



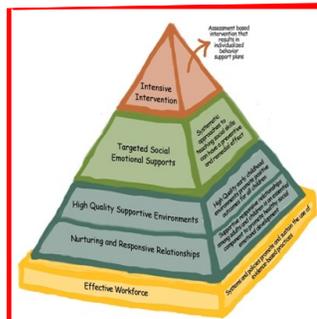
# Transition Tips, Tricks & Ideas

## What are transitions?

Transitions are times of change for students during the school day they include:

- Transition from one routine to another (bathroom/washing hands to preparing to go outside)
- Transitions between activities (from large group to an individual activity)
- Transitions between multiple settings (Leaving the classroom to go somewhere else cafeteria, outside etc.)

## The Pyramid Model: A Place to Begin



Developing nurturing responsive relationships and creating quality supportive environments are the foundations of the Pyramid Model.

When thinking about effective transitions in your classroom, the environment, schedules, routines and expectations you create will effect how your classroom transitions will be handled by all children.

This handout discusses several transition issues and provides strategies to limit the number of transitions, reduce wait-time, and increase child engagement. With intentional, purposeful planning and instruction and persistence teachers can make transitions be less time consuming, more engaging, and more effective in and out of their classrooms.

### Team Tennessee Project B.A.S.I.C. Pyramid Model

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## Why do I need to think about transitions?

- Transitions take time, limiting transitions or making them more effective will lead to more instruction time.
  - Students often spend a lot of time waiting with nothing to do during transitions .
  - By teaching transition skills students will take less time transitioning and have more time to be actively engaged in learning.
  - When students are taught what they "should be doing", it is less likely to see problem behaviors.
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### Too Many Transitions...I am moving children all the time!



**Intentional & Purpose Planning:** *Look at your schedule.*

- *Rearrange your classroom schedule* if possible to limit transitions and have larger time blocks for engaged instruction and learning.
  - *Plan activities* that can eliminate the need for the transition or long periods of waiting, for example have materials ready for next activity, where students can access them when needed, instead of waiting until everyone has completed the first activity and then pass out materials one by one to the whole class.
  - *Combine transitions* for example preparing to go to the library have children clean their area and place their lunch on their desk. When they return from library they can look at their library books as children take turn washing their hands for lunch.
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### Too Long Transitions...My transitions take forever!

**Intentional & Purpose Planning:** *Why is it taking so long?*

- *Expectations:* students should be taught what is expected before, during , & before transitions.
- *Post a visual schedule* so students know when a transition is going to occur and warn them before the transition begins.
- *Teach the students the routine* of the transitions (use visuals to remind them of the steps of the transition - clean-up my desk, turn in my work on teachers desk, push my chair in and line-up to go to the library)
- Split your class in half, have one group transition and the other group continues the activity.
- Send one (or a few students at a time) while the others continue the activity.
- If a wait is necessary plan for engaging and instruction activities to use with class .



# Too Chaotic Transitions....it is loud, children everywhere!

## Intentional & Purpose Planning: *Calming the storm*

- Expectations: students should be taught what is expected before, during, & after transitions. These expectations should follow the rules of the classroom and should include noise level.
- Prepare children for the transition, giving a time warning and/or a visual warning
- Teach the students the routine of the transitions (use visuals to remind them of the steps of the transition - clean-up my desk, turn in my work on teachers desk, push my chair in and line-up to go to the library).
- Give children a job to help with clean-up, materials or other activities that need to be completed when they have finished their routine for clean-up.
- Have an engaging instructional activity that students can join as soon as they have completed the transitional routine. These can be activities related to areas of study, word building games, a math problem challenge or as simple as a categories game or movement activities.
- Look at your classroom schedule -if the transition is from an active activity to a sit/listen/work time think about a calming move from the active activity to getting to work & listening.
- Play music during the transition. Use different tempos for different of activities.

## Tricks and Tips for Transitions:

**Create Calm Transitions:** Play music, have some children read books while others transition or the teacher can read to children not transitioning or finished transition. Remind students about how Tucker Turtle calms down model taking 3 deep breathes before starting a transition.

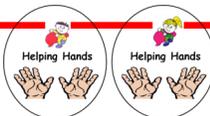


### Visual Schedules & Routines:

Students know what is coming next & they know what is expected during a transition or activity.



**Have buddies:** Use buddies to help clean-up, buddies to line-up together (they could have to solve a problem together before they



**Make it engaging:** Be silly, use fun props (pick a card from a bag and have students act out the card as they move from place to place), use puppets, give clues for what comes next this increases engagement and anticipation.



**Line-up cues:** students can learn shapes, numbers concepts. As well as a visual for where to line-up.



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## Where do I start to improve my transitions?

1. Watch the transitions in your classroom—Time how long are the transitions take? Do the children know what they are doing? If I don't intervene, what happens during the transition? What is working/what is not working? What are the most effective transitions? What happens before and after the transitions?
2. Think about and plan changes in transitions (eliminate, modify & engage)
3. Use these following guidelines:
  - Minimize the number of transitions that children have during the day.
  - Minimize the length of time children spend waiting with nothing to do.
  - Prepare children for transitions by providing a warning or count down.
  - Structure the transitions so that children have something engaging & instructional while they wait.
  - Teach children the expectations related to transitions.

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## Have transition ideas to share?

Team Tennessee is always looking for successful Pyramid Model ideas! Go to the Team

Tennessee website: <http://teamtn.invoices.org/> and add it to our forum either:

***Pyramid Model Implementation or Project B.A.S.I.C.*** (you will need to register for a username/password, follow the directions on the forum page)

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## Resources

The following resources were used to create this handout. The websites will provide more information and visuals for transitions:

**Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL):** <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>

**Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children (TACSEI):** <http://challengingbehavior.org/>

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**Promoting Social Emotional Competence  
in Tennessee's Young Children**

