TRANSITION SUPPORT FOR YOUNG CHILDREN.

A childcare practitioners handbook.

(Source: Miller, 2013)

An essential handbook to demonstrate the importance of supporting young children during transition through childcare practitioners' effective communication and practice.

Contents

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: The principles of transition

Section 3: The Needs of the young children

Section 4: The Role of the adult

Section 5: The Environment

Section 6: The importance of play

Section 1: Introduction.

This handbook is suitable for all practitioners in the early years setting but aimed more at early years practitioners during the transitional period of the nursery/preschool to primary school settings.

When transitions excel expectations and work, they help young children to develop confidence and gain the relevant skills to manage changes within their lives. Young children face multiple transitional changes before reaching the early years. These transitions can vary from a home setting to a childminder, moving home, or something more fundamental, such as moving from one activity to another.

This handbook focuses on the transitional changes that young children will face during their transition from nursery to primary school and the importance of childcare practitioners to ensure the best and most effective outcome for young children. All professionals involved in the Early years setting must be committed to developing positive communication links and a positive and shared approach between all professionals involved.

When young children go from one setting to another, as they begin their journey at full-time primary school, these transitions are milestones for young children and impact their academic and emotional development. These are happy changes and vital growth for young children. However, there can also be unsettled changes where surroundings, practitioners, new emotions, and routines change. The young children must be at the center so that their learning can be nurtured and their emotional state can be managed. Transitions can be made more delicate by careful planning and sharing information along with visits between parents, professionals, and carers.

(Source: Tigatelu, 2020)

Section 2: Principles of Transition

(Gateshead, 2018) state that when considering the features of 'best practice' guidance, the two clear themes to follow are:

• Young Children are to be at the heart of all transition arrangements.
• To maintain Effective transitions it is required that planning and regular communication between providers is essential.

Transitions should provide opportunities for:

• Developing positive relationships - *regarding young children's emotional well-being, fostering a sense of belonging and guidance.*

• Families to be involved – *developing a safe and essential support relationship with practitioners and families to support the transition.*

• Continuity of experience – increases attachment quality and supports long-term development.

• Collaborative working – young children's *development or learning is supported by practitioners and families.*

• Building on positive experiences – *vital for children's emotional well-being and achievement.*

• Managing change and new challenges – provide a safe environment and secure attachment.

• A Flexible approach to meet young children's needs as an individual – young children benefit from strong partnerships and practitioners' knowledge of their needs.

(Source: Ofsted, 2013)

Section 3: Needs of the young children.

According to (Harper, 2003), Young children are continually at risk of being unable to fulfill adequately their basic human needs. These children include those who live with a hunger for food, in inadequate shelter, in unsafe and unhealthy conditions, living with emotional abandonment, psychological pain, or are experiencing neglect, abuse, or rejection. The basic needs of young children are essential for a positive and successful transition. As (Brookings, 2022) points out, children with a stable home, supportive parents/guardians, economic resources, and a balanced diet are likelier to flourish. Every young child has the right to basic needs. As it states in ARTICLE 24 (UNICEF), the best possible health is every child's right; excellent quality health care must be provided by the government along with nutritious food, water, and education on well–being and health so young children can stay healthy. (Flatley, 2016) acknowledges that practitioners meeting young children's basic needs of social, physical and emotional is allows a sure foundation on which young children are guaranteed to achieve their full potential and experience a happy childhood. Artice 3 (UNICEF) states the best interest of young children must be a main priority in all actions and decisions that can affect young children.

(Source: Maslow,2020)

(Weidman, 2023) states that all the basic-need gratifications, which help growth toward self-actualization and toward peaks, are also intrinsically biologically valuable

Section 4: Role of the adult.

(The lego foundation) states that the primary source can be referred to as anyone in the young child's everyday environment and whom the young child looks for to gain necessities like shelter, food, and physical and emotional comfort. In a situation of change, the primary caregiver's role is to reassure the child of their presence and willingness to listen and respond to their physical and emotional needs. (Hayes, 2017) expresses Nurturing young children's learning as part of a caring educative process requires adults to develop skills of observation and reflection, allowing for non-intrusive planning and provision of learning environments that support and extend children's learning and opportunities for good-quality interactions. Young Children benefit from being with enthusiastic and responsive adults who show and are interested in talking with them. Practitioners must build a relationship with young children's families and support them during their transition to maintain a stable and clear understanding of the young child. (Rose, ETL 2012) believes that the practitioner dimension to the adult role recognizes that being a caring professional is essential to early years practice. How practitioners act involves:

- Demonstrating kind and caring values.
- Showing kindness to young children so that they feel safe and well-protected.
- Communicating with young children's families
- Providing all young children with basic needs
- Understanding young children emotionally.
- Facilitating and setting challenges

(Source: The Washington post, 2020)

Section 5: The Environment

Transitioning to a new school or classroom can be challenging for young children. Practitioners' reassurance and a comforting nature must be at the forefront of the young children's needs. Environments designed to support families and children during times of transition will enable emotional well-being, communication, and general engagement to happen and help the transition to be a time of excitement and challenge rather than being demanding and stressful. For many young children, the early years transition may be the only source of interaction away from home settings; therefore, practitioners must enable a safe and comfortable environment based on the individual needs of each young person. (Jarman 2018) points out Young children's environments designed to support families and young children during the transition periods will enable general engagement and emotional well-being, allowing the transition period to be a more exciting and enjoyable experience rather than a stressful and challenging transition time. (Armstrong, 2020) agrees A carefully resourced environment supports the development of competencies and skills, so all young children practitioners must facilitate an environment with excellent conditions and opportunities for learning; young children feel enthusiastic, joyful, and secure when doing this.

(Source: UWTSD, 2023)

Section 6: The importance of play

(Smidt, 2009) Play is self-chosen and allows the young child to follow their initiative to meet their needs. Play within young children's transition plays a vital role in allowing young children to express feelings and emotions from personal experiences, likes, and dislikes. (Gascoyne, 2018) illustrates that young children's practitioners acknowledge all types of play are fundamental in the transition period; it allows young children to express themselves through a variety of messy play, soft play, individual play, and group play. Play allows young children to interact with peers and helps build healthy relationships with one another. (Evening news, 2018) agrees Play is an essential part of Early Education and as young children play they are developing the cognitive, and physical skills that they will need to take them into successful adulthood; skills such as communication, cooperation, emotional intelligence as well as sharing and empathy skills.