

A handbook for early years keyworkers on transitions

Human development

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(Source: Understanding Childhood, 2014)

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Introduction

What/who is this handbook for?

This handbook is a guide for key workers and practitioners for them to know the importance of transitions during the first few years of child's life. This one is going to be focused on the transition from home to starting nursery/creche. I am hoping that this handbook will become beneficial to key workers and practitioners and they get a better understanding after reading it and will lead to better outcomes for the children as this handbook will contain a lot of useful information.

The handbook will cover various points and key factors and will contain a lot of information about transitions, role of the adult, needs of a child, interventions and the proposed outcomes.

Transitions

What are transitions?

Transitions represent the next stage in a child's life which start with from being at home to then moving on to creche/nursery and the moving up. Most children and older children may appear to be happy to go to the next chapter in their life, but on the other hand transitions may be difficult. Help and support from parents and the keyworkers will benefit the children by making it easier for them. (Education Scotland, 2020)

When a child changes transitions it can take up to 2 weeks for the child to get used to a different setting and being away from their primary care giver. The child will need to get used to their new environment and be able to form a relationship and bond with the key worker before they will feel comfortable and content. For children under the age of 3 it can be quite overpowering for them to adapt to change so that's when the keyworker will need to use effective communication to make the child feel secure. (Walker, 2017)

During transitions there is many new different things that children need to be able to adapt to such as, equipment, rules, new people and getting to know those new people. Not all children are the same, some children will be more outgoing and confident and will settle in without it being a problem but then then the keyworkers and parents have to take into consideration that an insecure shy child will take longer to adapt to the new environment. (Hunt, no date)

For a child to start nursery, it may be better to start with a taster day first to see how the child settles in and then gradually build up longer days until the child is settled and comfortable. The primary care giver should also give a detailed description of the child's routine, likes, dislikes and any allergies or medication as well.

The role of an adult

When a child starts creche or nursery it is the very first transition from being at home so it is important for the practitioner to be able to communicate and cooperate with the parent so the child can feel comfortable and safe. In a child's life the parent is the most sustainable person to them, and the person they feel more secure with. The parents know their children better than anyone else, so by the practitioner's involving the parents as much as possible, it aims to ensure that the key worker knows everything they need to about the child. (TowerHamlets)

A child starting nursery for the first time can be a frightening process for the primary care giver as well as the child. It is crucial that the key worker/practitioner makes the new environment as warm and welcoming as much as possible so the primary care giver feels comfortable as well as the child. By making sure that the primary care giver is happy with the setting it makes it easier for the child as the parent can give a positive message to the child about the transition. (O'connor, 2007)

Walker (2019) points out that when a child starts nursery it provides some thrilling chances as well as it may being tough, this transition needs to be handled delicately and successful. The idea of having a well-thought-out transition and being able to communicate with the primary care giver ensures that all aspects of the infant's requirements are encountered. Walker (2019) also states that key workers must ensure they establish measures and method to guarantee that they can assist the infant so the transition goes as smooth as possible.

Walker (2019) then goes on to give a few points about what practitioners really need to do during transition which are, having good communication with the parent/care giver, make sure they ask parents for a detailed written routine of what their child does throughout the day, take pictures of children (with consent from parent) for wall displays, ask parents to make sure the child has any comfort from home that they need to bring in with them, examine each child to see how they are getting on with the new environment and report back to parents, reassure parents that are distressed and assess the child's development with the parent by asking them to come in for a meeting. They are some of the main points that Walker (2019) discusses.

Attachments

Bowlby, (1958) States that the attachment between a child to the care giver is important because it enables that security and protection. Bowlby, (1958) also goes on to say that attachment is vital as it increases the possibility of the child's life to survive.

The attachment between a child and parent effects the child's development in many ways such as, physical, psychological, behavioural and development health. Rees, (2007)

Rees, (2007) also states when the relationship between the child and the parent is strong it creates that safe base.

Why is the attachment bond important?

In compliance with a landmark report in the 2000, the attachment bond is important to a child's development. The structure of attachment effects the child in many ways such as:

Mentally

Physically

Intellectually

Emotionally

Socially

If you have a strong and secure bond with the child it can determine the child's ability to do good in school and later on in life. (science of early childhood development)

The needs of a child

During transition, as a practitioner you meet many different children during the process. As every child is different a smooth and effective transition needs to be thought through properly as it needs to be a fixed and clear view of infants social, emotional and intellectual needs. As it is a new setting and environment for a child to be starting nursery, it is required that the practitioners should be open for the child to be able to go to them with any questions or concerns. (Drake, 2006)

(Mosaic Nursery, 2019) Suggests that each child has necessary needs which will benefit them in many ways and to develop a powerful personality. These are some of the needs:

- Love and care
- Security
- Physical activity
- Appreciation
- Guidance
- Time

According to (Maslow, 2020) the hierarchy needs are the following-

Physiology needs: This means physical needs. Physical needs are stuff like drinking and eating. Maslow states that some of the requirements are to be aware of the bodies needs by maintaining the body temperature. Maslow then goes on to say that physical needs are one of the most vital needs as if they have any other needs they are more than likely to just concentrate on the physical need as it will be difficult to focus on anything else.

Safety: Children need to have a safe environment and be able to be feel comfortable and secure otherwise they may not feel relaxed and happy. Maslow (2020)

Love: Maslow (2020) points out that this particular requirement is important because children need to be able to feel loved and to be able to love also. Children need to be able to feel accepted into their new environment so they need to feel welcomed. Maslow (2020)

Esteem: The esteem need includes being confident and self-love. It also includes being appreciated by people and being rewarded and recognised when the child has done something good and good behaviour. Maslow (2020)

Self-actualization: According to Maslow (2020) self-actualization means being able to enjoy. It can also be different for everyone as to one person it may be supporting people or to someone else it could mean being imaginative and accomplish things that you want to. Maslow (2020)

Partnerships

It is ideal to work along side parents/care giver during the early years setting as it is important that practitioners use effective communication to ensure that the parents/care giver can also work at home with their child's education. It is also important that parents advise them so that key workers can organise useful knowledge within the nursery. For parents that are separated, working or for dads there will need to be diverse tactics put in place and will communicate with the parents to see what works best for them. Lewisham case study (2003-2019)

Pacey (2009-2020) states that as practitioners they should ensure that the parent/care giver is made aware of who their child's key worker is. It is crucial that at the end of the day the practitioner should report back to the parent/carer how the child has been throughout the day and is made aware of any development that the child is making.

According to Pacey (2009-2020) The parents/care giver should be involved as much as possible as it will be good for them to know how their child is doing and the keyworkers can also invite them to social occurrences and any news that they have.

Patel (2020) points out that to have a smooth transition the link between the parent and practitioner needs to be firm and humble. A discussion with parents/care giver gives the practitioner opportunity to tell the parents any useful information that they can. It is also important that the parent/care giver feels comfortable leaving their child with the key worker. The parent would feel comfortable by having good communication and effective communication between themselves and the practitioner. It can be difficult for parents as well as the children when starting nursery, some parents may get "separation anxiety". To prevent this from happening the practitioner and parent should be communication so they know how the child is doing.

Under this category the theory of Bronfenbrenner will be useful. His theory is called "Ecological system theory".

Bronfenbrenner states that a child's ability to grow as a person is impacted by the environment that they are in. Bronfenbrenner broke the child's environment down into 5 section these are the following:

- Microsystem
- Mesosystem
- Exosystem
- Macrosystem
- Chronosystem

Roundy (2003-2020)

Microsystem- The microsystem is to show the bands that have immediate connections with the child. Most importantly, family and school are the main bands that are most crucial to a child. However, there is a lot of other bands that also make up this system.

Mesosystem- This system implies that the relationship between the practitioner and the parent/care giver has a straight effect on the child.

Exosystem- This system is more for the families that work so that would affect the child as it will all depend on the parent and how they can make time to sit down and interact with the child.

Macrosystem- In this system, this explains how the child is affected by what is happening close by them. The macrosystem controls how the child is developing as it decides how the other systems reveal themselves.

Chronosystem- Bronfenbrenner didn't add this theory in the same time as he done the other ones as this one covers the impact of losing a family member which will have a huge impact on a young child's life. Exploring your mind (2020)

What are the benefits of working in partnerships?

There is a wide variety of benefits on working with partnerships. The main benefit is that it enables all families to divide information between each other and tell each other about the child's progress in the new environment. Langston (2014)

Interventions

What are interventions?

Interventions are to guarantee that infants are able to require academic creche or nursery knowledge that desires to school when they are older. Education endowment foundation (2011)

Interventions are important as it affects an infant's development and enhance the results of an infant. Being able to have an effectual intervention will stop difficulties from happening or being able to control the problem before it gets out of hand. Early intervention foundation, (no date)

The intention of intervention is to provide the parents/care giver and key worker a knowledgeable insight on the infants learning, awareness and intelligence. The practitioner should access the infants progress in order to see if the infant is meeting the right needs that it should be. Other aspects are also reviewed such as, learning, play and creativity. Early intervention (2012)

Play

"For children, play is a language that can have considerable therapeutic benefits" (Horvath, 2000)

During children's nursery time they are urged to undertake in a range of educational play measures. Play is very important in a child's life as to them its more than just playing, to them it is their way off communicating and to voice their opinion.

As adults we can use other techniques to communicate but children may not be able to do that so they use play to connect with other children and adults. Children are able to show their feelings when playing and sometimes it is their only way to forget about any upset throughout the day. Through play children are able to show emotion.

Play is a child's language so as any other language it takes time getting used to it and learning properly. It is important to children that they get to explore outside as well as playing inside too. It is good for children to have actual items to play with as well as toys, inside and outside. Children are very fond to make their own decision on who they chose to play with and what they play with. Horvath (2000)

Play can affect children's development in many ways such as:

- Social and emotional
- Communication

Proposed outcomes

The key to having a successful and positive transition is having a good relationship with the new key workers. Having a positive transition has a huge impact on the child's development so it is important the transition goes smoothly because if it doesn't it can lead to affecting a child's development in a bad way, which can lead to a different kind of life later on.

The effective provision of pre-school

What is EPPE?

Effective provision of pre-school (EPPE) looks at all different aspects of a child's life such as history qualities in connection with the parents/care giver, surroundings of the infant's home and also the environment of the nursery that they will be starting.

EPPE investigated the features of useful procedure through strong case studies which included the outcomes of successful outcomes of transitions. EPPE has shown how the useful outcome for high quality condition on the infant's intellectual, social and behaviour development. Sylva, K. Et al. (2004)

Reggio Emilia approach

In this section the Reggio Emilia approach is also ideal.

The Reggio Emilia approach is based in Italy, it is schools where children get taken seriously and where even the youngest of children could acquire the skills.

Reggio Emilia approach infants as their own people as they would like to see how children who have the ability to be comfortable and confident with their new environment. The important elements in this approach are to comprehend the child's educational, physiological and sociological impacts. The approach gives children a good chance to express themselves, to be able to communicate, logical thinking and good problem-solving skills. Stoudt, (2020)

Effects

Successful and smooth transitions give children a better outlook on life and will help them out in a great way later on in life. It could get them to do better in their GCSE's and many more things in life. Positive transitions also help's children with how they handle difficult experiences. However, if children experience an unsuccessful transition it may make them view things in a completely different perspective, so it is important that practitioners and parents/care givers give as much support to children to ensure the transition goes as smooth as possible to benefit the child's life later on. An unsuccessful transition also affects the child's emotional, intellectual, physiological and behavioural development. Exceed academies trust, (2020)

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