



Moving forward with Transitions

Overview

During transitions, children move from one activity to the next. Rather than regarding transitions as incidental events, adults in a High Scope classroom use these times to provide children with opportunities for choice-making, movement activities and a variety of learning experiences.


4 types of changes children go through in any given transition:

1. Change in location (within or out of the classroom)
2. Change in activity (within or out of the classroom, within any daily routine)
3. Change in caregiver (family member or program/classroom adult)
4. Change in peer or playmate

Many transitions are a combination of these changes. The more changes within a transition, the more difficult the transition can be for a child.

Strategies to help ease transitions for children include:

- Children make choices during transition times including
 - How to move from one part of the classroom to another
 - Which person to travel/move with
 - What materials to clean up
- Adults let children know when transitions are coming by
 - Making announcements like, "In 5 more minutes we will go inside!"

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- Make individual announcements to children who need more than a group cue
 - Have parts of the day overlap; children have the opportunity to finish something or move to the next activity without the rest of the group (for example, not all children have to finish snack before Large Group can begin)
 - Adults plan and document these on their lesson plans for ways in which children can make transitions (for example choosing the next child to make the transition according to a characteristic of clothing like, “Now all children wearing sweatpants jump to the door!” or encouraging children to move along the floor in their own way to their cubby)

Goals for moving forward

1. Examine your daily routines for the purpose of either reducing or eliminating the number of transitions in the day.
2. Plan for the time it takes for children to first process that there is a transition, and then to follow through with that (or any) transition. This may involve time adjustments throughout the daily routines.
3. Use the Clean-up routine (which is a transition between Work Time and Recall Time and has all 4 changes within it) to critically examine your attitude and philosophy around children’s involvement and participation during transitions.

Implementation plan

1. Explore helpful resources: [Transitions Webinar](#), [Fun songs](#), [article by Betsy Evans](#):
2. Use the KDI’s to pinpoint specific areas of content to embed into transitions.
3. Consider each of the 4 changes possible in any transition and observe for each specifically as a way to better understand any behavioral challenges encountered in any given transition.
4. Refer to by name the part of the day that is coming to an end and the next part of the day to the children while giving warnings.
5. Systematically teach the children specific expectations around difficult transitions by modeling, using clear language and rehearsal (opportunities to practice with guidance).


Transitions Strengths and Needs Assessment

Name: _____

Date: _____

Instructions: Read each statement and consider your comfort level in using these effective practices. Choose one or two to focus on for this coaching period.

Practice	I need some help to use this practice effectively.	I am becoming comfortable using this practice.	I am confident using this practice.	I would like to focus on this practice as my goal.
1. I refer children to posted visual schedule, using the specific names for parts of the day.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
2. I offer reminders and visual/non-verbal cues about any changes to the typical day.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
3. I imbed choices into transition activities.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
4. I remind/give warnings to children when a transition is coming up, offering both verbal and non-verbal/visual warnings.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
5. I plan for transitions each day and look to reduce the number of transitions.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
6. I plan for transitions to have a beginning, a middle and an end.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No



7. I embed learning opportunities within transitions supporting active learning and children's independence.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
8. I use clear instructions and I explicitly model and teach the children expectations for transitions.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
9. I allow for overlap of activities and routines when possible to be flexible, to reduce waiting and to support independent choices by the children.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No
10. I individualize transitions for children who need extra support.	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No	Yes No