

# Helping Children Make Transitions between Activities

## HANDOUT

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### **Prepare children to move from one activity or setting to another.**

Provide verbal cues before transitions (e.g., “5 minutes ‘til snack,” “it’s almost clean-up time”).

Use nonverbal cues (e.g., showing pictures of the next activity, ringing a bell).



### **Plan your daily schedule to include transition times, and consider what the children and adults in the setting will do during these times.**

Sing songs, play word or guessing games, recite rhymes, or do finger plays with children so that the time passes more quickly when they have to wait for long periods of time for new activities to begin.

Plan a gradual increase or decrease in the level of activity (e.g., outdoor play followed by snack) and a good balance of active and quiet play (e.g. center time followed by story time).

Limit transitions between activities.

Allow children adequate time to finish projects or activities.



### **Individualize transition strategies.**

Provide support or different types of support to children during transitions (e.g., photos to help anticipate what activity is next, directions given in a child’s home language or sign language, an individual warning to a child that soon it will be time to clean up and begin a new activity).



### **Help children become more independent across the year as they make transitions from one activity to another.**

Allow children to move individually from one area to another area when they complete an activity (e.g., as children finish snack, they are encouraged to go to the carpet and choose a book).

Teach children to help others (e.g., have children move as partners from one activity to another or ask one child to help another child gather his/her back pack).

Help children self-monitor during transitions (e.g., children can be asked to think about how quietly or quickly they moved from one activity to another).



### **Provide positive attention to the children following the transitions that go smoothly (e.g., the times that children pick up the toys without much prompting).**

Give very specific positive feedback after transitions (e.g., “Nicholas and Jorge did a great job cleaning up the block area and moving to the carpet.”).