

# CHILDREN'S CARE CONNECTION (C3)/ HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES (HDS) NORTH CENTRAL NEWSLETTER



## ABOUT HDS

At HDS, our mission is to provide no-cost, comprehensive support for the developmental, behavioral, and care coordination needs of prenatal caregivers and children age 0-5. Through our services, which encompass education, prevention, and care coordination support for obtaining diagnoses, we strive to ensure the optimal development of our clients and the well-being of their family during these crucial early years.

## CELEBRATING TRANSITIONS!

For many of you, we are celebrating the end of this Fiscal Year and looking forward to the upcoming year full of wonderful possibilities and excellent services for families. Moving out of one year and on to the next can be challenging for everyone. It takes patience, flexibility, openness to the process, trust in those around you, and hope for the future.

We know that families are contemplating these next few months of transition. They may be closing down one year of school and on to the next or moving through different developmental milestones such as moving on to bottle weaning, toilet training, or taking their first steps.

In this newsletter, we want to **celebrate** transitions to highlight the benefits while also surrounding providers and families with tips and thoughts to support transitions, change, and routine. We hope you enjoy it! We also hope you thoroughly enjoy these next few months; we're all here for you as we take these journeys together!

## THIS ISSUE:

Helping Children Cope with Transitions

Smooth Transitions in Group Settings: Strategies for Success

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# HELPING CHILDREN COPE WITH LIFE TRANSITIONS

N. Coastal Behavior Specialist, Maggie Kershaw, highlights behavioral indicators that children may exhibit during changes and shares effective strategies for adults to provide support during these transitional periods.

Can you remember a time when something changed in your life that you struggled with adjusting to? A move? A change in relationship? Starting a new job? Change can be difficult, even for adults. Adults however, unlike children, can regulate their feelings and we often know what we need individually to cope with the changes/transitions (making lists for packing, staying at least two nights in one rental, not flying the red-eye). Children 0-5 continue to grow skills and understanding that change can be OK...and actually, sometimes positive and exciting!

Transitions can affect children's emotional regulation skills, causing more frequent or intense tantrums. Others may push the boundaries of control more than they typically do. Transitions can affect us physiologically as well. Some children regress in toileting skills, sleep behaviors, and feeding. These challenges, and the way caregivers respond to them can shape the way children feel about transitions.

At this time of the year, many children and families are gearing up for several transitions. Several transitions may be occurring at the same time for some children. So, what can we do to support children through these transitions? How do we prepare them? What can other caregivers do for children during these times? How do we respond to behavior change? We hope some of the tips-and-tricks below can provide you with some guidance going into this transition-heavy time of year.



## 01.

### **Prepare Children for Change**

Create countdowns for big changes (paper link chains, crossing off days on the calendar until school starts, etc.)

## 02.

### **Visit the New Classroom/School with Your Child**

Visit the new classroom/school with your child in the weeks leading up to school starting if possible. Many schools have open playground times. Can they meet their teacher? Can you show them their picture online at least?

## 03.

### **Maintain Daily Routines**

Maintain daily routines as much as you can while on vacation and during times of change. It is ideal for mealtimes, nap and bedtimes to remain consistent.

## 04.

### **Tell Children About the New Things They Might Experience**

Are you going on a boat/plane and they have never been one? Perhaps you can show videos of the activities they may participate in or the places they will visit. Children's books are also helpful!

## 05.

### **Listen to and Validate Big Feelings**

Listen to and validate big feelings connected to transitions.

## 06.

### **Process your Own Emotions**

Process your emotions connected to the transition, and plan for ways you can manage your stress when things don't go as planned.



# SMOOTH TRANSITIONS IN GROUP SETTING: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Join our Developmental Specialists as they explore effective strategies to ensure successful transitions in group setting and empower children to navigate changes with confidence.



## *Establish clear expectations ahead of time*

In both group settings and at home, it is beneficial to **establish clear expectations ahead of time**. For example, you can say, "First, we are going to play with blocks, and when the timer goes off, it will be time to clean up and wash hands before snack."

## *Provide verbal reminders and physical cues*

To aid in the transition, it is helpful to **give a verbal heads up beforehand**, perhaps with reminders at 5 minutes and then 2 minutes, depending on the group's needs. For children who are highly focused on their task, a **gentle physical cue**, such as placing a hand on their shoulder or back and getting down to their eye level for better communication, can be effective. You can **remind them individually**, saying, "Just want to make sure you heard that there are 2 more minutes to play before we clean up."

For those who may want to play with something they haven't had a chance to yet, you can let them know that if they want to play with it, they have 2 more minutes this time, and there will be another opportunity later (next time, after lunch, or whenever they will get another chance).

## *Utilize timers and incorporate regulating exercises*

During the transition time, **using an actual timer**, depending on the group or situation, can be helpful. When the timer goes off, draw the group's attention to the sound and say, "There's the timer – it's time to clean up." Since this announcement can dysregulate some children, it's important to **keep it calm**. You can even **suggest taking deep breaths together before cleaning up to promote a sense of calmness**.

## *Provide clear and specific directions to break down tasks*

If the direction to "clean up" seems too vague due to a large mess or challenges in comprehension, you can **provide specific instructions**. For example, you can say, "Everyone, pick up 3 toys that you can see and put them away. When you're done, stand by the bathroom to wash hands." Some children may require a specific task to follow, so you can **give individual attention** and say, "Let's pick up 3 blocks and put them in the basket." Then, **assist the child in staying focused on the task** until it is completed.



These strategies can be applied to various transitions. The key points are to **establish clear expectations**, **provide a heads-up before the transition**, **consistently initiate the transition using the same words and a timer**, **engage in regulating exercises like deep breathing at the beginning of the transition**, and **follow up to ensure successful completion**. Over time, children who require more support during transitions will likely become more independent if provided with the necessary tools early on.

# A PEEK INSIDE OUR DEVELOPMENT CLASS

Discover the inspiring journey of a child overcoming speech challenges and thriving in their development with the support of Developmental Specialist, Nina Isabel Alfonso's Development Class and the dedication of their family.

A concerned father reached out to HDS when his child experienced difficulties in responding to questions and expressing needs consistently. This was partly due to limited social interactions caused by a recent relocation and the presence of a newborn sibling. Recognizing the importance of early intervention, the family decided to join HDS services.

Upon joining, our assessments revealed emerging scores in language, fine motor skills, and social-emotional development. The child faced challenges with transitions and maintaining focus, often requiring prompting to stay attentive. To address these needs, our comprehensive approach included occupational and speech therapy, along with enrolling the child in the Preschool Time Development Class.

Despite initial challenges, we witnessed tremendous progress in the child's attention and participation. The introduction of a seat cushion allowed the child to stay focused during story time. Additionally, by providing tasks in between activities, the child developed a better understanding of transitions and adapted to the routine, resulting in improved engagement.

As family actively participated in the group, the child's social interactions flourished. They willingly traded and shared materials with peers, engaged in collaborative games, and confidently held simple conversations. The family's commitment to implementing strategies and following the Home Activity Plan also played a pivotal role in the child's progress.

The father expressed deep appreciation for the program, highlighting the positive impact of structured activities and the opportunity for his child to interact with peers of the same age. As part of their continued journey, the child will be enrolling in Transitional Kindergarten to provide more structure and social interaction in their daily life and will be joining our Kinder Camp in July to prepare for a successful transition to a larger school environment.



## UPCOMING CLASSES

Infant Time (7-12 mos):

English/In Person: [Thursdays, 7/20- 8/24, 2:00PM-3:00PM](#)

Toddler Time (20-24 mos):

English/In Person: [Tuesdays, 7/25-8/29, 10:00AM-11:00AM](#)

Older Toddler Time (25-36 mos):

English/In Person: [Tuesdays, 9/12 - 10/17, 10:00AM-11:00AM](#)

Baby Steps:

English/Virtual: [Mondays, 7/17-8/28, 11:00AM-12:30PM](#)

Steps to Understanding Your Child's Behavior:

English/Virtual: [Tuesdays, 7/11-8/8, 12:00PM - 1:30PM OR 6:00PM-7:30PM](#)

*Classes can be made available in English and Spanish.  
Please call our intake line (858) 966-7510 for further details.*





## CURRENT SERVICE WAIT TIME

### INTAKE & REGISTRATION

2 weeks

Upon receiving the referral, our team will contact family to complete registration and schedule client for a 90-minute developmental screening.

### DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

1 week

During this appointment, a Developmental Specialist will utilize the Ages and Stages Questionnaire-3 and SE-2 to determine if there are any delays. M-CHAT (if applicable) and a Caregiver Well Being Checklist will also be administered. Recommendations for further assessments and/or community resources will be provided at the end of appointment.

## IN THE COMMUNITY

### Sunday Organ Concerts

Sundays at 2pm at Spreckels Organ Pavilion  
Available Year-Round

<https://balboapark.org/arts-culture/spreckels-organ-pavilion/>

### Kids Bowl Free

Aztec Lanes (6075 Aztec Circle Drive)

May 13, 2023 until August 8, 2023

<https://azteclanes.sdsu.edu/kidsbowlfree>

### 2023 Summer Movies in the Park

Various local parks throughout San Diego County

May 26, 2023 until October 28, 2023

[http://www.summermoviesinthepark.com/wp-content/uploads/2023\\_SMITP\\_SCHEDULE\\_061323\\_highgate.pdf](http://www.summermoviesinthepark.com/wp-content/uploads/2023_SMITP_SCHEDULE_061323_highgate.pdf)

### Summer Reading Program: Find Your Voice

Various City of San Diego libraries

June 1, 2023 until August 31, 2023

<https://www.sandiego.gov/public-library/kidsandteens/summerreading>

### Balboa Park's Twilight Concerts

Spreckels Organ Pavilion

T/W/TH at 7pm on June 20, 2023 until August 31, 2023

<https://balboapark.org/event/twilight-concerts-2023-06-21/2023-06-21/>

### San Diego Pride Parade

Starts on Hillcrest Pride Flag at University Ave and Normal St and ends in Balboa Park

July 15, 2023 at 10am

<https://sdpride.org/parade/>



**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT  
C3/HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:**

**[WWW.RCHSD.ORG/HDS](http://WWW.RCHSD.ORG/HDS)**