

# School Transitions

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# Agenda

- Introductions
- Overview
- Plan
- Put it together
- Practice
- Q&A



# Overview

- What is a transition and why do we need to prepare for it?
- The three P's of successful transitions
  - Plan, Put it together, Practice
- Useful tips and strategies for ANY age



# What is a transition?

- Life transitions are periods in life involving lots of change to your lifestyle.
  - <https://www.firstpsychology.co.uk/life-transitions#:~:text=Life%20transitions%20are%20periods%20in,of%20change%20to%20your%20lifestyle.&text=This%20is%20because%20people%20start,which%20people%20may%20feel%20stuck.>



# School Transitions

- Starting school
- Pre-school or Kindergarten to grade 1
- Grade 3 to 4
  - Can sometimes be a big transition/change
- Elementary to Junior High
- Junior High to High school
- Post traditional K-12 school



# Barriers to Transitions

- Fear of the unknown
- Exhaustion
- Perceived limitations
- Not knowing what is possible
- It just feels HARD
- Fear of the firsts



# Why do we need to plan?

- Face these barriers head on
- Improved outcome for you and your child
- A sense of accomplishment
- Planning and practice prepare you for future transitions.



# The three P's of successful transitions

- PLAN:
  - taking an active approach to achieve what you and your child want
- PUT IT TOGETHER
  - creating a transition “tool kit”
- PRACTICE
  - the dry run/ dress rehearsal



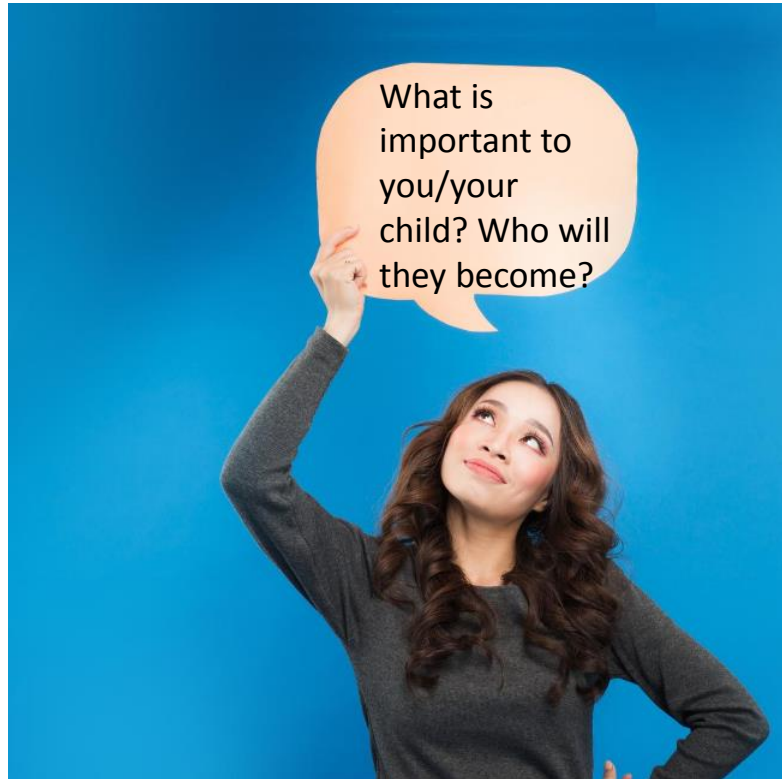


# The three P's of successful transitions

- PLAN- an active approach



# PLAN



- What do you want for your child?
- What does your child want?
- What has been hard for you in the past?
- What has been hard for your child in the past?
- What does a “good” transition mean to you?
- What does a “good” transition mean to your child?



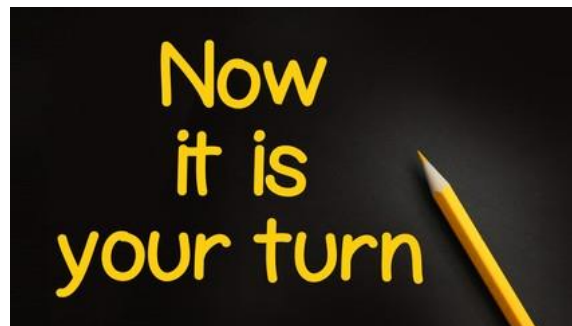
# Plan

- So how do we do this?
  - Ask your child if you can
  - Do your research to find out what is possible
  - Imagine what a successful transition looks like
  - Be aware of your bias
  - Involve people who know your child well
  - Don't put limits on yourself or your child!
  - Record this information



# Exercise

- Think of a transition you are facing and review the following questions. Jot down your thoughts
  - What does your child want?
  - What do you want?
  - Who can help you do your research?
  - What does “success” look like? For you? For your child?
  - Think of what barriers there may be for you and your child
  - Think of tools that have worked in the past to help your child with a transition



# The three P's of successful transitions

- Put it together- creating the “toolkit”



# The Toolkit

- What does a successful transition look like and what tools will help you get there.
- Creating your transition “toolkit”
  - What supports is your child already using and benefiting from?
    - Gestures
    - Verbal warnings
    - Clear expectations and descriptions
    - Communication book
  - What are some tools that may work?
    - Visuals
    - Social stories
    - Schedules
    - One page profile



# Put it together

- Gather your toolkit
- Now that **you** are prepared to help your child, it's time to help your child feel prepared.
- But how?



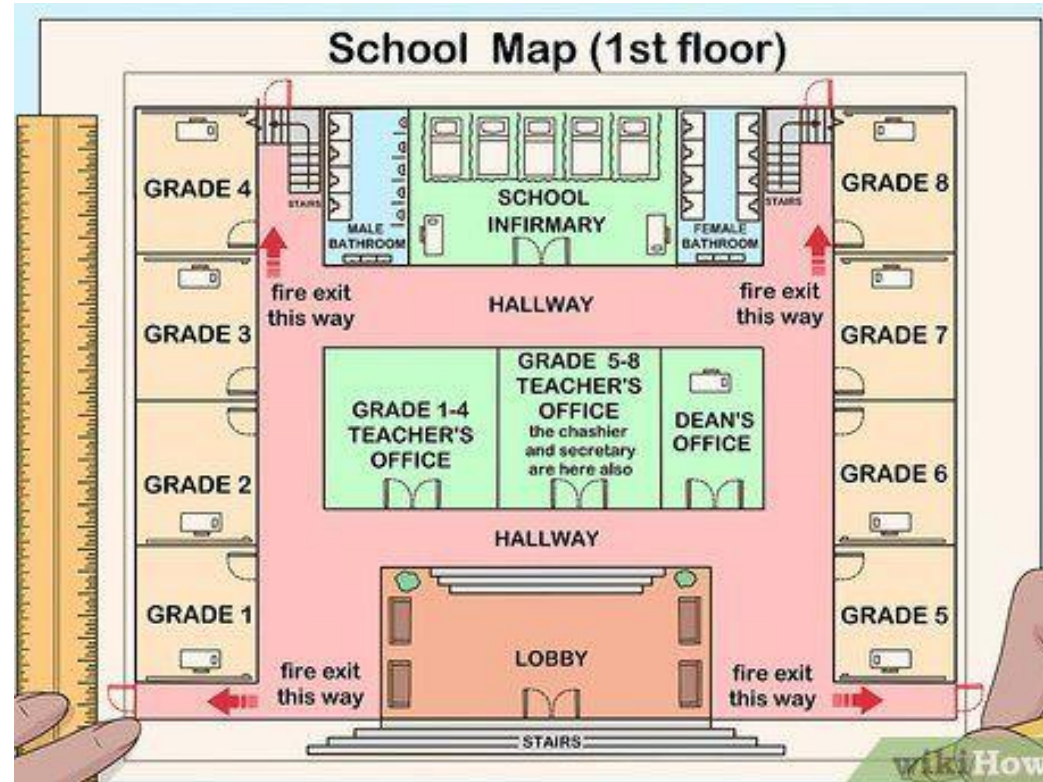
# Put it together

- Give your child a heads up
  - How long in advance do you give notice of the transition? How much time does your child need and benefit from?
- What information will they need?
  - Class schedule, maps
  - Teacher's name, pictures of teacher, school if possible





# Put it together



# Put it together



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# Put it together

**'s One Page Profile**

Date:

**What People Like and Admire about Me**

- 

*Insert client picture here*

**What is Important to Me**

- 

**How Best to Support Me**

- 

**Things I Like**

- 

**My Hopes and Dreams for the Next Few Months Are**

- 

Adapted from Sanderson and Lewis (2012)



# Put it together

## Moving to a New Home

My family is moving to a new home. This is our moving plan, in three big steps:

- Pack our furniture, and put other things in moving boxes.
- Take our furniture and boxes to the new home.
- Put our furniture and other things into the new home.

I am moving to a new home. I may pack some of my toys and things. This is my moving plan in three big steps:

- Pack. We'll put most of my toys and other things in moving boxes.
- Move. We'll take the boxes to the new home.
- Unpack. We'll put my toys and things in my home.

It's good to have a moving plan. My family and I have a plan for our move to a new home. ■



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# Put it together

## My Theory about Change

Here's a theory: Expected and welcome changes are the easiest. Unexpected and unwelcome changes are the most difficult.

For many people, changing from one day to another is easy. It's an expected and welcomed change. One change that I like and expect is:

---

For me, this change is (circle one):    EASY    CHALLENGING    DIFFICULT

Unexpected changes are a surprise. Some surprises are nice. For me, one unexpected but nice change (surprise) is:

---

For me, this change is (circle one):    EASY    CHALLENGING    DIFFICULT

Some unexpected changes are also *unwelcome*. Unexpected and unwelcome changes often make people do something that they would rather not do. For me, an unexpected and unwelcome change is:

---

For me, this change is (circle one):    EASY    CHALLENGING    DIFFICULT

Life may seem simple by looking at a calendar. But each day isn't just the activities and appointments that are listed there. Some of life's most challenging events are those that are never written on a calendar. ■



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# Put it together

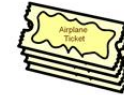
## Riding on an airplane



Riding on an airplane can be a lot of fun.

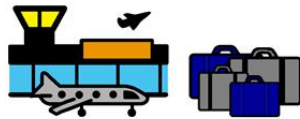


Mom will get our tickets.



2

When it's time to ride on the airplane, we go to the airport with our bags and luggage.



We wait for the people at the airline to tell us if the plane is ready for us to go into.



3

When we get on the plane, we find our seat and sit down.




4


# Put it together




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# Put it together

All About Me 

My name is ? 

I am  years old.

My Birthday is 

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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# Exercise

- Think of tools that already work for your child. Jot these down.
- Think of some ideas from this workshop that might work for your child. Jot these down.
- Begin to fill out the one page profile. Remember from your CHILD's perspective.



# The three P's of successful transitions

- Practice - the dress rehearsal



# Practice

- Now that you planned and put together your toolkit, it is time to practice.
- Why?
  - Think of this as a dress rehearsal. It may take a few tries to get to a point where you and your child feel confident.



# Practice

- How to practice at home BEFORE the real transition:
  - Use your toolkit for other transitions that occur
    - Camping trip, vacation, a doctor’s apt., haircut etc.
    - If a “tool” works, start to use it regularly so that it becomes habit for you and your child becomes familiar with it.
    - Have other caregivers use these same tools.



# Practice

- Build familiarity with the space
  - Visit the school throughout the summer
    - Walk around the school or campus
    - Find important landmarks: park, main entrance, campus student support building
    - Practice activities: play at the playground, walk the route between classes noting bathrooms or local shops



# Practice

- Build familiarity with people
  - Meet staff: teacher, principal, office admin, etc. where possible
  - Review pictures of these people using your social story/visuals.
  - Arrange a playdate or hangout



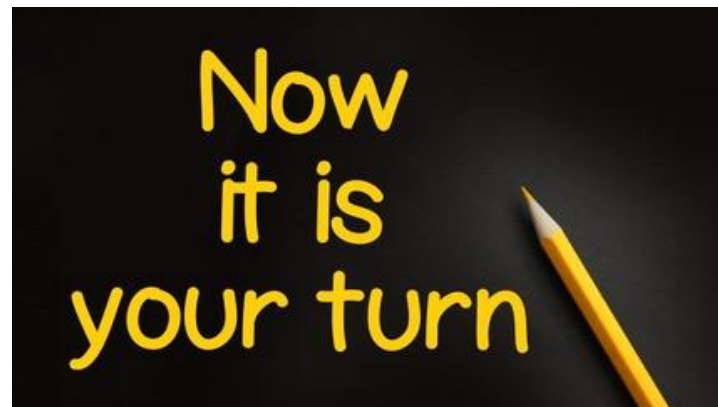
# Practice

- Build familiarity with the routines
  - Role play: asking for help to find a class, asking a friend to play
    - Any situation that your child identifies
  - Use the space: go for a coffee at the campus café, ask if you can visit the play room



# Exercise

- Think about ways that you can practice at home. Jot these down.
- Think of things you can practice at the new school. Jot these down.
- Think of people that your child can get familiar with. Jot these down.





# Tips

- Try a strategy many times before deciding if it is not going to work.
- Remember to continue to ask for your child's input on how they think the strategies are working.
- Go back to your planning questions to review and maybe revise.



# Q&A



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