

Provide Consistent Care

Supporting Children Through Transitions

Picture yourself thoroughly engrossed working on a project that you are really enjoying, when someone, with no warning, interrupts you and pulls you away from it before you are able to finish. What feelings do you have...frustration, anxiety, confusion? This scenario happens multiple times throughout the day for young children when they experience transitions. Changing or moving from one activity to another is what we will refer to in this newsletter as *transitions*.

Some transitions are small, like a diaper change or moving from lunchtime to nap time. Other transitions are big such as a child leaving mom or dad and entering your program for the first time. Regardless of the size of the transition, young children need caring adults to support them through it.

According to Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center, there are three keys to successful transitions:

- Caring relationships
- Consistent routines
- Flexibility that meets the needs of each child

This first key way, caring relationships, is shown through you being responsive, attentive, and available to children both physically and emotionally. This newsletter will discuss two other key ways to support young children's ability to have successful transitions at each age level – infants, toddlers and preschoolers, and present activity ideas for each age group.



Infants

Transitions are important opportunities for caregivers to support an infant's sense of wellbeing and belonging. According to Dr. Dan Siegel, when infants experience successful transitions, they feel safe, seen, soothed and as a result, they feel secure in their environment. For infants, transitions are primarily care routines like diapering, goodbyes, sleeping and feeding time.

One way to support transitions with infants is to create consistent rituals as you move in and out of these care routines. These consistent rituals give infants a sense of security, as they learn what is going to happen based on the ritual. For example, when it is time to change a child's diaper say to him each time, "It looks like your diaper is wet or soiled, I am going to pick you up so we can go and change your diaper." If you say this to him every time you need to change his diaper, he will know and understand what is about to happen. This ritual gives him a sense of security.

Another way to support transitions, is by being flexible with your daily routines. When caregivers are flexible, they are better able to meet a child's individual needs during transitions. You may notice that an infant in your care has trouble transitioning while saying goodbye in the morning. Offer time and a comfortable space for parents to create a daily goodbye ritual. For example, have a chair near the door for families to sit with their child. Encourage them to create a brief goodbye routine to say goodbye in the same way every day (e.g., One hug, two kisses, and a tickle).



Toddlers

"Toddlers live in the moment, don't have a real concept of time yet and are only just beginning to understand that separations don't last forever," says Gail Reichlin, Executive Director of the Parents Network in Chicago. They also don't have the language skills to verbally communicate their needs or wants, so oftentimes they resort to tantrums or tears. It takes a lot of energy to switch from one activity to another. Transitions, especially unexpected, can literally be stressful for the toddler brain.

During transitions, toddlers need to have cognitive flexibility, working memory and the ability to regulate their emotions. They need to shift focus and attention, first to your instructions, then to the new activity. For many toddlers, they need constant reminders, practice, and a lot of support to help them.

Here are a few ways to support them:

- **Validate feelings** - When a child expresses frustration about having to stop what he is doing, acknowledge that frustration, for example, "I can see that you were really enjoying playing with the playdough and you are frustrated because you don't want to stop to eat lunch."

- **Plan ahead** – This type of support meets the needs of different children by allowing time for them to finish what they are doing before having to change gears. Try not to rush into a transition without explaining to them what is going to happen step-by-step. For example, give a 5-minute warning that you will be cleaning up soon, and after that it is time to wash hands for lunch. This process may take time, but it gives them a sense of security to feel that they are part of the process.

Preschoolers

As preschoolers become more independent, and are able to sustain play longer, they may have more difficulty during times of transition. According to Dr. David Anderson, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute. “one of the reasons why transitions may be hard is that we’re often transitioning from a preferred activity – something we like doing – to something that we need to do.”

Transitions are necessary and unavoidable for every preschooler. Here are some things you can do to minimize transitions and keep children engaged.

- **Be flexible** with your daily routines to better meet the individual needs of the children in your care. Consider the activities during your day that require all of the children to do the same thing at the same time. Can you send preschoolers one



at a time to wash their hands, or can they transition in pairs by having an older child help a younger child wash hands? Can you provide an activity such as singing songs while they wait for their turn?

- **Use a signal or a cue** to let the children know that a transition is coming. You can use a bell and ring it once to let them know they have a few more minutes to play until it is clean-up time. When it is time to begin the transition, you can ring the bell twice. Let them know in advance what the bell ringing indicates. If you know that a child might have a hard time with transitions, let him know ahead of time that the bell will be ringing soon.



Training Opportunity

Story-times and Transitions with Heart

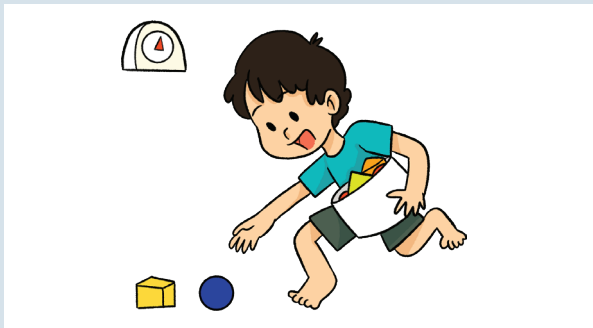
This 1.5 hr webinar from Early Childhood Investigations features real-life examples, practical advice and even some laughs. Learn how story time can be fun and engaging, and use the same techniques for transitions.

You need to register in order to watch the webinar and receive a certificate of attendance.

<https://www.earlychildhoodwebinars.com/webinars/story-times-and-transitions-with-heart-lessons-for-early-educators-from-youth-librarians-by-amadee-ricketts/>

Featured Activity

Make it a Game!



What you need:

- A timer or music

What to Do:

During clean up time or another challenging transition, bring in a little excitement by asking the children to do the task in a new way. Here are some examples:

- They can pretend that they are an elephant and pick up toys with their “trunk!”
- When moving from one area to another, incorporate movement: hop on one foot, walk like a crab, or tiptoe!
- Set a timer and challenge them to clean up or line up before the timer goes off, or play a song and let the end of the song be the target for finishing the transition task. Sometimes adding a time challenge is just the motivation children need to initiate the transition.



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Suggested Books

Discover these books and more at the Hawai'i State Public Library www.librarieshawaii.org

Infants and Toddlers

Clean-Up Time by Elizabeth Verdick

This book proves that clean-up time can be fun. Toddlers will want you to read this book again and again as they learn the song and join the fun of clean-up time.



Bye-Bye Time by Elizabeth Verdick

Goodbyes are hard for all ages, especially older infants and toddlers.



Preschoolers

Waiting Is Not Easy

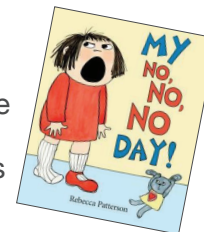
by Mo Willems

Did you ever have to wait and didn't like it? That's how Gerald feels waiting for Piggie's special surprise. Gerald waits all day, with Piggie by his side, and finds that the surprise was worth the wait!



My No No No Day by Rebecca Patterson

Bella is having a bad day – everything is going wrong and all she can do is shout! So many transitions are hard some days. But bad days don't last forever, especially when there's someone special there to hug you and love you anyway.



Citations

“Supporting Transitions Both Big and Small” (2022)
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<https://www.parents.com/toddlers-preschoolers/development/behavioral/easing-a-toddlers-daily-transitions/>

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