

TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING WITH KIDS



By Gretchen Yeager, Champions-KU and NAA Board Member

Transitions can be hard on a child. With these helpful tips you can make it easier on your students to easily switch between activities. For all situations make sure to, in a positive manner, tell children ahead of time where they are going, what they are going to do, and what behavior is expected of them.

1 ELIMINATE UNNECESSARY TRANSITIONS OR WAITING TIMES. For example, place a staff person on the playground so children can go outside as soon as they are ready, rather than waiting for everyone.

2 GIVE CHILDREN A SENSE OF THE PROGRESSION OF FUN ACTIVITIES FOR THE DAY, so that they have an idea what will happen next. Children can't, won't and don't wait. Positive learning skills will be reinforced as you engage them in interesting and fun activities.

3 MODELING WHAT WE WANT CHILDREN TO DO is a powerful technique for teaching appropriate behavior. Give them clear examples of what you expect by your own actions and point out other children who are responding appropriately.

4 CHALLENGING CHILDREN MAY NEED EXTRA ATTENTION DURING TRANSITIONS. Speak to them individually prior to the group warning. Model for them what is expected during clean up, or assign a clean-up "friend" to help them.

5 PLAN AMPLE TIME FOR TRANSITIONS SO NEITHER TEACHER NOR CHILD FEEL RUSHED. Plan for all the steps during the transitions. Like other activities, transitions have a beginning, middle, and an end.

6 ANTICIPATE WHAT COULD GO WRONG and brainstorm for creative resolutions.

7 PREPARE AND HAVE READY ALL MATERIALS FOR THE DAY AHEAD OF TIME. It is unfair for kids to wait while the staff gathers materials.

8 PLAN FOR A LOGICAL FLOW OF ACTIVITIES. Placing outdoor time at one end of a component could conceivably reduce some of the hassle of putting on outdoor gear.

9 GAGE THE NUMBER OF DIRECTIONS GIVEN AT A TIME to the developmental level of the children.

10 REMEMBER THAT TRANSITIONS CAN BE HARD FOR ALL OF US. When your children are having a difficult time, think about what else you could do to help them be successful.

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SEE MORE AT: <http://naaweb.org/tip-of-the-week/item/95-tips-for-transitioning-with-kids#sthash.pUPfnKh5.dpuf>

OPENING DISCUSSION

Which of these tips seems likely to be most impactful? Why?

Who has an example of a time when using one of these tips would have been helpful?

Which tips confuse or surprise you?

What questions or other thoughts do you have about the article?

APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Every day when the kids arrive to the program they come running in, noisily and throw their backpacks all over the floor. "It's just a tough group this year," the Site Director comments as she throw's up her hands. Which tips might help this Site Director?

The kids are waiting for Site Director, Matt, to gather the materials necessary for the day's activity plan. One girl comments, "Can I at least start on my homework?" Another says, "I'm hungry." And finally, "I hate this place." Which of the tips might help Matt meet the needs of his students? What changes can be made? How do transitions come into play?

CLOSING REFLECTION

Which one of the tips reviewed today will you commit to using more intentionally? What impact will it have?

CERTIFICATE of PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



TIPS FOR **TRANSITIONING WITH KIDS**

_____ **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOURS, EARNED BY:**

CONTENT INCLUDED:

Eliminate Unnecessary Transitions • Establish a Routine so the Children Know What to Expect
Model What You Expect • Advance Warning When Needed • PLAN for Transitions • Forecast What Could Go Wrong
Prepare in Advance to Eliminate Unnecessary Wait Time • Plan a Logical Flow of Activity
Gauge the Number of Directions Given at One Time • Ask “What Can You Do to Help Them Be Successful?”

FACILITATOR: _____ **DATE:** _____

| What is the value in planning for transitions?

| How does establishing a daily routine impact transitions and children’s behavior?

| You notice one of your staff mandates that every student is silent with their hands at their sides before moving to the next activity. She has been waiting 10 minutes now. How would you coach her to use a more developmentally appropriate approach?

Supports Content Areas 7, 8, and 9, Levels 1-4 of the NAA Core Knowledge and Competencies for Afterschool and Youth Development Professionals