

Transition Ideas to Avoid Meltdowns

1. Make it clear to the child how much longer the activity will last.
 - a. May use a visual timer
 - b. Offer a set number of turns with the activity before moving on and counting them out clearly.
 - c. Give several warnings for how long the child has left to participate in the activity. (Some children need more than others)
2. Make sure the child knows and understands what is coming next and give her something to look forward to.
 - a. Use a picture schedule or visual schedule
 - b. As much as you can stick to the schedule
 - c. Inform children of changes that are occurring in the schedule
3. Use a transition object or toy
 - a. Allow the child to bring a favorite object with them.
 - b. Make a special place for them to “park” their toys for the time they shouldn’t have them and tell them a time they can pick up their toy.
4. Practice the art of distraction
 - a. Bubbles!
 - b. Singing or movement when transitioning to the next room
 - c. Set a block in front of the line and have all the children jump over it while going down the hall
 - d. Bring along a jump rope and have the entire line limbo or jump over it
5. Make sensory “pit stops”
 - a. Mini trampoline in the middle of the hallway
 - b. Tactile bin with a few resistance bands and a container of theraputty
6. Have a consistent way of signaling that an activity is over
 - a. Line up or clean up song
 - b. Put on a CD with a specific song
7. Make “wait” time less miserable and confusing
 - a. Have them complete a small movement break while they’re waiting
 - b. Use a fidget toy
 - c. Visual prompt to show how long the wait time will be
8. Don’t rush it-if you know a student is going to struggle with an upcoming transition plan for extra time.
9. Practice makes perfect!
 - a. Social Stories are great for easing anxiety over new or difficult transitions. They allow kids to mentally “practice” the transition in a calm, nonthreatening way.
 - b. Practice is key. Kids aren’t going to learn to make new transitions unless they have consistent practice - sometimes for many days (or weeks).
10. Consistency, Structure, and Organization are key!