



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2025-2026

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Hours of Operation:

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WELCOME TO OUR CENTER

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Hostos Community College Children's Center, Inc.! We first opened our doors almost 40 years ago and continue, today, to provide quality childcare and education in a developmentally appropriate learning environment. Our goal is to work with student-parents to help them become self-sufficient, achieve their educational objectives, and graduate, while their children participate in a safe, nurturing, educational program. We provide care for children aged 6 weeks to 5 years old. More information about our Infant Toddler Program can be found on page 18.

The Children's Center (the Center) is a campus-based, 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. We are licensed by the New York City Department of Health & Mental Hygiene (DOHMH).

OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Every child is unique and different. They each have different strengths and challenges. Our goal is to address and support the needs of every child, through differentiated instruction and hands-on implementation of the curriculum. The staff at the Children's Center acknowledge and embrace student diversity while implementing a student-centered approach to education. We strive to meet each child where they are; cognitively, developmentally, as well as socially and emotionally. The Center's focus is on active learning and we have high expectations for our students, staff, and families. Our ideal environment is safe, nurturing, stimulating, and engaging, which motivates children to learn.

CULTURAL SENSITIVITY

Our teachers have attended training on how to integrate culturally sensitive and inquiry-based language strategies with inquiry tools in the early childhood classroom. Teachers aim to develop their interactions with children through intentional language strategies that consider children's lived experiences. Applying culturally responsive strategies and techniques in early childhood also fosters increased student engagement and participation in the classroom and enhances children's interest and sense of belonging in the classroom.

Quality teacher-student interactions that consider teachers' language and their children's funds of knowledge promotes cognitive and language development through the early years. Many of our teachers are bi-lingual in Spanish and are able to support children's development through communicating with them in the child's first language. Teachers are also aware of parents/guardians whose primary language may not be English. The Center collaborates with parents that speak languages other than English and Spanish to help translate and communicate to those parents.

The Children's Center cultural sensitivity policy is founded on a strength-based perspective. Therefore, we acknowledge that the following ideas are held true:

- We recognize that programs can learn from families.
- Children are nested in families
- We recognize that diversity enriches and provides depth to the overall program.
- We respect and support the preservation of children and families' home languages, cultural backgrounds, and childrearing beliefs, goals, and practices.
- We incorporate aspects of children's cultural and linguistic backgrounds in program's curriculum.
- We acknowledge child development as a culturally-driven, ongoing process that should be supported across school and home.

CURRICULUM

At the Children's Center, we utilize the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, Two's, and Preschoolers. The goal of the Creative Curriculum is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive and enthusiastic learners by actively exploring their environment. Through a series of investigative studies on various themes; children deeply explore topics that build on a foundation in math, science, literacy, social studies and art. As students are immersed in each study, they will be exposed to diverse cultures, languages, family compositions, disabilities, and religions within the classroom. This will encourage empathy, understanding, and acceptance of all differences, and will be exhibited through the transformation of centers/learning areas and student work.

The Creative Curriculum helps teachers interact with every child in ways that promote their overall development and learning, foster children's social competence, support children's learning through play, create rich environments for learning, and forge strong home-school connections.

We encourage parents to utilize the Creative Curriculum's family App so that they can continue their child's learning at home, based on classroom studies. Teachers can distribute activities to parents in a digital format, which makes accessibility more convenient.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION – ALL AGES

ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

Admission is based on the parent/legal guardian's enrollment in Hostos Community College. The Children's Center serves the children of enrolled, matriculated students

and non-matriculated students in the college's Continuing Education Program. We also reserve 10% of our slots for children of faculty and staff, if available.

Hostos students interested in enrolling their children at the Center must complete an initial application. A representative from the Center will contact you to review the documents that must be submitted, and to complete the intake process. During the intake process, your fee will be calculated, and you will sign a tuition agreement.

FEES*

Childcare fees are based on the number of weeks that your child attends. Schedule changes are permitted if there is an open spot available to accommodate the change. We do have a limited number of subsidized awards through the NYS Block Grant to assist with tuition, if you qualify. Eligibility is based on income and family size. If you do not qualify, then student fees for childcare are based on a sliding-fee scale. We also accept ACS and HRA Childcare Vouchers.

During the enrollment process, our Program & Family Coordinator will work with you to determine your eligibility, and fees.

*Please note fees for faculty/staff are based on a sliding-fee scale

PAYMENT

The Children's Center enrolls children throughout the year. A Children's Center staff person will provide you with an invoice for tuition payment. The transmittal is brought to the Bursar's Office, Basement, Savoy Building at 120 E 149th St., where payment is received by check or cash. The Children's Center does not accept payments.

Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that their Center tuition is current. If you owe a balance to the Center at the end of any semester, you will not be able to re-enroll for the following semester. Unpaid balances may result in the account balance being sent for collection.

Please see an Administrator if you are experiencing financial hardship.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Parents/guardians are required to complete an Emergency/Escort Authorization Form. The authorized contacts are only the people listed on the Form. All authorized escorts must be 18 years or older. It is important that you notify emergency escorts that they have been designated as an emergency resource. The Center will provide the public safety officer with a comprehensive list of allowed escorts.

If you would like to amend your emergency contacts/authorized escorts information, please see our Program & Family Coordinator or our Administrative Assistant at the front desk, who will assist you in completing a new form

UPDATING YOUR INFORMATION

All changes of information must be reported to a Children's Center administrator. Student-parents/legal guardians are responsible for updating all information, i.e., address, telephone numbers, escort lists, email address, orders of protection, emergency contacts, class schedules, internships, etc. If you have a change in schedule that will have an impact on your weekly or monthly fee, you must bring this to the attention of our Program & Family Coordinator.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Center is open from 7:45 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Your child can attend the Center based on the parents' class schedule, work-study, internships, study time, and clinicals/labs.

The Center follows the Hostos Community College Academic Calendar. The Children's Center is closed on all national holidays followed by Hostos Community College. Each month you will receive a Children's Center calendar which highlights important dates and events happening at the Center. The Center closes at 5:00PM. Please arrive by, or before 5:00PM for pick up. If you run into an emergency and are late, please call the front desk at 718-518-4176.

STUDENT SCHEDULES

You will determine your child's schedule based on your class schedule, school commitments, and work obligations. Our Program & Family Coordinator will explain our scheduling protocols to you at the time of enrollment. If you have signed up for more days/hours than you actually utilize, we may ask you to reduce your number of hours, so that we may fill in your missing hours with another child that needs care.

ARRIVAL

Student-parents/guardians and authorized escorts must bring their child to the classroom for drop-off. The Children's Center utilizes the **Brightwheel app in order** to scan your child in and out of the Center. Once you are enrolled, you will receive an invitation to download the app onto your phone, or you may scan in on the Center's iPad at the reception desk.

Student-parents/guardians should ensure their child arrives in unsoiled diapers or pull-ups. When your child arrives, please check their diaper/change/clean and wash hands

for the child before signing in the child in your child's classroom. Lastly, please stop at the sink to wash your hands when entering the classroom, and after a diaper change.

Student-parents/guardians are required to inform the Center staff if a child was given medication prior to arrival. Disclosing the medication that the child was given will help ensure the child is treated appropriately in an emergency situation.

LATE MORNING DROP-OFF

We ask that you arrive at your regularly scheduled time. That is the time you agreed to arrive by during your enrollment into the Center. We understand that occasionally you may be late. **Please know that we cannot accept children past 11:00AM.** At 11:00, children in the classroom are getting ready for lunch and nap and have concluded several educational portions of their day. If you are not going to arrive at your regularly scheduled time, you must inform the Center immediately.

PICK-UP

Children are picked up from the child's respective classroom. **Please be on time.** It is very important for children to have predictability, and to take comfort in knowing they will be picked up along with everyone else. All student-parents/guardians must scan out through Brightwheel at the time of pick up

CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES

Please make sure your child has two complete changes of clothing at the Center at all times. If soiled clothes are sent home, please be sure to replace them the next day. If your child wears diapers or pulls ups, please make sure to send in those supplies as well on a regular basis. Open-toed shoes are not permitted for children's safety.

SHEETS

All children must have two cot sized sheets for their daily rest period. Sheets are a NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene regulation. We will send sheets home every Friday to be washed and returned on Monday. Please let the Center know if you need a sheet for your child.

POLICIES

ABSENCES

Please call (718-518-4176) or message us on Brightwheel if your child is going to be absent or late.

- **Sickness:** (3) days of absence – child may return with medical clearance from physician.

- **Unexcused Absence:** (3) days of absence – written warning from the Center

Repeated unexcused Absence:

1. Meet with Center staff to determine if we can assist your family's needs to achieve decreased absences.
2. Adjust your child's schedule.
3. Drop from the program.

Please note that if you are receiving Block Grant funding for your tuition, there are specific absence guidelines about the number of days your child can be absent.

These guidelines were explained during your enrollment process. If you would like to learn about the absence guidelines again, please contact our Program & Family Coordinator.

ILLNESS

If your child is not well and you are concerned about their condition worsening, please keep your child at home. They should be symptom free for 24 hours without assistance from over-the-counter medications before returning to the Center. Please notify the Center immediately when your child's absence is due to illness.

In the event that your child becomes ill while at the Center, you will be notified immediately (for example, fever, diarrhea, rash, vomiting). If illness prevents your child from participating in scheduled classroom activities, the Center expects a parent/guardian to pick up the child and to take them home. In order to return to school, your child should be symptom free for 24 hours without assistance from over-the-counter medication. If your child is absent 3 days in a row due to illness, you will be asked to provide us with a medical clearance letter from a Healthcare Provider noting the date the child is safe to return to school.

MANDATED REPORTING

All staff members of the Children's Center are considered Mandated Reporters. Therefore, the Center staff is required by law to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the New York State Child Abuse Central Registry.

LOST CHILD PROTOCOL

ATTENDANCE

- Routine daily attendance is taken when children arrive at school.
- Parents sign in child through a software application which is on a kiosk at the Center's front desk. They may also sign in with their cell phones. The Center has the ability to run a daily attendance list of present children.

- The Center’s Administrative Assistant either telephones, or messages parents that have not yet arrived at their prescribed arrival time.
- The lead teacher, records attendance, manually, in classroom attendance record books. The assistant teacher will record attendance in the lead teacher’s absence in real time, as children arrive. At departure time, parents sign out their child through the software application which is located on a kiosk at the Center’s front desk. They may also sign out with their cell phones.
- Teachers sign off on the classroom’s daily health check at each child’s departure time.

RATIOS

- The Center employs a master schedule for all teaching and administrative staff, which includes lunch breaks, meeting times, and prep time, which is distributed Center-wide, and updated regularly.
- Staff to child ratios are maintained from the arrival of the first child at the start of the day to the departure of the last child at the end of the day.
- Ratios are maintained during nap according to the guidelines outlined in Article 47.
- Ratios are maintained during outdoor play and the use of bathroom facilities.
- Teachers and staff are trained in the beginning of the school term and throughout the school term as a refresher training.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Center does not participate in class trips. Children may attend on campus events located in the College.

- Parental approval is required for children to participate in events.
- Teachers and staff are informed of the event details via email notification from the Director.
- Roles are assigned to staff.
- Attendance taken prior to start of activity through name to face recognition.
- Periodic monitoring and retaking of attendance through name to face recognition.
- Children are paired in a buddy system.
- Prior to departure from the Center, and after arrival at a destination, name to face recognition count is conducted and attendance is taken.
- Prior to returning to the Center, and after arrival at the Center, name to face recognition count is conducted and attendance is taken.
- If departing the Center, teaching staff are responsible to bring along with them: first aid kit, class roster, list of emergency contacts, cell phones, and daily attendance record.
- Periodic monitoring and retaking of attendance through name to face recognition.

- Children are paired in a buddy system.
- Increased supervision rates are implemented to ensure that the child/teacher ratio is above the allowable ratio. Additional staff such as floaters, Assistant, Parent, and/or Administrators are utilized to accompany classroom teachers.

Lost Child Procedures

In the event a child cannot be accounted for:

- Assemble the children in a secure place under teacher supervision.
- Notify Director immediately.
- Notify Office of Public Safety immediately.
- Institute a systematic search of both indoor and outdoor areas.
- Maintain communication with staff and Director via phone and in person.
- Notify the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene within 24 hours.
- Incident documented by Director within 24 hours to the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene and the NYS Central Registry for Child Abuse and Maltreatment.

Established instructions to staff for the reporting of missing children:

Reports of missing children will be submitted immediately to the Police Department, the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, the NYS Central Registry for Child Abuse and Maltreatment, and the Office of Public Safety at Hostos Community College.

Reports will be made by the Director, or the Senior Education Director of the Center.

Parents and/or Guardians of the missing child will be notified immediately by telephone and the Center's Brightwheel application.

Procedures for initiating and carrying out the search for the missing child:

- Staff that are not needed to maintain ratio in classrooms, will conduct the search, at the time of the incident, and will include, the Director, the Senior Education Director, Program & Family Coordinator, and the Administrative Assistant.
- The identified staff above will be joined by Hostos Community College Office of Public Safety Officers.
- Remaining groups will be asked to stay in place at the Center under teacher supervision, until the close of business.
- The Center does not utilize public transportation. Trips are contained to Hostos Community College Campus locations that do not include exiting the building of the Children's Center location.
- Search area parameters will be based on the location at which child went missing, and will include all floors of the building location, and will continue until the child is located.

- Search parties will communicate via cell phones, radios, and land lines, as necessary.
The Office of Public Safety will determine when it is necessary to include emergency services personnel beyond the Hostos Community College Office of Public Safety in a search.
- At the cessation of a search for a missing child, staff that are not needed to maintain ratio in classrooms, will assess that all children in attendance are present through a name to face headcount. Staff will include the Director, the Senior Education Director, and/or the Program & Family Coordinator.
- Assessment shall, at a minimum, include:
- A determination of the need for treatment for any perceived injury or need for medical intervention.

An investigation into what may have occurred to the child while unsupervised will be conducted by The Director of the Center, or other administrative staff in the event of his/her absence, including the Senior Education Director and/or Program & Family Coordinator. The Office of Public Safety will immediately be contacted in response to investigation results that indicate the need for any additional intervention, including medical or police services.

The retrieved child will be integrated back into the group, when appropriate. If alternative means of care are necessary, the child will wait at the Center under the care of the Center's Nurse, Director, or Program & Family Coordinator.

The lost child incident will be documented on the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene incident/accident report of actions form; documentation will be recorded by the adult involved in the incident; and signed by the Director of the Center. The incident report will be provided to the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene within 24 hours.

FIRE/EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICIES FOR ALL CLASSROOMS

All staff must be familiar with all emergency exits and the evacuation route for each area within The Hostos Children's Center and surrounding exits throughout Hostos Community College in the A-Building.

Parents, if you arrive during the time that a fire-drill/emergency evacuation is in progress, please stay with your child, and do not enter the Center.

- All staff have a responsibility to account for, supervise, evacuate, and ensure the safety of children during emergency situations.

- Use the nearest and safest exit, stairwell/pathways to leave the building immediately, do **NOT** use elevators in emergency situations.
- Do not return until it is declared safe to do so by a Fire Department Official/Public Safety and/or the Director of the Hostos Children’s Center.
- Our emergency meeting location is the M Building / Academic Advisement Center – 429 Grand Concourse.
- In all emergency situations please call Public Safety immediately at 718-518-6888 and provide the dispatcher with any and all information available to ensure a prompt response.

FOOD POLICY

At this time, we are **not** providing meals for children, however we do provide one fruit and/or vegetable during lunch for the children to share family style. Breakfast, lunch, and snack are provided by the student-parent/guardian. Our Food Service Coordinator will prepare and serve each child’s meal. To promote healthy eating, please send in fresh fruit, vegetables, protein, grains, or grain substitute, and 100% fruit juice. **NO COOKIES, CAKES, CANDY, OR POTATO CHIPS.** Please do not send in food that contains bones. Please do not send in whole grapes, popcorn, or any other item that is larger than your child’s airway.

Please be sure to label all food containers with your child’s name. Please note we are a **NUT-FREE AND SEAFOOD-FREE ENVIRONMENT.** Do not send in any food items containing nuts or fish/shellfish. Occasionally, we may require that an additional food item not be allowed into the Center. That decision is made based on our enrolled children’s medical needs. You will be informed if we have to limit an additional food category.

You can always speak to our on- site nurse if you have any questions relating to your child’s nutrition.

BIRTHDAY POLICY

We celebrate birthdays once per month. Due to food allergies, we do not permit sending any birthday food items or special snacks. Candy and chewing gum are not allowed as they are potential choking hazards for young children. If you are sending in party bags, please do not send in small toys that are choking hazards.

SCREEN POLICY (ELECTRONICS, TABLETS, COMPUTERS)

The Center’s policy limits the use of screen time for children in that there can be no viewing of more than 30 minutes, once a week, of high-quality educational or

movement-based commercial-free programming. Screen time is never used for children birth to age 2.

parents that are graduating. Detailed information will be provided to families closer to that date.

HEALTH

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

If necessary, The Children's Center will administer basic first aid such as wound care and cold compresses. The Center is also trained to administer Emergency Medication, i.e., inhalers and epi-pens. Additionally, four of our staff are MAT certified (Medical Administration Training) and can administer over-the-counter medications, and prescription medications. We must have a **Medication Consent Form signed by your doctor on file for your child** if you authorize us to administer prescription medications. This form is only valid for 6 months, unless otherwise specified by your child's healthcare provider. The nurse will notify you of when an updated form is needed. The nurse will also notify the parent of any expired medications, which will then be returned to the parent for safe disposal. A record of medication administration will be recorded on our medicine log. A **NON-Medication Consent Form** should also be signed in order for us to administer any over the counter creams, lotions, and/or non-prescription medication.

All medication brought to school by parents must be: non-expired, labeled with child's name and date of birth. Medication will be stored in your child's classroom in a locked, medicine cabinet.

DAILY HEALTH & WELLNESS CHECK

The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene require that staff conduct a health & wellness check when your child arrives. If your child arrives to school with any signs of minor injury (scratch, bump, bruise), the teacher will record that on the sign-in sheet, and you will be asked to sign a form indicating that you are aware of the injury that occurred outside of the classroom.

INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS

The Center strives to maintain a safe environment for all our children and staff. If a child sustains an injury during the school day the following procedure is in place:

1. The Children's Center staff will administer first aid immediately.
2. The parent or legal guardian will be contacted via phone and/or the Brightwheel app.

3. More serious injuries will require that the College's Public Safety Office be notified, and more qualified assistance summoned.
4. If an injured or sick child must go to the hospital with paramedics, a Children's Center staff member will travel with the child if the parent cannot be reached.

Please note that the Children's Center cannot assume responsibility for accidents or situations that stem directly from false information provided at the time of enrollment. The Center will not be responsible for any changes or updates in a child's medical status that has not been officially communicated to the Center by the parent or guardian in writing.

You will be provided with a copy of a completed incident/accident report for your records. The Center will maintain the original report in your child's file.

GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL

A NOTE ABOUT SEPARATION

To help you better understand the importance of transition and separation in a child's life, please see the articles about transition and separation that appear at the end of this Handbook.

Children sometimes have difficulty letting go of their parents at arrival. This is typical behavior which, over time, should decrease as they become more secure in their new environment. Here are a few suggestions to help ease separation:

- Allow adequate time at drop off for arrival adjustment before needing to leave for class.
- While traveling, talk to your child about the classroom, who will be there, etc. This prepares your child for what will occur. When you are rushed, children feel hurried and anxious.
- When you arrive, check your child's diapers and wash their hands. Also, help your child get "settled in" by becoming involved in play.
- Once your child is playing comfortably tell your child it is time for you to go. Please do not "sneak out." Children are establishing their sense of trust and need to see you go and see you return at the end of the day.
- Give hugs and kisses and reassure your child you will be back (e.g., after a snack).

If there is still protest or difficulty, the staff members and teachers are close by to help your child when you leave. Usually, children calm down and begin to play soon after you leave. Remember, even those children who are comfortable in play and in their environment need your attention, affection, and reassurance.

TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

We prefer to have new children ease into the classroom routine. We recommend a phase in process for the first three days, gradually lengthening the hours until attending for a full day. This helps your child become familiar with the environment and helps us get acquainted. Please speak to your classroom teacher about a phase-in schedule.

- Day 1: Morning (pick up before lunch)
- Day 2: Morning (pick up after lunch)
- Day 3: Afternoon (pick up after nap)

There are other times during the school year when children experience transitional periods. If your child attends the Center for a second year, then they will be transitioning to a new classroom with a new teacher. Before beginning their second year, we work with children to visit their new classroom, to meet their new teacher, and to process saying goodbye to their familiar surroundings, and friends, by reading relative stories and creating art projects.

We have also added to our team. Our staff includes a Mental Health Consultant who will work with children, teachers, families, and staff to ensure that transitions are successful, and that families are given the skills to adjust to new routines. The Children's Center is excited to partner with a community-based organization, Chances for Children, which offers parent-child therapy and parent-child groups and supports both child and parent through separation. These sessions are supportive of children and families who need a program model which provides families access to clinical services. Chances for Children utilizes one of our classrooms on Tuesdays from 9:00AM-5:00PM. At that time, their social worker is on site.

CHANGING OF CLASSROOMS

Children stay enrolled in their assigned classrooms throughout the Academic Calendar. Children do not move to a higher aged room once they have a birthday. Early Childhood best practice is to not move a child during a calendar year. The Teachers in the room will adjust their lessons to meet the needs of every child where there are academically, so there may be a shift in their current classroom of developmentally appropriate practices, to accommodate skill levels with differentiated instruction.

TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN FOR FOUR YEAR OLDS

If your child will be transitioning to kindergarten, we also work to help children understand they will be starting a new school, with new friends! We assist families by presenting workshops and tabling events dedicated to learning about the various kindergarten options in New York City, and how to navigate the application process.

CENTER SUPPORTS FOR FAMILIES

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS/EVALUATION PROCESS

If your child has support services in place, or you are interested in having your child evaluated, it is very important to please discuss this information with our enrollment coordinator, and our Mental Health Consultant, at the time you are completing your enrollment process. Our enrollment coordinator will then inform our Mental Health Consultant, who will be the main person to assist you through the evaluation process.

The Children's Center accepts children working with NYC's Early Intervention program for children under the age of 3, and the Department of Education's Committee on Preschool Education for children 3 and 4 years old, **as long as** we are able to meet the needs of the child as outlined in their individual education plans. Related services can be held by outside providers at the Children's Center, once the parent/guardian signs the provider agreement form. We recommend that copies of the evaluation, IEP/ IFSP are shared with by us PRIOR to the child's start date.

Our teachers will implement appropriate modifications and provide support so that children identified with special needs are able to be fully included in the program's activities. For children, whose developmental and/or emotional needs might be greater than a regular childcare center can provide, we will work with the family to find the most suitable educational arrangement, by providing referrals, identifying other educational settings, and conducting outreach on your behalf.

ASSESSMENT

Best practices and policies in early childhood care and education requires that our program has in place a child observation and assessment system that includes the collection, and protection of assessment results, and the sharing of that information with families. Student assessment enables instructors to measure the effectiveness of their teaching by linking student performance to specific learning objectives. As a result, teachers can implement effective teaching choices and revise ineffective ones in their practices.

The program documents the developmental / social emotional status of each child before entering / starting the program using a child developmental screening tool. This tool is called the ASQ and the ASQ-SE. This screening assesses each child for basic developmental and social emotional levels to help define individual learning goals and to identify any potential special needs. ASQ results are completed and stored in the ASQ confidential, online system. If a child scores below the developmental threshold, a

meeting will be scheduled to review the results with the parent/guardian, and the Mental Health Consultant.

Teachers also collect data on children's cognitive, developmental, social / emotional, and academic skills by using an assessment tool called Teaching Strategies Gold – Checkpoints. The results of these assessments will be shared with parents during Parent / Teacher Conferences. This information is also kept completely confidential and is a part of each child's private record.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Conferences are held 2 times per year, once in the Fall, and once in the Spring. Parent/Teacher conferences provide opportunities for parents and teachers to discuss the child's growth, development, and progress. Parents are encouraged to be active partners in their child's educational lives. Assessments and Portfolios are also shared at this time.

WORKSHOPS AND REFERRALS FOR FAMILIES

As part of our partnership with parents and community organizations, the Children's Center regularly offers and hosts family workshops and events. Examples of past workshops include Managing Asthma and EpiPen Injector, Nutrition and Health, How to Manage your Finances, Understanding the Early-Intervention Process, etc. Information and details will be provided on the monthly calendar. We are also available to provide you with Campus resources and referrals offered by the department of Student Development and Enrollment Management.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The program provides regular opportunities for parents/guardians/families to participate in program level decisions, through our Family Committee, and also through the Center's By-laws which mandates that one student parent be a voting member of the Board of Directors.

At the beginning of the Fall semester, each classroom identifies a class parent. Class parents then invite other parents and family members to join the committee and to convene as the Family Committee to meet regularly in order to be involved with planning of special events and activities, and to make recommendations for the improvement of the program.

During the Family Committee Meetings, parents can decide how they would like to volunteer/participate in supporting the Center throughout the year. Additionally, families

may volunteer to share talents and/or expertise, and form sub-committees, such as the Family Committee on Cultural Sensitivity.

MOVING UP CEREMONIES

Each May, the Center celebrates all children's last day of school with a Center-wide moving up ceremony. Parents and friends are invited to acknowledge our oldest children who may be moving on to Kindergarten, and all other students that have successfully completed their time at the Center. We also acknowledge all student-

END OF THE YEAR FAMILY SURVEY

The Children's Center values our families' input and opinions regarding overall experience at the Children's Center. In May of each year, you will receive a brief, electronic survey for your completion. The results are reviewed by administration and teaching staff, and used for program improvement.

Thank you for participating in our programs and we are excited about working with you to guide you and your child along a pathway to learning! Always reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns.

Catherine Garcia-Bou, Director

INFANT/TODDLER ADDENDUM TO PARENT HANDBOOK

INTRODUCTION

Hello parents and guardians and welcome to our program for infants and toddlers at the Hostos Community College Children's Center! We are now licensed by the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene to allow programming for children ages 6 weeks through 24 months old. Our infant room can accommodate 8 babies, and our 12-month-old to 24-month-old rooms can accommodate 10 toddlers each. Each room is staffed with a Lead Teacher and an Assistant Teacher. A floater works between classrooms every day.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

This addendum is attached to the Children's Center Parent Handbook which provides a comprehensive overview of all information regarding day-to-day policies and procedures for all ages. Additional program information, specific to infants and toddlers, is below.

FOOD POLICY

At this time, we are not providing formula or food for infants and toddlers. All bottles and food items should be prepared at home and sent in a clearly marked bottle and/or container/sippy cup. These items will go home at the end of the day for return the following day. Each classroom has a refrigerator to store milk, formula, and food. **If your child is allergic to any foods, that information should be clearly identified on your child's physical.** You should also notify Paulina Martinez, our Program & Family Coordinator. If you have a food preference for your child, you should notify us as well.

***DAILY SUPPLIES** (Teachers will remind you if your supplies are running low, but please check to make sure the above items are always in your child's cubby).

Please send your child with the following items:

- Diapers
- Formula
Breast milk babies must have an emergency bottle of breast milk available each day
- Pacifier
- 2 changes of clothing
- Cereal (if child is eating)
- 2 crib Sheets or cot sheet
- -Baby Food or Toddler Food
- NO Blanket under 1
- Wipes
- Bibs
- Bottles, sippy cups, preferred bowl, or spoon

**If it is a burden to supply any of the above items, please speak to the Director so that we can assist you.*

THE CHILD PROJECT

(Climate of Healthy Interaction for Learning and Development)

The Children's Center has partnered with the Robin Hood Foundation to implement the Child Project in our Infant/Toddler Classrooms. CUNY has secured funding through the Robin Hood Foundation to allow teachers at the Children's Center to be coached and participate in the CHILD project voluntarily. Their participation will involve monthly coaching along the framework of the Climate of Healthy Interaction for Learning and Development (CHILD) to build their practice to support the social and emotional environments and climate of early childhood classrooms. The mental health climate is rooted in relationships and experiences. We use the CHILD Toolkit to build a climate that supports both children and adults by encouraging healthy positive interactions.

PHYSICAL WELL BEING AND HEALTH

Infants need freedom of movement to build strength and motor skills. Our program provides infants and toddlers daily opportunities to move freely under adult supervision to explore both indoor and outdoor environments, including tummy time when awake. It is important to keep families informed of their child's daily routines. The program will communicate with parents of infants through daily written reports on our parent-friendly communication, app – Brightwheel. You will receive, and /or will be able to, access daily reports about care-giving routines, such as feeding, sleeping, diapering/toileting. Please read Brightwheel messages daily.

BREASTFEEDING

The Children's Center supports breastfeeding for children. There are proven health benefits and development advantages associated with breastfeeding. We have a quiet, private space available in the Center to all parents. Please see a staff member if you are interested in using this space. The program is certified in the Child and Adult Food Program's Breastfeeding Friendly Certificate.

The Center recognizes that breastfeeding is the ideal method of feeding and nurturing infants, providing many health benefits to both infant and mother. We encourage and support families who choose to breastfeed their infants and strive to protect their ability to continue providing breast milk while their infant is in our care. We promote a philosophy that advocates breastfeeding as the normal feeding process and are committed to helping families have a successful experience.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Director	Catherine Garcia-Bou	cgarciabou@hostos.cuny.edu
Senior Education Director	Monique van Putten	mvanputten@hostos.cuny.edu
Administrative Assistant	Elias Advincola	eadvincola@hostos.cuny.edu
Family & Program Coordinator	Paulina Martinez	pmartinez@hostos.cuny.edu
Mental Health Consultant	Cassie Elliot	celliot@hostos.cuny.edu
Registered Nurse	Xyannie De La Rosa	xdelarosa@hostos.cuny.edu

MEET THE TEACHERS

It is important that families become acquainted with the staff that are teaching their children. Family/Teacher partnerships are an essential component to a successful school experience for both families and children. We encourage you to work together with the classroom teachers to use your shared knowledge to support learning, at home and school. Below are our current staff's qualifications and experience. If there is any change to your classroom's teaching team, we will notify you as soon as possible.

LEAD TEACHERS

- Nehanda Fernandez; A.A., Early Childhood Education; B.A. in Early Childhood Education, in progress
- Yennifer Mendez; B.A., Early Childhood Education; M.S. Ed., in Early Childhood Education, in progress
- Thais Nunez; A.A., Early Childhood Education
- Hijonae Spence; A.A., Early Childhood Education
- Yessica Almanzar; M.S. Ed., Early Childhood Education and Special Education
- Catherine Wint; M.S. Ed., Early Childhood Education; Certified in PK-6

ASSISTANT TEACHERS

- Cindy Vargas; A.A., Early Childhood Education; B.A., Human Services
- Kassandra Crespo; A.A., Early Childhood Education; in progress
- Maria Pena; Child Development Associate
- Princess Nunez; A.A., Early Childhood Education
- Christine Fojas; A.A., Early Childhood Education

RESEARCH AND ARTICLES

Why do Kids have trouble with transitions?

English Version

Writer: Katherine Martinelli

Clinical Experts: Dave Anderson, PhD , Michael Rosenthal, PhD , Matthew H. Rouse, PhD , Caroline Mendel, PsyD

<https://childmind.org/article/why-do-kids-have-trouble-with-transitions/>

With the right support, children can learn to change gears without whining and tantrums any children struggle with transitions, which are common triggers for behaviors that range from annoying (whining, stalling) to upsetting (tantrums and meltdowns).

There are many ways parents and teachers can help kids have an easier time with transitions — and be able to behave better — but it may take a little experimentation to find out what clicks with each particular child.

Some practices are useful to help kids of all stripes with transitions. But for kids with ADHD, anxiety, autism, or sensory processing issues, scaffolding is particularly crucial and can make the difference between a good day and a bad one. Over a period of time, it can help pave the way for success.

Create routines: If a child “doesn’t want to transition because they like consistency and routine and structure,” says Michael Rosenthal, PhD, a clinical neuropsychologist, “then start by building in consistency and routine and structure into the transition process itself.”

For transitions that will happen every day, like turning off the phone to go to bed, consistent routines can have big payoff. A bedtime routine, for example, might seem like something for babies, but having a predictable structure in place can be reassuring and helpful even for older kids (and adults!).

Preview and count down: Along with routines, previewing and countdowns are key. In the morning you might lay out what the day is going to look like. Dr. Rosenthal suggests doing a role-play in which you practice moving from activity to activity to “engage them in the process.”

Then before each transition, give a time frame and description of what will happen along with countdowns (in 20 minutes, then 10, then 5, it will be time to finish breakfast and head to school). This is “allows them to emotionally get ready for an event,” explains Dr. Rosenthal.

Give it a sound track: For younger kids in particular, songs can be especially effective tools to help implement routines and ease transitions. The “clean up” song can be heard in preschools throughout the country for good reason, but there are countless other

songs to be found (and made up!) to suit a variety of situations from tying shoes to brushing teeth.

Visual cues: Other kids may benefit from visual cues. Being able to point to a chart with drawings about what to expect from a particular transition or the steps involved can help some people immensely. These are common in lower grade classrooms but could be easily adapted at home.

Get their attention: For kids with ADHD in particular, says Matthew Rouse, PhD, a clinical psychologist, it's important to make a connection with the child to ensure that you have their attention and that the information is sinking in. This could mean eye contact, sitting next to them, a hand on their shoulder, or asking them to repeat back what you have said. Simply yelling at them from the other side of the room and assuming it's gotten through won't work and will only lead to frustration on both sides.

Use rewards: Rouse points out that rewards can be an effective tool for all kinds of kids and issues. These can be things like stickers, snacks, or a point system that leads to tangible rewards. Schools and parents alike can implement reward systems, and once the kid gets into the habit of seamlessly transitioning you might be able to phase it out. Implement appropriate consequences: If a transition is not going well, David Anderson, PhD, a clinical psychologist at the Child Mind Institute, recommends paying less attention to it rather than escalating the situation.

“Ignore it as long as they’re at least making an effort to make the transition or approximating the transition,” he says. “If they’re really egregiously misbehaving then use an appropriate consequence for that behavior that makes the child understand that behavior is off limits.”

Praise good transitioning: Finally, Dr. Rouse urges parents to recognize when things go well. “For all the times it’s gone wrong,” he says, “there have probably been a lot more times when it’s gone right. Don’t lose those opportunities to be really enthusiastic and say this was so great, it went so smoothly, I really liked how you handed over the iPad right away and started brushing your teeth, and now we have more time to read.” Be specific in your praise, and follow up with a reward when appropriate. With the right support, children can learn to change gears without whining and tantrums.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How can parents help kids with transitions?

One basic strategy is creating routines for daily transitions. Routines for things like getting ready for school, starting homework, and bedtime can be helpful for kids of all ages. Previews and countdowns can also make a big difference. Every morning, give them a preview of the day. Then before each transition, let them know when it will happen and what they will need to do.

2. What tools can make transitions easier for kids?

When helping kids with transitions, getting their attention is important. You can try making eye contact, sitting next to them, putting your hand on their shoulder

or even asking them to repeat back what you said. You could also give each transition its own soundtrack. This works really well for younger kids.

Supporting Transitions Both Big and Small

Young children need caring adults to support them through big and small transitions. In this brief, discover strategies to meet the individual needs of children and their families as they work through big and small transitions. Find the most up-to-date information to answer three prompts: "What does research say?"; "What does it look like?"; and "Try this!" A companion resource, *Connecting at Home*, includes easy-to-try tips to help families support their infants and toddlers through transitions.

Research Notes

Infants and toddlers experience transitions every day. Some transitions are small, like going from playtime to lunch or from nap to a diaper change. Other transitions are big, like starting in a new program or welcoming a new sibling. Whatever the size of the transition, young children need caring adults to support them through it. Three keys to successful transitions are: caring relationships, consistent routines, and flexibility that meets the needs of each child.

The Take Home

Children's individual differences affect how they respond to transitions.

Families that understand child development can better tailor their support to the child's needs during transitions.

Supportive environments with familiar, consistent routines can help infants and toddlers handle transitions.

What Does Research Say?

A child's temperament and developmental level will affect how they respond to transitions. Some children adjust easily to change. Other children may need more adult support. How young children express their emotions and behaviors will vary based on their stage of development. Adults who understand child development can better adapt their support to the specific needs of the child during transitions.

Caring relationships act as a buffer during transitions. Infants and toddlers who receive responsive caregiving from adults learn to trust them and they gain emotional security. They learn they can count on those adults to support them through transitions big and small. This helps them be more receptive to the transitions.

During transitions, it's common for infants and toddlers to act in ways that adults may find challenging. Remember, children's behavior has meaning. They use their behavior to communicate. But their communication and self-control skills are still developing. It's even harder for infants and toddlers to regulate their emotions when things are changing. As they develop, children begin to understand and control their emotions and

behaviors. But, they still need adult support to learn how to handle transitions. Extra help is also important for children with disabilities or suspected delays, who may have challenges communicating their emotions or processing change due to the nature of their disability or delay.

Infants and toddlers do best in predictable environments. Familiar routines around daily transitions teach children what to expect and boost self-confidence. When children know what to expect, it's easier for them to practice regulating their emotions and behaviors.

Even when children know what to expect, transitions can be hard. Some transitions occur at a time of day when children are hungry or tired. Or, the transition might involve many steps that a child doesn't have the memory skills to carry out. This is why routines and support from caring adults are so important. For big transitions, children and families are better able to adjust to change when supportive practices, like routines, are already in place.

What Does It Look Like?

How infants and toddlers respond to transitions depends on the individual child. Temperament, developmental level, and past experience all play a role. One infant might smile as they transition from one adult to another adult's arms. Another infant might immediately begin to cry. For some children, it can be helpful to rehearse or talk about what a bigger transition might look and feel like. Other children might run (or crawl!) full speed into the change.

Relationships act as a buffer to stress. Young children need responsive adults to help them regulate their emotions and behaviors. For example, at first, babies are unable to soothe themselves on their own. They need an adult to help. When children are in responsive relationships with caring adults, they learn, "I know that person and they know me. I can count on them to be there even when things change."

Big transitions are part of all infants' and toddlers' development. Caregivers move away. Families change homes. Children transition into new programs. A family welcomes a new baby. A parent transitions their infant from using a bottle or wearing diapers. Big and small transitions affect children in different ways. Keep in mind, transitions — especially big ones — affect families, too, and so the families may need support through these transitions along with the child.

Many of the daily transitions infants and toddlers experience are predictable and occur in a familiar sequence. An example is putting shoes on before heading outside or changing a diaper after naptime. Other daily transitions are unpredictable, such as an unexpected trip to the doctor or a visit to the home by an unfamiliar person.

Having consistency in caregiver actions and routines teach children what to expect. Reminders, including visual schedules, can help them prepare for what comes next. Consistency is especially important for children with disabilities or suspected delays and children who are dual language learners, as they may be unable to rely on language cues alone.

Try This!

Talk with families about their daily routine. Start the day with a preview of what the day will look like for the child. A visual schedule with pictures of the day's activities can help young children and children with disabilities or suspected delays to understand the day's routine. Be sure to talk about anything that will be different from a typical day. Be flexible with the daily routines you've created, to take into account the individual needs of the child.

Encourage families to provide more time or extra reminders to help young children learn new routines and practice transitions.

Model a first/then strategy for families to let infants and toddlers know when a transition is coming. For example, you might say, "First, we'll put on your shoes and coat, then we'll head outside." For infants, use a soothing voice to talk about what you're doing and what comes next. For toddlers, a little warning gives them time to mentally prepare. Share the [Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework \(ELOF\)](#) with families. The ELOF is a wonderful guide for understanding child development that can help families better support their child through transitions and beyond. Use the [ELOF2GO@Home](#) mobile app to access effective teaching practices while on the go for home visits.

Connect families to program services or resources to help them prepare for and adjust to big transitions.

Discuss the importance of preparing for smaller transitions, too, such as transitioning from a bottle to soft foods or beginning potty training. To help both children and families adjust, have in place supportive practices that align with a family's culture and beliefs. Help families think in advance about the different ways children may respond to small and big transitions. Together, make a plan for how to respond across different scenarios. Talk about how their child's reactions and their own responses will change based on their child's development.

For children transitioning to a new program, encourage families to visit the space ahead of time if they are able.

Be a model for families by engaging in warm, supportive interactions with their infants and toddlers. Encourage families to let their child know they are there for them, even when there is change.

Help families feel supported and ready about upcoming transitions. Young children take cues from their families. If families feel relaxed, young children are more likely to, also. Explain the importance of visual cues for upcoming transitions. For example, if nap time comes after reading books, show them their crib. Visual cues can be especially helpful for children with a disability or suspected delay or for children who are dual language learners.

Encourage families to focus on the positive. Praise children when things go well during transitions. Provide examples of how families can be specific in their praise, such as, "You were patient while I got your bottle ready" or "I like how you cleaned up by putting your toys in the basket."

Learn More

[Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework](#)

[Supporting Transitions: Resources for Building Collaboration](#)

Connecting at Home

Infants and toddlers experience transitions every day. Some transitions are small, like going from a caregiver's arms to a crib or from nap to a diaper change. Other transitions are big, like starting in a new program or welcoming a new sibling. Young children need caring adults to support them through big and small transitions. At home, you can help children manage transitions by creating consistent routines that are flexible to the needs of your child.

Talk About It

Talk to your child about small and big transitions. This kind of talk can teach children, even infants, what to expect over time. You might provide a verbal warning that a small transition is coming: "We need to clean up in 5 minutes. First, we'll clean up, then we'll wash our hands before lunch." One reminder might be enough, but other children may need additional warnings. For bigger transitions, talk about what will happen and when. Describe what will be the same and what will be different. You'll likely need to talk about the transition on many occasions. How and when you talk about the transition will depend on your child's temperament and developmental level.

Add Visuals

Sometimes talking about a transition isn't enough. Children need to experience or see what will happen. For daily transitions, find pictures or symbols that represent transition activities. You can color them together or print out images you find on the computer. Hang the pictures up to point to each day when preparing for each transition. For bigger

transitions like starting in a new program, visit the site with your child if you are able. Before welcoming a new sibling, give your child a baby doll and encourage the child to feed it or be gentle with it. Books also offer visuals that can help with transitions. They can help young children see and learn more about what the transition might look like and how other children or characters have experienced them.

Play a Song

Add music to your routine. Songs can be a great cue to signal that a transition is coming. Select an upbeat song when you want to add some fun to clean up time or a soothing song when you're transitioning to nap time. Or make up your own song! Adapt the words from a familiar tune to match the transition.

Use Transition Objects

A transition object is something that the child can hold and obtain comfort from. You might offer your child a toy to hold in their car seat, during diaper changes, or bath time. Offer a favorite blanket or stuffed animal as you snuggle or read before they head for a nap or bedtime. Let them pick out a special object to use only during the specific transition.

¿Cómo podemos ayudar a los niños con las transiciones?

Spanish Version

Escrito por: Katherine Martinelli

Expertos clínicos: Dave Anderson, PhD , Michael Rosenthal, PhD , Matthew H. Rouse, PhD, MSW , Caroline Mendel, PsyD

Cuando llega el momento de alguna transición, muchos niños se quejan, las postergan o hacen un berrinche. Pero hay maneras en que los padres pueden ayudar a los niños a aceptar las transiciones sin escándalos. Estas estrategias son especialmente útiles para niños con TDAH, ansiedad, autismo o problemas del procesamiento sensorial. Una estrategia básica es la creación de rutinas para las transiciones de todos los días. Las rutinas para cosas como prepararse para ir a la escuela, empezar a hacer las tareas y la hora de ir a la cama pueden ser útiles para niños de todas las edades. Los avisos previos y las cuentas regresivas también pueden hacer una gran diferencia. Todas las mañanas, díles qué es lo que va a pasar durante el día. Luego, avísales antes de cada transición cuánto tiempo falta y qué es lo que tendrán que hacer. Puedes decir, por ejemplo: "En 20 minutos tienes que terminar de desayunar para salir hacia la escuela". Luego, repite el aviso cuando falten 10 minutos para la transición y una vez más cuando falten 5 minutos.

También podrías asignarle a cada transición su propia banda sonora. Esto funciona muy bien para los niños más pequeños. ¡No es casual que la canción "clean up" se escuche en todos los preescolares del país! Algunos niños también se pueden beneficiar de las señales visuales, como un diagrama con imágenes que muestra lo que ocurre en cada transición.

Al ayudar a los niños con las transiciones, es importante captar primero su atención. Puedes tratar de establecer contacto visual, sentarte a su lado, colocar una mano en su hombro o incluso pedirles que repitan lo que dijiste.

Cuando tu hijo realice bien una transición, felicítalo. También le puedes dar una pequeña recompensa como una calcomanía o pegatina, un chocolate o un punto adicional para obtener un juguete nuevo. Una vez que logren hacer la transición con facilidad, puedes ir eliminando gradualmente las recompensas. Cuando no lo hacen tan bien, suele ser mejor prestarle menos atención a tu hijo y centrarte en los momentos en los que sí transita bien de una actividad a la otra.

Muchos niños tienen problemas con las transiciones, que son los desencadenantes comunes de comportamientos que van desde molestos (argumentar, retrasar) hasta perturbadores (berrinches y crisis).

Hay muchas maneras en que padres y maestros pueden ayudar a facilitar las transiciones para los niños (y lograr que se porten mejor), pero puede que requiera un poco de experimentación para averiguar qué funciona con cada niño en particular.

Algunas de estas ideas para facilitar las transiciones son útiles para todo tipo de niños. Pero en el caso de niños con TDAH, ansiedad, autismo o problemas del procesamiento sensorial, este tipo de andamiaje es particularmente significativo, y puede hacer la diferencia entre un día bueno y otro malo. Con el tiempo, contribuye a pavimentar el camino hacia el éxito.

Crear rutinas: Si un niño “se niega a hacer una transición porque le gusta la consistencia, la rutina y la estructura —dice Michael Rosenthal, PhD, neuropsicólogo clínico— entonces incorpora consistencia, rutina y estructura al proceso de transición”. En el caso de las transiciones que suceden todos los días, como apagar el teléfono para ir a la cama, una rutina constante puede tener grandes beneficios. Una rutina para acostarse, por ejemplo, podría parecer que es algo para bebés, pero tener una estructura predecible establecida puede ser tranquilizante y útil incluso para niños mayores (¡y hasta para las personas adultas!).

Avisos y cuenta regresiva: Junto con las rutinas, son fundamentales los avisos y cuentas regresivas. Por la mañana, podrías establecer cómo será el día. El Dr. Rosenthal sugiere hacer un juego de roles en el que practicas ir pasando de una actividad a otra para que tus hijos “se involucren en el proceso”. Después, antes de cada transición, dales un tiempo y una descripción de lo que sucederá, e inicia la cuenta regresiva (en 20 minutos será momento de terminar el desayuno e irnos a la escuela, luego en 10 y después en 5). Esto “les permite prepararse emocionalmente para un evento”, explica el Dr. Rosenthal.

Ponle música: En particular para los niños más pequeños, las canciones pueden ser herramientas especialmente eficaces para ayudar a implementar rutinas y facilitar las transiciones. No por casualidad se escucha la canción “clean up” en los preescolares de todo el país. Pero hay innumerables otras canciones que puedes encontrar (¡y

también crear!) que se adapten a una variedad de situaciones, desde atar los cordones de los zapatos hasta lavarse los dientes.

Indicaciones visuales: Hay niños que se podrían beneficiar de las señales visuales. Señalar una imagen que describe con imágenes qué esperar de una transición particular o los pasos involucrados puede ser de enorme ayuda para algunas personas. Este tipo de imágenes son comunes en las aulas de los primeros grados, pero también se pueden adaptar fácilmente para usarlos en casa.

Captar su atención: Para niños con TDAH en particular, dice Matthew Rouse, PhD, psicólogo clínico, es importante conectar con los niños para asegurarte de que tienes su atención y que la información está siendo captada. Esto podría significar establecer contacto visual, sentarte a su lado, colocar una mano en su hombro o pedirles que repitan lo que dijiste. Gritarles desde el otro lado de la habitación y asumir que lo entendieron simplemente no funcionará y provocará frustración a ambas partes.

Usar recompensas: Rouse señala que las recompensas pueden ser una herramienta eficaz para todo tipo de niños y problemas. Pueden ser cosas como calcomanías o pegatinas, algún dulce o un sistema de puntos que les permita obtener otras recompensas tangibles. Las escuelas y los padres en casa pueden implementar sistemas de recompensa por su cuenta, y una vez que las transiciones dejan de ser un problema se pueden ir eliminando gradualmente.

Aplicar las consecuencias apropiadas: Si una transición no va bien, lo que recomienda Dave Anderson, PhD, psicólogo clínico del Child Mind Institute, es prestarle menos atención, en vez de escalar la situación.

“No pongas tu atención ahí, mientras al menos se estén esforzando por hacer la transición o estén cerca de hacerla”, dice. “Si realmente se están portando mal, entonces usa una consecuencia apropiada para ese comportamiento que les deje claro que el comportamiento está fuera de los límites”.

Elogiar la buena transición: Por último, el Dr. Rouse anima a los padres a reconocer cuando las cosas van bien. “A pesar de todas las veces que las cosas han salido mal —dice— probablemente ha habido muchas más veces en las que han salido bien. Nos pierdas esas oportunidades de ser realmente entusiasta y decir que esto fue genial, que fue tan fácil, que me encantó que entregaras el iPad de inmediato y empezaras a cepillarte los dientes, y que gracias a eso ahora tenemos más tiempo para leer”.

Especifica qué es lo que estás elogiado, y si consideras que es apropiado, dales una recompensa. Con el apoyo adecuado, los niños pueden aprender a cambiar de actividad sin argumentar y sin berrinches.

Apoyo a las transiciones tanto pequeñas como grandes

Los niños pequeños necesitan adultos que se preocupen por ellos y los apoyen durante las transiciones tanto pequeñas como grandes. En este resumen, podrá descubrir

estrategias para satisfacer las necesidades individuales de los niños y sus familias durante las transiciones tanto pequeñas como grandes. Encuentre la información más actualizada para responder a estas preguntas: "¿Qué dicen las investigaciones?", "¿En qué consiste?" y "¡Pruebe con esto!". También hay un recurso complementario, Conexión en casa, que incluye consejos fáciles de seguir para ayudar a las familias a apoyar a sus bebés y niños pequeños durante las transiciones.

Notas de investigación

Los bebés y niños pequeños experimentan transiciones todos los días. Algunas transiciones son de pequeña escala, como pasar de la hora de jugar al almuerzo, o de la siesta a un cambio de pañal. Otras transiciones son grandes, como comenzar en un programa nuevo o darle la bienvenida a un nuevo hermanito. Cualquiera que sea la escala de la transición, los niños pequeños necesitan adultos que se preocupen por ellos y los apoyen durante la transición. Para tener unas transiciones exitosas se necesitan tres cosas: relaciones afectuosas, rutinas regulares y flexibilidad para satisfacer las necesidades de cada niño.

Lo que debe recordar

1. Las diferencias individuales de los niños influyen en la forma en que responden a las transiciones.
2. Las familias que tienen conocimientos sobre el desarrollo infantil pueden adaptar mejor su apoyo a las necesidades del niño durante las transiciones.
3. Los entornos de apoyo con rutinas familiares y regulares pueden ayudar a los bebés y niños pequeños a manejar las transiciones.

¿Qué dicen las investigaciones?

- **El temperamento y el nivel de desarrollo de un niño influirán en la forma en que este responde a las transiciones.** Algunos niños se adaptan fácilmente a los cambios. Otros pueden necesitar más apoyo de los adultos. La forma en que los niños pequeños expresan sus emociones y comportamientos variará según la etapa de desarrollo en que se encuentren. Los adultos que tienen conocimientos sobre el desarrollo infantil pueden adaptar mejor su apoyo a las necesidades del niño durante las transiciones.
- **Las relaciones afectuosas actúan como un amortiguador durante las transiciones.** Los bebés y niños pequeños que reciben cuidados receptivos de los adultos aprenden a confiar en ellos y eso les aporta seguridad emocional. También aprenden que pueden contar con esos adultos para que los apoyen durante las transiciones tanto pequeñas como grandes. Esto los ayuda a ser más receptivos a las transiciones.
- Durante las transiciones, es común que los bebés y niños pequeños actúen en formas que pueden parecerles desafiantes a los adultos. Recuerde, **el comportamiento de los niños tiene un significado.** Para ellos el comportamiento es una forma de comunicarse. Pero sus habilidades de comunicación y autocontrol aún se están desarrollando.

- **Es incluso más difícil para los bebés y niños pequeños regular sus emociones cuando las cosas están cambiando.** A medida que se desarrollan, los niños comienzan a comprender y a controlar sus emociones y comportamientos. Pero, todavía necesitan el apoyo de los adultos para aprender a manejar las transiciones. La ayuda adicional también es importante para los niños con discapacidades o presuntos retrasos que pueden tener dificultades para comunicar sus emociones o procesar los cambios debido a la naturaleza de su discapacidad o retraso.
- **A los bebés y niños pequeños les va mejor en entornos predecibles.** Las rutinas familiares en torno a las transiciones diarias les enseñan a los niños qué esperar y hacen que tengan más confianza en sí mismos. Cuando los niños saben qué esperar, les resulta más fácil practicar cómo regular sus emociones y comportamientos.
- **Incluso cuando saben qué esperar, las transiciones pueden resultarles difíciles.** Algunas transiciones ocurren en un momento del día en que los niños tienen hambre o están cansados. O puede ser que la transición implique muchos pasos que el niño no puede llevar a cabo porque no tiene las habilidades de memoria para hacerlo. Por eso las rutinas y el apoyo de los adultos que se preocupan por los niños son tan importantes. Para las transiciones grandes, los niños y las familias pueden adaptarse mejor al cambio cuando las prácticas de apoyo, como las rutinas, ya se han implementado.

¿En qué consiste?

- La forma en que los bebés y niños pequeños responden a las transiciones depende de cada niño. El temperamento, el nivel de desarrollo y las experiencias pasadas desempeñan un papel importante. Un bebé puede sonreír mientras hace la transición de los brazos de un adulto a los de otro. Otro bebé podría comenzar a llorar de inmediato. Con algunos niños, puede ser útil ensayar o hablar sobre cómo sería y se sentiría hacer una transición más grande. Otros niños pueden correr (¡o gatear!) a toda velocidad hacia el cambio.
- Las relaciones actúan como un amortiguador para el estrés. Los niños pequeños necesitan adultos receptivos que los ayuden a regular sus emociones y comportamientos. Por ejemplo, al principio, los bebés no pueden calmarse por sí mismos. Necesitan a un adulto que los ayude. Cuando los niños tienen relaciones receptivas con adultos que se preocupan por ellos, aprenden lo siguiente: "Conozco a esa persona y esa persona me conoce a mí. Puedo contar con ella para que me ayude, incluso cuando las cosas cambien".
- Las transiciones grandes son parte del desarrollo de todos los bebés y niños pequeños. Los cuidadores se mudan. Las familias cambian de hogar. Los niños hacen la transición a nuevos programas. Las familias le dan la bienvenida a un nuevo bebé. Un padre hace pasar por una transición a su bebé para que deje de usar biberón o pañales.
- Las transiciones tanto pequeñas como grandes influyen en los niños de diferentes maneras. Tenga en cuenta que las transiciones, sobre todo las grandes, también influyen las familias, por lo que estas, al igual que el niño, podrían necesitar apoyo.
- Muchas de las transiciones diarias que experimentan los bebés y niños pequeños son predecibles y ocurren en una secuencia familiar. Un ejemplo es ponerse los

zapatos antes de salir o cambiarse el pañal después de la siesta. Otras transiciones diarias son impredecibles, como tener que ir al médico de forma inesperada o que venga de visita a la casa una persona desconocida.

- Que haya regularidad en las acciones y rutinas de los cuidadores les enseña a los niños qué pueden esperar. Los recordatorios, incluidos los horarios gráficos, pueden ayudarlos a prepararse para lo que viene a continuación. La regularidad es especialmente importante para los niños con discapacidades o presuntos retrasos y para los niños que aprenden en dos idiomas, ya que es posible que no puedan confiar solo en las indicaciones transmitidas con palabras.

¡Pruebe con esto!

- Hable con las familias sobre la rutina diaria de los niños. Comience el día con un anticipo de cómo será el día del niño. Un horario gráfico con imágenes de las actividades del día puede ayudar a los niños pequeños y a los niños con discapacidades o presuntos retrasos a comprender la rutina del día. Asegúrese de hablar sobre cualquier cosa que sea diferente a un día habitual.
- Para tener en cuenta las necesidades individuales del niño, sea flexible con las rutinas diarias que ha creado.
- Anime a las familias a darles más tiempo a los niños pequeños, o a recordarles de nuevo lo que tienen que hacer, para ayudarlos a aprender nuevas rutinas y a practicar las transiciones.
- Modele una estrategia de "primero esto y luego lo otro" para que las familias les digan a los bebés y niños pequeños cuándo se acerca una transición. Por ejemplo, podría decir: "Primero, te pondremos los zapatos y el abrigo, luego saldremos afuera". Use una voz relajante con los bebés para hablar sobre lo que está haciendo y lo que harán después. Con los niños pequeños, una pequeña advertencia les da tiempo para prepararse mentalmente.
- Comparta el [Marco de Head Start sobre los resultados del aprendizaje temprano de los niños \(ELOF, sigla en inglés\)](#) con las familias. El ELOF es una guía maravillosa para comprender el desarrollo infantil que puede ayudar a las familias a apoyar mejor a sus hijos durante las transiciones y más allá. Utilice la aplicación móvil [MiELOF](#) para acceder a prácticas docentes eficaces mientras está afuera haciendo las visitas al hogar.
- Conecte a las familias con los servicios o recursos del programa para ayudarlas a prepararse y adaptarse a las transiciones grandes.
- Discuta la importancia de prepararse para transiciones pequeñas, como pasar del biberón a alimentos blandos o comenzar a aprender a ir al baño. Para ayudar a adaptarse tanto a los niños como a las familias, implemente prácticas de apoyo que se alineen con la cultura y las creencias de una familia.
- Ayude a las familias a pensar con anticipación sobre las diferentes formas en que los niños pueden responder a las transiciones tanto pequeñas como grandes. Juntos, hagan un plan sobre cómo responder en diferentes escenarios. Hable sobre cómo las reacciones de su hijo y sus propias respuestas cambiarán según el desarrollo del niño.
- Para los niños en transición a un nuevo programa, anime a las familias a visitar el espacio con anticipación si es posible.

- Sea un modelo para las familias, involucrándose en interacciones cálidas y de apoyo con sus bebés y niños pequeños. Anime a las familias a hacerles saber a sus hijos que están ahí para ayudarlos, incluso cuando haya un cambio.
- Ayude a las familias a sentirse apoyadas y listas para las próximas transiciones. Los niños pequeños prestan atención a las señales de su familia. Si la familia se siente relajada, los niños pequeños también serán más propensos a relajarse.
- Explique la importancia de las señales visuales para las transiciones futuras. Por ejemplo, si después de leer los libros, viene la hora de la siesta, muéstrele su cuna. Las señales visuales pueden ser especialmente útiles para los niños con una discapacidad o presuntos retrasos, o para los niños que aprenden en dos idiomas.
- Anime a las familias a enfocarse en lo positivo. Elogie a los niños cuando las cosas vayan bien durante las transiciones. Ofrezca ejemplos de cómo las familias pueden ser específicas en sus elogios, como "Fuiste paciente mientras te preparaba el biberón" o "Me gustó cómo guardaste los juguetes en la canasta".

Más información:

- [Marco de Head Start sobre los resultados del aprendizaje temprano](#)
- [Apoyo a las transiciones de los niños y las familias](#)
- [Apoyo a las transiciones: Recursos para el desarrollo de colaboraciones](#)

Conexión en casa

Los bebés y niños pequeños experimentan transiciones todos los días. Algunas transiciones son pequeñas, como pasar de los brazos de un cuidador a la cuna, o de la siesta a un cambio de pañal. Otras transiciones son grandes, como comenzar en un programa nuevo o darle la bienvenida a un nuevo hermanito. Los niños pequeños necesitan adultos que se preocupen por ellos y los apoyen durante las transiciones de pequeña y de gran escala tanto pequeñas como grandes. En el hogar, pueden ayudar a los niños a manejar las transiciones creando rutinas regulares que sean flexibles para satisfacer las necesidades de su hijo.

Hable de ello

Hable con su hijo sobre las transiciones tanto pequeñas como grandes. Este tipo de conversación puede enseñarles a los niños, incluso a los bebés, qué esperar con el tiempo. Puede hacerles una advertencia verbal de que se avecina una transición pequeña: "Tenemos que recoger dentro de 5 minutos. Primero, vamos a recoger y luego nos lavaremos las manos antes del almuerzo". Un recordatorio puede ser suficiente, pero puede ser que otros niños necesiten advertencias adicionales. Para transiciones grandes, hable sobre lo que sucederá y cuándo sucederá. Describa qué será igual y qué será diferente. Es probable que tenga que hablar sobre la transición en varias ocasiones. El momento y la forma de hablar sobre la transición dependerá del temperamento y el nivel de desarrollo de su hijo.

Agregue elementos visuales

A veces hablar de una transición no es suficiente. Los niños necesitan experimentar o ver lo que sucederá. Para las transiciones diarias, busque imágenes o símbolos que

representen las actividades de transición. Puede colorearlos juntos o imprimir imágenes que encuentre en la computadora. Cuelgue las imágenes para señalar cada día cuando esté preparando las transiciones. Para transiciones grandes, como comenzar en un nuevo programa, visite el lugar con su hijo si es posible. Antes de que llegue el nuevo hermanito, dele una muñeca a su hijo y anímelo a darle de comer o a tocarla con cuidado. Los libros también tienen imágenes que pueden ayudar con las transiciones. Estas pueden ayudar a los niños pequeños a ver y aprender más sobre cómo podría ser la transición y cómo otros niños o personajes las han experimentado.

Ponga una canción

Añada música a su rutina. Las canciones pueden ser una buena señal para indicar que se acerca una transición. Seleccione una canción alegre cuando quiera ponerle algo de diversión a la tarea de recoger, o una canción relajante cuando esté haciendo la transición hacia la hora de la siesta. ¡O invente su propia canción! Adapte las palabras de una melodía familiar para que coincida con la transición.

Use objetos de transición

Un objeto de transición es algo que el niño puede sostener y que le da consuelo. Puede darle a su hijo un juguete para que lo sostenga cuando esté en su asiento del auto, durante los cambios de pañal o a la hora del baño. Dele su manta o animal de peluche favorito mientras se acurruca o lee antes de irse a dormir la siesta o a la hora de acostarse. Permítale elegir un objeto especial para usarlo solo durante esa transición específica.

