

Great Transition Ideas

from the satellite workshop

“Active Times – Quiet Times: making transitions easier”

Drop-Off Ideas

- Use the “Three Bears” story. Children of different ages can join in and participate in the story.
- Have children bring a picture of Mom, Dad, or their family. They can look at the picture whenever they feel the need.
- At our center, children eat breakfast shortly after they come. We wave to Mom or Dad and then each child helps to get his or her high chair and tray set up for breakfast.
- Children can bring toys from home and hold on to them for about 5-10 minutes.
- Sometimes parents come in to get a child started in activities before they leave.

Clean-Up Ideas

- Give children a five minute warning before clean-up time to make the transition easier.
- We freeze when play time is over. The teacher calls out, “freeze.” The children freeze right where they are and stand like statues. Then I say, “Unfreeze and clean up.” And they know play time is over and everyone helps in clean-up. They love it!
- Stamp children’s hands when they participate in clean-up.
- Make clean-up time a game to play with children.
- Tell children that if they clean-up they will get to pick out a special activity from a box. Fill the box with slips of paper with several fun (short) activities. Have a child pull a slip when clean-up is finished or before if another incentive is needed.
- Take a basket and carry it around the clean-up area. Sing the clean-up song as children put toys in the basket.
- Sing a pick-up song.
- Turn clean up time into a game. Have a teacher close his/her eyes and ask the children to surprise you by putting toys away. Ask the children to tell when you should “peek” and see the clean room.
- Give the children rewards. Whoever picks up the most toys, papers, etc. gets a reward.

- Put on a favorite song and try to be finished by the time the music stops.
- Select Best Cleaner Uppers for reward or praise or as clean-up leaders.
- Count to 10 or 15. When you start counting they seem to start rushing to see who finishes first. Give praise for a good job done.
- Offer children a prize (stickers) for helping to clean up.
- Offer a prize of “authority.” Whoever cleans up the quickest will be the teacher helper and give out the cups or can “read” a book to the class or chooses where to line up or be the one to hold the teacher’s clipboard.
- A parent gave us a copy of the “Bob the Builder” theme song. We use it for our clean-up song with these words, “Can we clean up? Yes we can!” It’s very upbeat and the children love it. The song talks about working together, etc.
- Have children jump like a frog to clean up and fly like a plane while bringing toys to the shelves.
- Tess the Mess -- We dressed a person in a very messy fashion and asked her to come to the center and show the children how to clean up. The children now talk about “Tess the Mess” when they clean up.
- Sing the following to the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot"

I'm a little helper
 See me clean
 I can pick-up
 and not be mean
 When we're finished
 You will see
 A nice clean room
 for you and me

Nap Time Ideas

- Use a wooden train set to transition to nap time. One by one, each child gets to be the conductor. As they finish their circle, the conductor lays down on his or her mat until they are all down for a nap.
- At naptime, we have the children take out their napping things and get a stuffed animal. As the children lay down, we put on a tape of a book. The children listen to this story every day like it was their first time hearing it. After the story is finished, most children are calm and falling asleep. We put on soft music. Some days the children ask to hear

the story again. We would play it again, but most would be asleep by the time the story is finished.

End of the Day Ideas

- Parents get child's things ready and put them in the car before they actually get the children.
- Have children help to get their things ready before leaving.
- We color for quiet time until the parents pick them up.

Walking from Place to Place

- Walking quietly -- Pretend there is a family of sleeping bears in the hall. Tell the children, "We don't want to wake the sleeping bears. Let's tiptoe very quietly!" Be sure to change the characters you're pretending to be to keep the children thinking.

- Use a walking song when walking from one place to another. It helps children stay in line and follow the leader. Try singing the following words to the tune of "Frere Jacques."

We are walking, we are walking.

Yes we are, yes we are.

First we walk the one way,

Then we walk the other way,

Yes we do, yes we do.

- Sing this waiting/walking song to the tune of "Alliegh, Aliega, Alliluaha"

Follow, follow, follow me.

Follow, follow, follow me

Follow, follow, follow me.

Follow, follow, foll ----oh

Foll—oh me.

- Children who are learning to use the bathroom chant or sing "Potty Patrol" as they walk to and from the bathroom.

Transitioning a New Child

- Create a picture board or book with pictures of all the children in care and their names. After the first visit, the new child can take home the picture board or book. When the child starts care, add the new child's picture to the board. You can play a game to name the children, including the new child. This activity helps a child recognize the faces of children in their class before they start a new program so they won't be so scared.

General Transition Tips

- Raise your hand to quiet children. Teach children that when they see your hand in the air, they are to raise their hands in the air and quiet themselves.
- Tell children what activity is coming next. For example: after the toys are picked up, we will be going outside. Or after we eat our lunch, we will lay down for a nap.
- Have a picture board available to the children where you velcro picture clues. As you finish one activity, take the picture down and hang a picture for the next activity for the children to see what's coming next. For example – use pictures of toys for free time; pictures of food for meals or snacks; crayon pictures for art; musical notes for singing or dancing, etc.
- Sing this song to the tune of “Do You Know the Muffin Man?” to help children wait:
Do you know my Shannon, my Shannon, my Shannon?
Do you know my Shannon? She goes to Ronna’s daycare.
Yes! I know my Chad, my Chad, my Chad.
Yes! I know my Chad. He goes to the child care center.
- We show our four and five-year-olds the clock. When the big hand is on the three, we will start to clean up. When the big hand is on the six, it will be time for breakfast. They look at the clock during play. When I give them a reminder – you have ten minutes before clean-up – they look at the clock.
- To get everyone’s attention when we need to make a transition, we turn the lights off for one to two seconds. We have large windows so the room is never very dark. They know when the lights go out they need to stop, be quiet, and listen for the teacher’s directions. It’s a great safety feature too. If the power ever goes out for any reason, we know they will not panic but will look to the teacher for directions.