

# COPING WITH CHANGE (TRANSITIONS)

## What are transitions?

A time where change is occurring throughout the day (switching from one activity to another or moving classrooms)

## Why are transitions harder for some kids than others?

Child reactions to transitions can vary based on their temperament levels, developmental level, and past experience.

## Research

- Adults need to **respond predictably and consistently** to children's needs, **be warm and supportive**, and **model positive social behavior**
- Even though there are routines, transitions can still be difficult

## How can staff support students in the classroom?

- Be warm, nurturing, caring
- Routines are crucial
- Use “first/then” statements
- Use visual schedules
- Play a song
- Learn about transition routines at home
- Ask parents about different words they use (ex: some families may call diaper changing something different)
- Use a comfort object (fav toy or toy from home)
- Be flexible
- Have realistic expectations based on developmental stage
- Rehearse big transitions (ex: changing classrooms)
- Provide more time so kids can process transition
- Give warnings - 5min, 2min, or 1min (use a timer)

## How this promotes social emotional development

- Secure attachment with adults is essential for kids to manage transitions
- Positive interactions foster a sense of belonging & confidence

## References

(2024, April 30). *Supporting Transitions Both Big and Small*. Head Start. <https://headstart.gov/publication/supporting-transitions-both-big-small>

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