



# Change Happens! Managing Transitions in Early Childhood



## What is Transition?

*-noun*

movement, passage, or change from one position, state, stage, subject, or concept to another

*-verb*

to make a transition

On your own, **list every transition** your children manage throughout the day in your classroom

## Types of Transitions

Major life transitions: home to school, crib to bed, bottle to cup, crawling to walking, potty training, moving to a new house

VS.

Daily transitions: home to school, asleep to awake, play to clean up, inside to outside, play to bathroom, play to circle time

## Preparing for Transitions

Whether it is time to play, time for a snack, a nap, or a loved one to return, knowing what will happen next gives infants, toddlers, and preschoolers security and emotional stability.

## Social Stories

Social stories can help prepare a child for a major life transition

A social story is a first-person, present-tense story used to provide a student with as much information about a social situation as possible

Think about a child in your care and **write a social story** for a major life transition in that child's life

## Daily Transitions

We spend a good part of the day transitioning from one activity to another. How do we make daily transitions meaningful?

2 ways: transition activities & embedded curriculum

## Embedded Curriculum

Even the youngest child can be an active participant rather than a passive recipient in caregiving activities... Involve children in transition activities, but how?

### Infants

- Before you pick a child up, say the child's name, make eye contact, and let the child know what you are doing
- Narrate: Talk about what you are doing while you do it
- Wait: Observe the child carefully and wait for the child's response

### Toddlers

- Encourage children to help get ready for and clean up after meals by setting and clearing the tables
- Allow children to help lay out cots and make their own beds for naptime
- A child who is potty training may enjoy wearing his own "potty watch" to remind him to take a potty break

### Preschoolers

- Wave, Handshake, or Hug: Ask children how they would like to say hello or goodbye
- Getting ready to store toys for the summer? Have children help wash them and put them away
- Make a snack together

- Save time for dressing

## Meaningful Transitions

Why make transitions meaningful?

- Change is hard!
- Reaction to change is part of our TEMPERAMENT

## Emotion Guides Cognition

It matters how we feel when we are learning!

How does the child experience transition?

- Big Reactors VS. Low Reactors
- Everyone responds to change differently

**Key Points to Remember:**

- We must plan for transitions
- We can use social stories to manage major life transitions
- We can use transition activities to manage daily transitions
- Temperament affects how we deal with change
- Knowing what will happen next gives young children the security and emotional stability they need to learn and grow