TRANSITIONS



(Source:- Teaching Times, 2020)

A Guide For All Early Years Practitioners For A Positive And Effective Transition

(Nursery to Reception)

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Introduction to the Process of Transition



(Source: - Early Years Alliance, 2018)

Aim

The aim of this Handbook is to provide setting staff with the knowledge and understanding needed to provide a positive and smooth transition for the children within their care, by utilizing theories and concepts in Early Years Transition.

It will provide a basic understanding of the term transition, and by exploring how the role of the adults, the learning environment, positive working partnerships, and practical interventions, are essential in not only meeting the child's needs, but also allowing the child to achieve their preferred outcomes.

Working as an early year's practitioner, it is important that we understand what attachment is and how we can support the child and parents through the transition process. By providing a positive smooth transition, it can improve the wellbeing of the child and allows both the child and the parents a positive outcome (Pacey, 2021).



(Source: - Mother And Baby, 2022)

What is Transition?

Transition is 'the changing environments surrounding the child and their family' (Beniston & Dudley, 2020)

Transitions occur in every aspect of a child's life, it's the process when a child must adapt to a new situation or circumstances, due to changes that have taken place in a child's life. (Birth to 5 Matters, 2021).

These childhood transitions allow the child to successfully achieve their milestone events and have a specific influence on the child's development outcomes (Early Years Matters, 2018).

What are the types of transitions?

There are three types of transition, these are Vertical, Horizontal and Educational Associated Transition.

Vertical Movements

Vertical Movements are progression transitions which are linked to the child's developmental stages (Fabian & Dunlop, 2007).

These include: -

- Toilet training
- Removing a child's dummy
- Sleeping through the night
- Moving upwards between care settings and educational settings



(Source: - Kandoo Kids. 2022)



(Source: - Swinemoor Primary School, 2021)

Horizontal Movements

Horizontal Movements are transitions which can occur throughout the child's daily activities (Kegan & Neuman, 1998).

These can include: -

- Lunchtimes
- Going out into the yard at playtime
- Supply Teacher
- The transition between home, the child's setting, and a childminder



(Source: - Food for life, 2021)

Education Associated Transitions

Education Associated transitions are significant changes which occur outside of the educational setting but have an impact on the child's needs or wellbeing (Vogler et al, 2008). Elder (1998) discusses transition in a social context, where significant changes affect the individuals or a family's life can alter the trajectory of a child's development.

These significant changes can include: -

- A birth of a new sibling
- Moving to a new home
- Divorce
- Living with other family members or in the care system
- Bereavement or serious illness within the family.



(Source: - Huffpost, 2014)

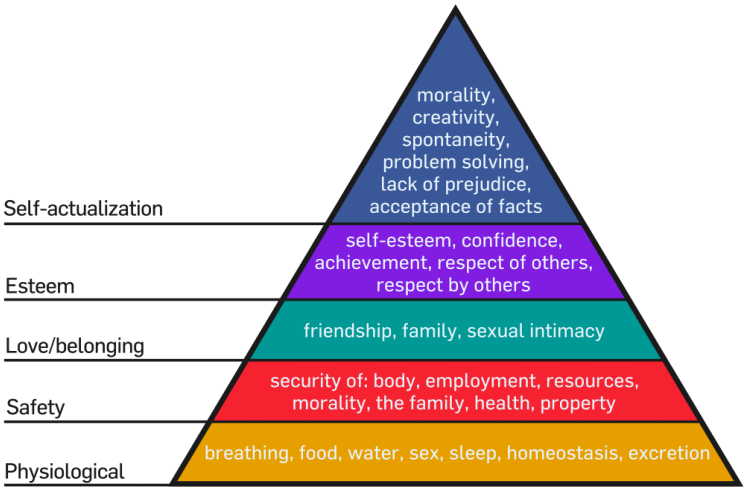
Within this handbook, transition refers to the changing of the environmental settings from either the child's home or previous childcare setting.

The Needs of the Child

Locke (1689) and Maslow (1943) both discuss the theory that for a person to achieve their full potential, it is essential that all their basic needs are met.

Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, discusses these basic needs required for a child to progress further.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943)



(Source 1: - Defending The Early Years, 2022)



(Source 1.1: - Defending The Early Years, 2022)

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The base layer of Maslow's pyramid are the basic biological and physiological rights. These are the needs which should be met, essential needs such as food, water, shelter, warmth, and sleep. Without these

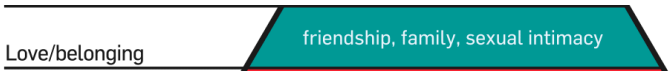
basic needs being met, the child can be hungry, tired or cold, which can all have an effect on the child's concentration skills. We must take these basic needs into consideration before we expect these children to engage in any activity. By simply offering a piece of warm toast or a glass of milk, can help the child overcome some of their hunger, enabling the child to focus on the task in hand (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) articles 6, 24 & 27).



(Source 1.2: - Defending The Early Years, 2022)

(Dissected image from original source)

The second stage of Maslow's pyramid is safety, to provide a child with freedom, security, stability and protection (Section 31 (1) Children Act 1989 & UNCRC Article 19 & 24). When these initial safety needs are met, the child becomes more aware of their additional requirements, this is where separation anxiety and uncertainty can manifest itself. As professional practitioners, we must be aware of Bowlby (1958) Attachment Theory.



(Source 1.3: - Defending The Early Years, 2022)

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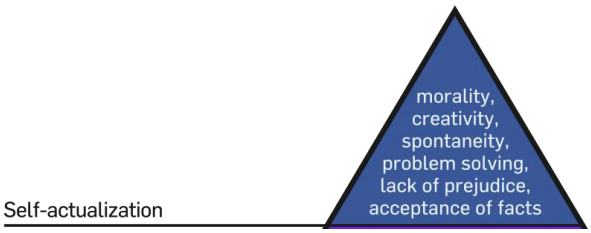
The third segment of Maslow's (1943) pyramid of needs, looks at affection, love, and friendship. Where, children are give opportunities to make friends or build connections within a loving home. By creating these essential relationships, it enables the child to excel into the forth segment, Esteem.



(Source 1.4: - Defending The Early Years, 2022)

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This is where a child is respected and praised for their achievements and accomplishments, it enables the child to gain independence, self-esteem, self-respect, and the ability to achieve (UNCRC Articles 7, 8 & 15). In addition to the concept of positive reinforcement of a child's achievements, Skinner's (1904-1999), Operant Conditioning theory, discusses that when a child's achievements are rewarded, it has the ability to influence and enhance a child's educational achievements.



(Source 1.5: - Defending The Early Years, 2022)

(Dissected image from original source)

Finally, the top of the Maslow's (1943) pyramid looks at a person's self-actualisation or self-fulfilment. (UNCRC Articles 6 & 8).

Heylighen, (1992) disagrees with this part of Maslow's (1943) theory, discussing that self-actualisation is a difficult challenging concept for children to comprehend. To have the ability to reach personal potential, an individual must understand contentment in their current personal situation and to have the desire, drive and need to succeed, which as a child, who is still learning to develop, is unable to succeed in attaining this level of fulfilment (Heylighen, 1992)

Attachment Theory

'Attachment is a lasting psychological connectedness between human beings' (Bowlby, 1997).



(Source: - psychalive.org, 2018)

Bowlby's (1997) theory on attachment, discusses the importance of the emotional bond a child creates with their primary caregiver. Discussing the emotional and psychological affects that can occur if there is a disruption to this early bond and the impact this loss or disruption can have on the child's future relationships in adulthood.

Erikson (1982) reinforces this theory, by discussing the fact that for a child to develop, then they must have a basic trust in their primary care and the need for their basic needs to be met.

Bowlby's (1997) theory, continues to discuss that during a child's life, although, the attachments formed with their primary caregiver during early infancy, are the most important, they can also form attachments with more than one caregiver.

Holmes and Holmes (2014) explore Bowlby's (1997) attachment theory, discussing the four different categories of attachment further.

Secure Attachment

This form of attachment established with a child, is regarded as the healthiest form of attachment, as it has an impact on the child's future development, such as showing maturity, empathy, and positive non-disruptive social behaviour.

It takes the form of, when a parent is present, the child will comfortably explore and play in a new environment, positively interacting with other individuals.

When the parent leaves the room, the child will become distressed and inconsolable, although prior interaction with other friendly adults was established, the child still requires and seeks their parents physical and emotional support.

When the parent returns, they have the able to react appropriately to the child's needs, providing the required comfort.

These children grow into confident, positive, secure, supportive individuals, who can maintain positive secure relationships as adults (Bowlby, 1997).

Insecure Avoidant Attachment

In this form of attachment, the child will comfortably explore and play in a new environment, and show's indifference to who their caregiver is. This is usually, the outcome of the child feeling rejected by their parents. This can be due to the parents, lack of emotional or physical closeness, and when a parent is unresponsive or insensitive to the child's needs.

When the parent leaves the room, the child may or may not show emotion, but if the child does cry, other present individuals are able to calm the child down effectively.

On returning, the child may choose to turn or pull away from the parent.

Unlike children with secure attachments, these children often grow up to be hostile, aggressive adolescence, and as adults they avoid emotional connections, as they find intimate relationships problematic (Bowlby, 1997).

Insecure Ambivalent Attachment

Choosing to remain close to the parent, and even when parents are present, children with insecure ambivalent attachment, will oppose to exploring and playing in a new environment, and show apprehension towards other individuals.

On separation, neither the parent or present individual can comfort the child, as the child will show signs of frustration and anger on the return of the parent. This can be due to the parent's lack of consistency and their inability to provide comfort or respond appropriate to their child's behaviour.

Growing up to be less confident, less assertive, adult reliant individuals, who often become targets of bullying (Bowlby, 1997).

Insecure Disorganized Attachment

Demonstrating odd and uncertain behaviours towards their parents, a child with insecure disorganized attachment can find distinguishing their feelings difficult. They can appear to show signs of distress, avoidance and can freeze in sight of their parents.

Unfortunately, this can sometimes be due to the child's exposure to trauma or loss experienced by a parent. This can result in the child associating the parent with distress, but for the child's needs to be met, even though the parent may display unpredictable and inconsistent behaviour.

As adults, child with insecure disorganized attachment, often become withdrawn, as they are usually suffering of trust issue, this can cause the individual to suffer from behavioural issues and mental illness, as they are unable to regulate their emotions, and have difficulties in socializing with others (Bowlby, 1997).

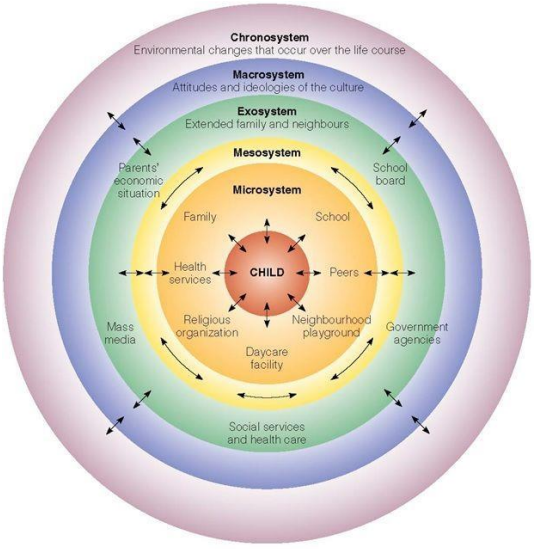
The Role and Partnerships of the Adult's in a Child's Transition

'In all things, the beginning is the important part'

(Plato, 375 B.C)

(Source: - Plato, 1941)

With this philosophy in mind, the role of the adults in the transition process is essential in providing a smooth and positive experience for the child, and by having an understanding that no matter how small an experience is, it can have lasting consequences, which can influence the child's development (Locke, 1692).



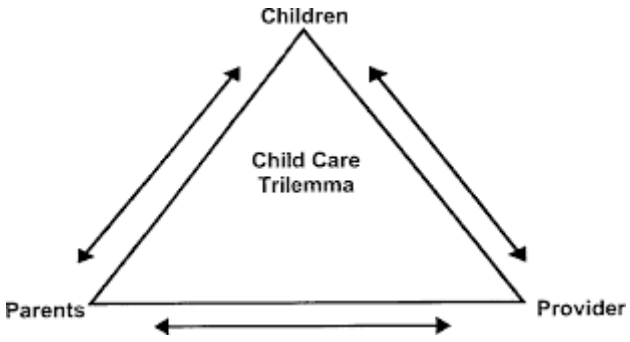
Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory

(Source:- Simply Psychology. 2020)

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1976) discusses the multiple complex relationships between a child's environment, family, cultures, laws and the school setting, that can impact on a child's development.

By dividing a child's environment into five different systems, Bronfenbrenner (1976) was able to determine that when looking at a child, it is essential that we look not only at the child's immediate environment, but also the child's interaction with the wider environment around them. With this notion in mind, an inclusive learning environment is necessary for a child to reach their developmental potential. Furthermore, Bronfenbrenner (1976) discovered that children who experienced strong nurturing relationships with their parents or primary caregivers, possessed the crucial personal interaction skills which supported the child's development.

Due to this crucial relationship between the child and its primary caregiver, Brooker (2008) discusses the significance of Kaminsky 1970's family childcare triangle and the importance of the complex relationships between all adults providing care and developmental support to the child.



(Source:- Kaminsky, 1970)

Childcare Practitioners

Following the mandatory guidelines set out in the National Minimum Standards (NMS), Early Years Practitioners have a clear set of key

instructions in which they can assist and support the child and families through the transition process (Care Inspectorate Wales, 2016). These instructions state that: -

- By assessing and collating information on every individual child, enables the practitioner to have a fuller understanding of the child and the child's needs, so that provisions can be put into place prior to the child's arrival at the setting (NMS 3 & 4) (Care Inspectorate Wales, 2016).

- Positive valued partnerships with parents are vital in obtaining crucial and relevant information about the child and to encourage a two-way communication between the parents and setting. Enabling parents to be kept up to date with information on their child's achievements and empowering the parents to make informed decisions and choices towards the child's wellbeing (NMS 6) (Care Inspectorate Wales, 2016).

- The awareness and importance of the parent's role in the nurturing and the wellbeing of the child, emphasizing the importance of 'The Voice of the Child' (Children Act 1989), and UNCRC Article 27 (Care Inspectorate Wales, 2016); (UNICEF UK, 2022).

Parents

Dodds (2016) and Winnicott (1960) both believe that parents are fundamental in providing the child with the love and care within the family environment, and that this environment can influence and impact on the child's development. Winnicott goes on further to say that even though a child has no control on their environment, they still have the ability to develop, due to the care and support that is provided by their mother.

As a child's first and continuous teacher (Cowan, 2014), a parent's role is to provide the child with encouragement, support and providing access to age-appropriate activities to interact with their environment, allowing the child to encounter challenges in a safe and enabling

environment, which will enable the child's development (Child Development Institute, 2019) & (UNCRC Article 31).



(Source: - FirstCry Parenting, 2021)

Key Person

A 'key person' is a term used by Goldschmied & Jackson (1994), is a designated member of staff, placed into the position of providing care and working with a specific child and providing a point of contact for parents to liaise with, enabling a parent to have 'peace of mind' regarding their child's care and welfare (Elfer et al, 2012).

This relationship creates a bond between the child, parent, and key person, ensuring that there is a continuity of care for the child, which supports the emotional well-being of the child (Birth to five Matters, 2021).

The key person should be understanding to the needs of both the child and the parents, providing open communication where information can be freely shared with confidence and respect between the setting and the parents, and, also by providing advice and support to enable the parents to assist in their child's learning and development (Birth to five Matters, 2021).

This important relationship is essential in forming the Kaminsky's family childcare triangle between the 'child and practitioner', the 'practitioner

and the parent' and 'the parent/ child relationship' (Teach Early Years, 2011) & (UNCRC Article 5).

This key person approach enables a nurturing relationship to be formed with the child, by providing the emotional security, when the child is away from home. Ensuring that a child's physical and personal needs are met and having an understanding about the child's interests, preferences, motivations and most of all, their feelings about being at the setting. (Birth to five Matters, 2021).

It is essential that the child forms a close trusting relationship with a key person to ensure the child's individual care and learning is tailored to meet their personal needs.



(Source:- Nursery World, 2022)

Positive Role Models

James Baldwin stated that "Children have never been very good at listening to their elders, but they have never failed to imitate them." (Hu, 2019).

Being in an influential role model, it is essential that all Early Years Practitioners provide the child with a positive role model to replicate (Bronfenbrenner, 1977).

A positive role model is essential in aiding and motivating a child's development, by providing a idealistic example of which inspires others to follow. Once, positive behaviour is observed by the child, it enables the child to gather good habits, that could be used daily and last a lifetime (Morgenroth et al, 2015). Watson (2022) discussed the concept, that by exposing a child over time to certain environments and

conditions, a child will become adapted into a version of lifestyle dictated by those surroundings. Bandura (1965) reinforces this concept by explaining that a child learns through the process of observation and modelling the behaviours that they see. When children observe others, they are not only observing behaviours, but also the reaction to the behaviour. Erikson (1994) discusses the fact that if a child adopts a role model of whom they admire, the child's ambitions, interests and personality can be collectively influenced.



(Source: - Room to Grow, 2022)

The Importance of Partnerships

It is essential that as a setting, positive professional partnerships are created with the family of the child. These relationships can provide the parents with the support that they require to better enable their child's development.

Effective communication is vital for a two-way partnership to work. This can be achieved by: -

- Active listening
- Open and honest communication
- Involving parents and asking for their input
- Sharing the child's achievements
- Providing the correct information for parents to make informed decisions about their child.

The Learning Environment



(Source: TRCA, 2019)

There are many methods and theories that under pin the New Welsh Early Years Curriculum to form an all-inclusive learning environment, these include the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky and the curiosity approach followed by Montessori, the Reggio Emilia approach and forest schools (Welsh Government, 2022).



(Source: Spring Grove School, 2022)

Piaget's theory on children's learning environments, focuses on the observation that children actively search for solutions to reinforce their understanding of the world. By providing a child with opportunities and materials to explore, it enables them to learn 'through experience' allowing the child to develop existing concepts through play, into more complex concepts. Although Piaget and Vygotsky's theories are similar, Vygotsky, believe that language, social and collaborative interactions, and learning through the freedom of imaginative play, played a vital part in enabling a child's development. (Early Years Educator, 2021).



(Source: - Hatherop Castle Prep School and Nursery, 2019)

Montessori, the Reggio Emilia approaches, and forest schools provide the child with an enabling learning environment, which supports the individuals needs and interests, by removing modern distinctions. Providing the child, the opportunity and ability to learn and play in an environment that enables the child to feel empowered by their active role in their own learning.



(Source: - Whitgreave Primary School, 2022)

Interventions

It is essential that interventions are put into place to ensure a smooth transition. These can range from:-

- Prepare welcome packs for parents, providing information and key dates.



(Source: Forest Lodge Academy, 2022)

- Prior planning to allow time to handle any concerns the child or family may have, to ensure the child's well-being is priority.

- Carry out home and new setting visits, providing the opportunity for the family and child to meet the key person in their child's care, and for the key person to observe and collect the relevant information required.



(Source: F.W. Solutions, 2015)

- Ensure time for parents to discuss any concerns before or during the transition period.

- Provide a 'home to school' book, to communicate any concerns or information.

- Value parents' concerns and points of view.

Proposed Outcomes

(Source: - Children's Law Centre, 2022)

The new Welsh Early Years outcomes, underline the seven core aims set out by the UNCRC. These are: -

- The child is and feels safe.
- The child is cared for, supported, and valued
- The child is resilient, capable, and coping.
- The child is healthy.
- The child is provided opportunities to learn and develop.
- The child does not live in and are not disadvantaged by poverty.

(Welsh Government, 2018)

As professional early years practitioners, it is our responsibility to provide the children within our care the opportunities and care to enable them to obtain these proposed outcomes. (Welsh Government, 2018).

(Source: - Welsh Government, 2022)

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