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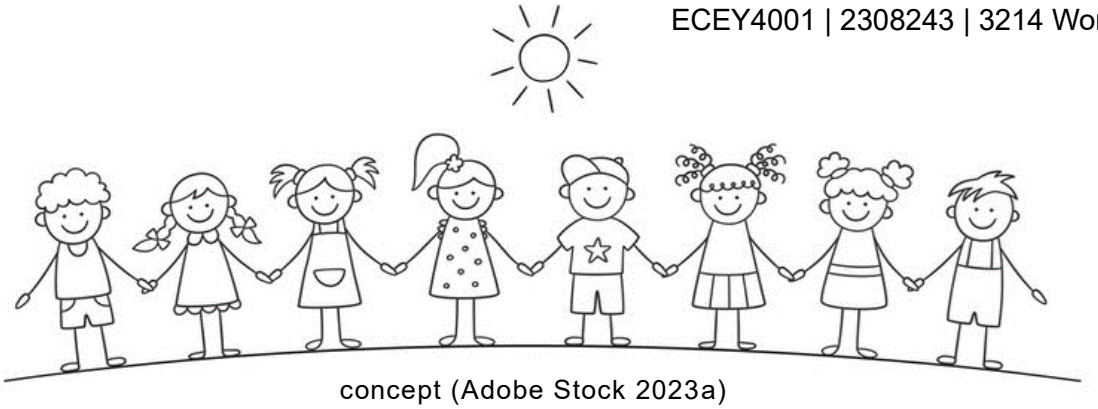

concept (Adobe Stock 2023a)

A handbook to help support children through transition

characters (iStock 2022)

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An introduction to support early years practitioners with children starting school from a nursery setting

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a foundation to help early years practitioners as well as supporting the children and families. This handbook will discuss the effects of transition and the impact it has on the children. Highlighting the true meaning of transition, the children's requirements, role of the adult, positive collaboration, interventions, desired outcomes, and key theories that link into transition.

What is transition?

Education Scotland (2023) claims that Transitions is associated with a move or sudden change as a child starts their journey away from home into the education system. Change can be difficult to adapt to, it is an adjustment for the children to develop and to gain new relationships with other children and staff.

Act government (2020) suggests that a successful transition can help build a base to provide the best outlook on the children's education. This can be demonstrated by encouraging the child's knowledge and health, as well as enhancing the self-assurance by managing adjustments, having a sense of familiarity as well as association with others and to develop connections to create a strong link with everyone involved. This will help by allowing the children to bond with staff and peers, giving them the ability to grow relationships as well as providing them with a sense of belonging.

City & Guilds, WJEC CBAC (2019a) believes that there are various transitions that may affect the child when they start nursery such as progressing from nursery to starting primary school, progressing from primary to comprehensive school, a new baby in the family and a house move. All these aspects influence the child during their time of change.

Devon county council (2022) points out that transition is meaningful in the early years, as it is a key time in the child's progress. Seeing the children progress through life is an achievement for the child and being part of that is rewarding.

The effect of a postive transition

Harman (No date) believes that supportive transition during childhood, gains the foundation to aid the child as well as comfort the relatives. The characteristics of a positive transition could include building relationships, providing adequate care, and making sure the child has the support they need. Having a positive transition provides the children with a sense of belonging. Queensland Government (2023) claims that optimistic adjustments through the child's youth will provide an on-going advantage to the children because, it will improve the basis for them to gain the knowledge and achieve a successful future.

The effect of a negative transition

According to Mentally healthy schools (no date) a failed transition can impact the child's future. Without the support and framework their performance, confidence, and their ability to learn and adapt could be hindered. Martinelli (2023) believes that the complications within transition periods are evidenced in multiple forms, it is helpful to consider the children and the environment they are in as well as the impact it has on the children's emotions, they may show signs of being powerless, this can lead to them acting out and showing signs of dissatisfaction and resistance. These elements could influence the successfulness of a transition.

Everyone is unique!

It is considered that each child is unique! Nursery story (2021) claims that all children develop in a unique way at their own pace. Children will have a varied reaction towards adjustments. It needs to be personalised to the children's comprehensive demands and their experimental phase.

concept (Adobe Stock 2023b)

The children's requirements

Supporting the needs of the child provides a base for them to develop further and gain all the skills needed through their life. Patel (2023) claims that creating bonds with the child and relatives will give them support while the child is being cared for. A supportive environment will promote collaborative effort and quality time with small teams as this will aid in making new friends as well as develop their feeling of safety as a result from the change. Engagement within a teaching activity based on playing, can help provide further logic. Mind mapping is another tool that could benefit the children education and allow them to flourish through childhood.

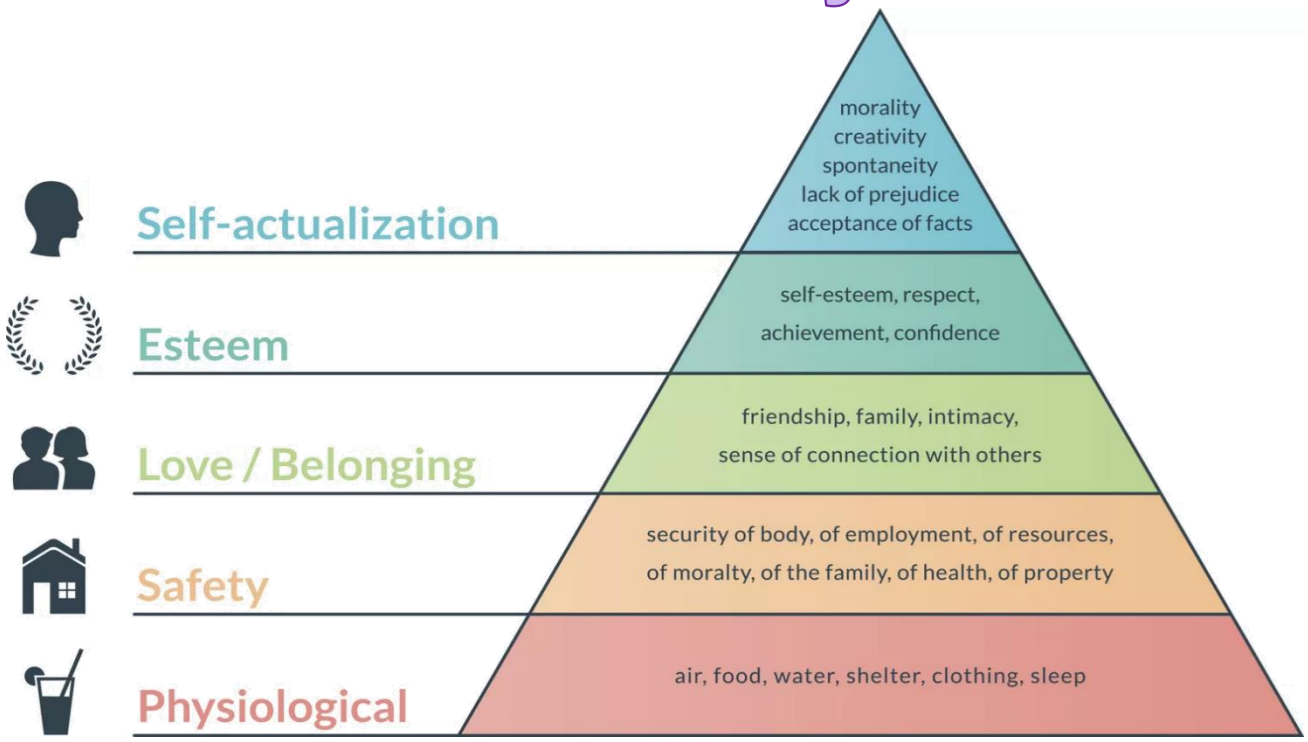
The Education Hub (2020) indicates that a child may contribute in the setting in many ways, this is dependent on their character. An outgoing child may find more comfort to connect in educational tasks and will build connections with others. A reserved child may be pleased to play on their own. Individuality exists amongst each child, considering their characterises and traits helps support them through transition.

Ncse (2020) discusses visual materials, as this can support the child with the change by looking at the different things that happen during a school day as well as supporting the child. A transitional item could help the child if they are upset as this will comfort them, this could be anything from a blanket to a soft toy. Routines are helpful for everyone, as it breaks down the day to manageable steps to follow, as well as allowing everyone a clear path to follow on their daily tasks.

Nursery story (2021) states that educational play and child focused activities are necessary to achieve a positive education, this could provide a productive method to assist the children to manage with the transition. Children need the support and reassurance to be able to cope with the challenges of the transition.

hands (Adobe stock 2023d)

Maslow's hierarchy of needs



Pyramid (Getty Images 2019)

Cherry (2022b) expresses that Maslow's physiological and emotional requirements could advance from simple to tricky situations. Maslow's hierarchy of needs suggests that each child may only develop to their full potential when their basic needs have been met. The psychological needs could provide reassurance, belonging and love, without this element the connections could be difficult to build. Without esteem the children may not develop any further and that could hinder their development. Understanding each point in detail provides significance for each child to blossom and to become their true self. Self-Actualization considers resolutions to problems and Creativity. Each category helps create a clear transition for the children and it allows the practitioner to have a better picture of the child's transition. Schley (2023) indicates that this enables the practitioner to discover the best place for action, this allows them to determine the essential partnerships thrive and praise is received.

Reach for the stars and beyond!

Attachment

Attachment is the connections the child gains from the parent or guardians. Ackerman (2018) claims that Bowlby and Ainsworth theory of the initial eighteen months of a child's life is when they build the attachment to the carer, and they begin this by showing they are upset and attached. Ackerman (2018) believes that while the child is growing, they establish their own attachment models to people who care for them. This can affect how the children grow up and influence their traits in future life. There are various distinct types of attachment models, depending on how the child is raised, this can play a major part in the connections they create with others. There could be negative effects on the child, signs of this are shown by the child, such as hesitance in the child not wanting to leave their parents. With the reassurance from the early year's practitioner, this will give them the support and care they need to be able to face all the transitions they may encounter. Communicating with the children in advance could provide awareness of any future activities. The emotions displayed by the child can indicate obvious signs of attachment to the individuals they have built up over time, in these situations it is best to show signs of comfort to the child especially during their time of transition as this will allow them to overcome any attachments they have.

WebMD Editorial Contributors (2023) points out that Erikson's structure of thoughts elevates the environments and connections in their lifetime. He claims that children's self-importance personality grows across their life throughout the eight stages. Each element creates a clear path to allow everyone to mature throughout their life. Erikson's theory looks at the children and the knowledge they gain throughout their life rather than their development. By providing a positive transition the practitioner could supply the child the tools needed to support any change they go through. Lewis (2023) claims that Erikson's model is the key to developing knowledge and reaching the goals by looking at each stage an individual may go through in their lifetime. Creating a connection with the children helps build a great bond and relationship, this allows them comfort and the ability to learn and confide in their teachers.

The role of the adult

There are countless ways to support the children through their transition. Croner-I (2022) indicates that there are options available such as telling a story about starting school, this could help the child understand better, role play area dolls and puppets could be displayed to allow the children to communicate and rein act their story of transition, allowing the children to show how they are feeling by being creative, drawing and colouring as well as talking about all the diverse types of feelings. Using some of these examples could support the children's development and transition.

Nursery story (2021) talks about the techniques used by childcare staff to deliver safe and familiar surroundings with different events and playing chances, and providing the children with a variety of activities to support and prepare them through any changes they may go through.

Monkey Puzzle Day Nurseries (2022) talks about the importance of the environments both inside and outside, as this provides the education to contribute to a friendly, engaging learning experience. This can improve and help with maturity, providing optimism as well as assertiveness and developing the children's independence. This supports the children's needs by encouraging them to feel calm and safe, which prepares the children and allows them the to learn and engage with their peers and teachers.

City & Guilds, WJEC CBAC (2019b) suggests that effective communication allows the teacher to listen to the conversation closely, showing compassion, providing appreciation and being formal as well as truthful. Without effective communication it can be difficult to build relationships, having these qualities provide approachability and trust.

outdoors (Adobe Stock 2023e)

Role of the manager

The manager makes sure that their team members follow the policies and procedures, as well as making sure everyone has the correct tools and information to support the specific needs of the children. This could include having a meeting to go through the requirements for children with additional learning needs during transition. The manager is required to inform all staff members with any changes needed based on their roles. Early years alliance (2019) suggests that all individuals should work in collaboration with providing appropriate details as well as controlling the procedure of the change together.

Role model

Being a role model can support the transition as the children sometimes look up to the early year's practitioner. Bandura's theory looks at learning by observing, implementing other ideas based on their success as well as being a role model. Cherry (2022) claims that these influences allow consideration, encouragement, feelings, and perspectives. This affects how people understand their environment as well as behaviour aspects. The benefit of this includes the ability to inspire others, and to allow them to achieve clear goals.

Role of the parent

Birth to 5 Matters (2021) believes that the parents make a key difference to the child's success. Parents have a role in helping with the transitions. Identifying the parent's dedication to the children's initial development and learning by allowing them to give focus to working together. This can help build the foundations to support the children's needs through their transition. Collaborating with the parents allows the best experience for the child as this identifies the requirements from both sides.

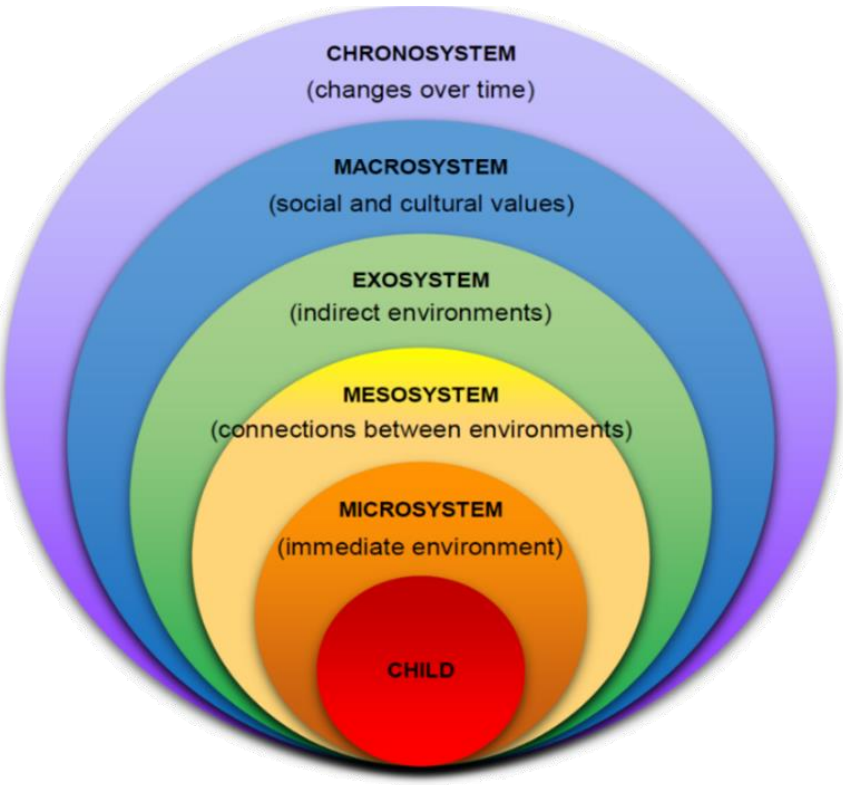
Playing (png tree 2023a)

Positive collaborations

Oxfordshire Country Council (2017) points out the importance of improving the awareness within relationship's, communicating with the nursery and the education setting throughout the transition. This can provide a greater understanding of the child and the parents, which can lead to positive partnerships with the practitioner.

The Government has set up an early help hub since 2021 this provides the guidance and support needed for each family with their needs. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Department for Education (2022) points out that local governments have approved centres to support the family with housing, health, and Wellbeing as well as parenting. This can provide further knowledge, and assistance through the transition period.

Cherry (2023a) talks about Bronfenbrenner's model as it looks at communication among people between their surroundings and how difficult relations can influence the progress made over time. This model can provide a clear view ahead for the children during their transition as it allows each area of communication and interaction to be considered to support the children.



Theory (Rotel Project No Date)

Microsystem is the inner component, this comprises of the persons immediate surroundings and regular interactions to others, such as friends, family and anyone who communicates or interacts with them daily. Each of these aspects have a direct impact on the children, these connections influence the children.

Mesosystem consists of the next tier within the model, this comprises of the communications and connections the children have with others, this may include any daily intercommunications with the school and others. Any changes that occur can impact both inner tiers due to the nature of their connections. This can affect the children's abilities to develop and have a successful education, this tier can still influence how the children learn.

Exosystem tier refers to the children's environment, the child may not be directly in contact with this area, however, this could still impact the child. The level of childcare given and social aspect of the child's life, any form of governmental policies dictates the resources available to the children. These areas shape the children's development skills.

Macrosystem is one of the key aspects of this model which applies to the wider area of the child's development strategy. This is based on moral values, behaviours, beliefs, and ethnicity. These factors shape the children's identity**.**

Chronosystem is the last part of the model which considers the children's individual experiences and past events throughout their life. This considers several situations such as, a new baby in the family, moving house, parents separating or a bereavement. Each of these scenarios have a major impact on the family functioning smoothly.

First Discoverers (no date) claims that this method could benefit the early years practitioners by allowing them to consider the best ways to provide a great balance, this could benefit the children's education in many ways. By looking at each element, it is clear to see the importance each point has on the transition. The model is child centred, and it places the needs of child first. It can help build their cognitive and biological needs.

Interventions

Croner-I (2017) believes that as children commence their journey through education, having a process or procedure to follow gains the best settle-in method for the children. Holding settling in sessions allows clarification for the transitions of the children by allowing them a clear picture of the environment and clear direction; it can also assist their emotions. During the settling-in sessions the children will get an opportunity to explore the whole classroom as well as meet their new classmates, this will aid their transition with any familiar faces who may have been in pre-nursery with them. The parents will have a meeting with the headteacher to discuss the key areas of school life. During this time, the early years practitioners will observe the children by playing by their side and communicating with them, starting to build the bond needed. During the meeting, the parents are provided a welcome pack and documents, containing information such as the start date and the school requirements.

Children with additional learning needs will need more time to adapt to the transition and warm to different staff members and the classroom. This will aid the transition by impacting their emotional wellbeing. Pac UK (2023) suggests that further transition visits for any children with additional needs will help assist the children and allow them to feel secure in their new setting. A visual routine of images and staff who will be there during their time of attendance can also support the children.

A phased transition could help settle the children in a group at a time prior to the whole class starting. This allows time as an early year's practitioner to provide the support needed for each child. Ephgrave (2023) indicates the final stages of transition is when a child can remain in school for the full duration of the day. Each child is unique, and their needs must be respected by establishing when it is suitable for them to stay.

kid (Adobe Stock 2023c)

After receiving transition documents relating the child from the preschool setting, the practitioner can gain an understanding of how to support the characteristics of the child, this may include their likes and dislikes as well as any extra support needed. Bowden (2022) claims that this is an incredible method to familiarise the child with the staff within the school; a page all about the child as well as a one-page profile which describes the child can assist the staff. The school could try something new such as a page about the staff within the class to help the children and parents get to know the staff. These key areas may help the children feel safe and adapt to change. It can assist with building a bond with the child, regardless of how long it takes for them to settle. Showing a positive transition will help each child develop their wellbeing and emotions.

Backpack (Vector Stock 2023)

Profile (Extraudinary 2019)

Desired outcomes

A child who has had a positive transition can thrive, build a bond with peers, teachers as well as early years practitioners, Mentally healthy schools (no date) claims that observing how the children are socializing with others can help gain an understanding of their transition success, indicators of this could include new friendships with other children, the child could show other signs of a positive transition such as comfort, understanding, respectfulness, creativity, confidence and have a clear sense of their own abilities and sensitivity, the child may also show obvious signs of development. Collaboration helps create a strong-minded child and allows them to understand self-respect. The child may show less signs of resistance in attending school, they can in fact show the opposite signs and they may look forward to school.

Using an integrated and interconnected approach to transition can be helpful during transition. Parenta (2021) indicates that a holistic approach allows consideration based on the demands of the individual's needs. This grows knowledge and understanding, as well as factors in any special difficulties. This can provide effective encouragement for all the children by supporting each child and giving them the care needed to allow them to blossom and to become the best they can be.

Future (Transition together 2023)

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