



Strong Foundations in Mental Health  
for Social & Emotional Well-Being



NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

# Strong Foundations in Mental Health for Social and Emotional Well-Being Newsletter

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## Planning for Smooth Transitions



**Y**oung children experience many transitions. Transitions range from small ones throughout the day to larger ones that are more life changing. These experiences can be stressful for young children and their caregivers. With intentional planning, transitions can become opportunities for supporting children’s development of self-regulation and other important social and emotional skills. Transitions can become smoother and result in less challenging behaviors when adults are plan transitions that are:

- Predictable and consistent
- Minimal in number
- Not rushed
- Intentionally infused with real-life learning opportunities
- Considerate of children’s limited ability to wait

Resources in this issue of the *Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Being Newsletter* focus on supporting smooth transitions for children and the adults that care for them.



## [Resources for Practitioners](#)

These resources were developed for staff and consultants working in early childhood settings. Some resources may also be useful to families.

### [Classroom Transitions](#)

#### [Moving Right Along... Planning Transitions to Prevent Challenging Behavior](#)

This article was published in the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) *Teaching Young Children*. It discusses why challenging behavior occurs during transitions. It also explores strategies for planning and implementing more effective transitions and ideas for using transitions to teach social skills and emotional competencies. Review a planning process for working with children who continue to have difficulty during transitions.

#### [Helping Children Make Transitions Between Activities: What Works Brief Training Kit No. 4](#)

This short training package from the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning includes PowerPoint slides with note pages, activities, and handouts. The kit provides trainers with the materials needed to conduct a short staff development program on transitions in the classroom.

### [Daily Routines and Transitions](#)

#### [Supporting Morning and Afternoon Transitions](#)

Every day, preschoolers must adjust from home life to school and then back again. Such transitions can be challenging for children, families, and teachers. This short article from *Teaching Young Children* shares suggestions from preschool programs to make mornings and afternoons go more smoothly.

## [Daily Separations and Reunions](#)

Parents, staff, and children may experience intense emotions when young children leave or return to an early care and education program. Program staff can provide emotional support. The pattern of “give and take” that occurs among young children and their parents and caregivers shapes how children feel about themselves.

### [News You Can Use: Transitions](#)

Find ideas for supporting the many kinds of transitions children and adults experience in Early Head Start. The e-newsletter supports teachers, home visitors, and parents in providing quality care for infants and toddlers.

### [Supporting Dual Language Learners with Classroom Schedules and Transitions](#)

The strategies in this tip sheet will allow you to provide dual language learners with ways of understanding and participating in classroom transitions that are not dependent on understanding and speaking English.

### [Life Transitions](#)

#### [Transition to Kindergarten Resources](#)

Preschool children make the transition into kindergarten more successfully when their schools and families prepare for it together. It is also key for their preschool and kindergarten teachers to connect. By coordinating transition efforts, preschool and elementary programs can help children maintain and maximize the gains they made in preschool. These resources support kindergarten transitions at the child, family, classroom, school, and community levels. Included are resources to help grantees plan and facilitate a community Transition to Kindergarten Summit.



## [Resources for Families](#)

These ready to print resources were developed for families with young children.

### [Daily Routines and Transitions](#)

#### [How to Help Your Child Transition Smoothly Between Places and Activities](#)

Children make many transitions each day, including from parents to teachers, from home to car, or from play time to the dinner table. When and how often transitions occur are usually decided by an adult and children may act out with challenging behavior when they feel unable to control their routine. Prepare your child for transitions while you are enjoying time together. This resource from the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children's (TACSEI) Backpack Connection Series focuses on helping parents support their child's transitions, leading to reduced challenging behaviors.

### [Bedtime and Naptime](#)

Many families find bedtime and naptime to be a challenge for them and their children. Sleep problems can make infants and young children moody, short tempered, and unable to engage well in interactions with others. Sleep problems can also impact learning. TACSEI's *Making Life Easier* article provides a few proven tips for making bedtimes and naptimes easier for both parents and children. Tips contain valuable information on how to make often challenging events easier to navigate, and even enjoyable, for both caregivers and children.



### [Transition from Preschool Services to Kindergarten](#)

The Early Childhood Technical Assistance (ECTA) Center offers links to National Centers, studies, and specialized projects that provide resources on transition to kindergarten. Read brief descriptions of the resources, some of which were developed for families.

### [Resource Guide for Early Childhood Transitions: Annotated Bibliography](#)

The Harvard Family Research Project provides a selected listing of journal articles, research briefs, and reports that focus on early childhood transitions and school readiness. They cover a variety of topics central to the issue of early childhood transitions, including family engagement and home-school and program-school partnerships.

### [Ways to Use Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Handbook](#)

This tool is designed to support Head Start, Early Head Start, Migrant and Seasonal Head Start, and refugee resettlement staff and other early care and education providers in using and applying concepts from the handbook. It includes staff self-reflection activities, team planning strategies, and approaches to family engagement. Also available in [Arabic \(تبرعلا\)](#) and [Spanish \(español\)](#).



## [Life Transitions](#)

### [Early Childhood Transition Guidebook: What You Need to Know Before Your Child's Third Birthday](#)

This guidebook from the PACER Center provides information to support families through their child's transition from Part C Early Intervention services to Part B Preschool services for children with disabilities. It provides a timeline, checklist, and tips for selecting a preschool program.

### [Preschool Prep: How to Prepare Your Toddler for Preschool](#)

Find a timeline for all the things that need to be done to prepare for preschool and guidance on saying a "good good-bye" on your child's first day. This article from Zero to Three provides parents with strategies for helping their young children prepare for their first day of preschool.

### [Raising Young Children in a New Country: Supporting Early Learning and Healthy Development Handbook](#)

Programs serving refugee families, newly arrived immigrant families, and others may use this resource with parents to help ease their transition to a new country. Explore the six themes: family well-being, health and safety, healthy brain development, early learning and school readiness, guidance and discipline, and family engagement in early care and education. Also available in [Arabic \(ةيبرعلا\)](#) and [Spanish \(español\)](#).

### [Transitions: Returning to Civilian Life](#)

This resource from Zero to Three explores how your child may respond to changes as you leave the military and return to your community. Find ideas to help make the transition less stressful for your young child.

## [Multimedia Resources](#)

Check out these Multi-Media Resources Focused on Supporting Smooth Transitions

### [Classroom Transitions](#)

Teachers can watch this 15-minute In-service Suite for ways to help children use positive behaviors during classroom transitions. The suite also includes related print resources for early educators, administrators, and families.

### [Change Doesn't Have to Be Hard: Daily Classroom Transitions that Support Children](#)

Preschool children experience many transitions throughout the day. This Teacher Time webinar explores how to plan for and structure transitions that support children's learning and reduce challenging behavior.

### [Transition to Kindergarten Summit Presentations](#)

Transition to Kindergarten Summits offer unique chances to gather state and district level leaders in early learning and kindergarten transition. Watch the videos for examples.

### [Home Again: Re-Connecting with Your Baby](#)

Welcoming a military parent back home is an exciting time for everyone, including for the youngest members of the family. Sometimes babies are quick to warm up to a returning parent, and other times it takes a while. Watch this video from Zero to Three to learn about how military families can support their babies during this transition.



## MyPeers: A Collaborative Platform for the Early Care and Education Community

MyPeers is an online social and learning network for Head Start and Early Head Start program staff and partners to dialogue and share thoughts. This is a virtual community for exchanging ideas, sharing resources, and lending support to the early childhood community.



Register for  
**MyPeers**

Currently, the NCECHW have the following open communities on MyPeers:

1. Child Care Health Consultants
2. Health, Safety and Wellness
3. I am Moving I am Learning (IMIL)
4. Staff Wellness
5. and two state-specific early childhood health communities for Oregon and South Dakota.
6. Mental Health Consultation Community (soon to open)



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To join one of these communities, register at <http://www.123contactform.com/form-2230355/My-Peers>. Once registered, you will be able to join new communities to meet your specific needs.

Please watch your email for announcements from the National Centers or others as they initiate new communities.

The National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness welcomes your feedback on this newsletter issue, as well as your suggestions for topics for future issues. Please forward your comments to The National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness Feedback [health@ecetta.info](mailto:health@ecetta.info) or call 866-227-5125.

Subscribe or view all issues of the Mental Health Services Newsletter on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/newsletters/newsletters.html>.

***School readiness begins with health!***