**Goal:** To provide workshop participants with supports for managing transitions and improving routines in early childhood settings. To make Transitions & Routines more positive and more productive.

**What is a Transition or Routine?** Any time that is not core instructional time:

- **Transitions** = *movement between activities,* such as moving from centers to playground.
- **Routines** = *repetitive activities,* such as brushing teeth, lining up, washing hands, etc.

➤ **Map out your Daily Schedule:**

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**Why work on Transitions and Routines?**

Transitions and Routines:

- Have **potential for chaos**; may feel out of control, loud and messy.
- May feel less **structured** to children.
- Are times when **expectations may be unclear**; children may not know how you want them to behave or move between different activities.
- Are key learning opportunities because they **provide repetition and practice** – they happen every day and at predictable times. There are lots of opportunities to get it right!

*And...*

- **Build Language & Literacy Skills:** Children are interacting and communicating with each other; peer-to-peer language is occurring naturally. Adults can make this a more intentional learning opportunity by designing and supporting specific types of language interactions between children.
- **Build Social-Emotional Skills:** Children are faced with social-emotional challenges – because it is unstructured time, conflicts or issues may arise (children are in each other’s space, taking turns in
line, pushing and grabbing, etc.). Adults can make this a more intentional learning opportunity by designing and supporting specific types of social-emotional interactions.

- Identify the Transitions and Routines across your day:

Examples of Common Transitions and Routines:
- Greeting/ Arrival
- Circle or Story Time (whole group)
- Transition to Centers (small groups)
- Transition out of Centers (clean-up)
- Lining Up to Wash Hands, Find a Book, Go to the Bathroom, etc.
- Lunch or Snack Time
- Brushing Teeth
- Walking in Hallways, Walking to Playground, etc.
- End of Day/ Departure

- Reflect on the Transitions and Routines across your day. What are the “hot spots” when you want things to move smoother, more quickly, or with less noise/conflict?

What Works?
- A specific task and learning goal – give children something concrete and engaging to do.
- Clear, concrete expectations – tell children how you expect them to behave/act.
- Consistent and predictable – do the same thing every day.
- Positive feedback – give immediate and specific praise when children are doing a good job.
- Visual supports – provide picture cards or other cues to help children who need more support.

Things to keep in mind...

It takes time to establish a new routine.
- Be consistent and keep doing it every day, even if children don’t get it right away.
- Keep teaching the routine: keep explaining and modeling what to do. Even if it is clear to you, it may not be clear to all children what they need to do in order to be successful.
- It is normal for young children to need a few weeks or months to practice.

Use 5, 2, or 1-minute warnings before each transition.
- This helps all children be successful.
- Especially for children with a behavior plan, let them know when a transition is coming and tell them what they can do/earn for positive behavior.
- Example: “In one minute we will go to the playground. The playground is exciting, but I don’t want you to run. You can earn a sticker for walking the whole way.”

Some kids will still need additional support.
- Posters, picture cards, hand signals, and other visual supports are helpful reminders for concepts like “quiet voice,” hands to self,” and “no running.”
- These are particularly helpful for younger children, English Language Learners, and children with specific behavior challenges.
What would this look like? Examples of effective strategies and supports:

Give children something to do while lining up or waiting in line
--pretend to carry a heavy rock or animal
--act out a concept you are learning
--sing a song and finger play while waiting
--trace the letters of your name
--trace the alphabet

Sing a song to help children remember directions, a series of steps, or multiple pieces of information

Give children a specific task to accomplish together
--collect or pass out materials
--hold a poster of "quiet voice"
--use a timer or stopwatch
--give a Daily Q: partners think about a question, share answers at destination

A Daily Schedule Board to let kids know what is happening and when; check off activities as you go

Children can use visual supports as a reminder for specific behavior expectations. Create 3-4 classroom sets of key picture cards.
Identify and clarify your expectations for children. Transitions often require children to use multiple complex skills that adults take for granted (i.e., focus, memory, self-control). Reflect on what you are asking children to do. Be specific, detailed, and concrete. Explaining in clear terms what is involved in a transition will help you design a strategy or support to help students be more successful.

Skills often required during Transitions:
- Listening carefully to new directions
- Remembering multi-step information
- Ignoring distractions (sights, sounds, peers, adults)
- Resisting desires/impulses and instead follow a plan
- Dealing with the frustration of having to leave an activity earlier than desired
- Dealing with unexpected conflict like the need to find or share materials, bumping into other children

Problem-solve the “hot spots” in your day. What supports can help children be more successful during these Transitions; how can you design or improve the Routine?