

TRANSITIONING TO PRESCHOOL

WELCOME TO THE *WILLIAMSBURG Y*

P R E S E N T E R :
J E A N N E R O O N E Y , P H . D .

S E P T E M B E R 3 , 2 0 2 5



AGENDA

- Welcome
- What is the *Transition Process*?
- *Insights into your Preschooler's feelings and behaviors in starting school*
- *Parents, too, have feelings as their children start school*
- *Suggestions for easing the transition*
- *Ways in which teachers facilitate the transition*
- *Handling stress at this time.*

UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF TRANSITION

- What is the *Transition* Process?
- Why is it important?
- Developmentally, what can we expect of 3 and 4 year old children?
- How do preschool children typically react when they first come to school?
 - Excited, Adventurous
 - Maybe Shy
 - Sometimes shy and sometimes adventurous
 - Crying
- How long does the *Transition Process* last?
- Does it recur over the year?



P A R E N T S ' F E E L I N G S

- Typical feelings
 - Excited
 - Worried
- Keep your own emotions in check
- Children can tap into their parent's feelings
- Be their cheerleader



EASING THE SEPARATION

- Tell them about going to school
- Read books about going to school
- If possible, take them to see the school
- Practice saying goodbye



MORNING ROUTINES AT HOME

- Keep a consistent bed and wake up routine – yes, even on weekends
- Maintain an early morning schedule
- Let them choose their own clothes if they want to
- Have clothes ready the night before
- Encourage them to eat breakfast unless they are too worried

AT SCHOOL

- Don't sneak off

Tell them you are leaving,

When you will return (soon, after lunch , in an hour) and

Say good-bye and leave (no running back for another hug)

- Follow through on your promises – *Be on time*
- Talk about the future – what you will do later with them: “we” activities
- Develop an after-school routine
- Build in weekend plans and then back to school on Monday

HOW DO THE TEACHERS FACILITATE THE TRANSITION?

- Varied activities and toys
- Short lessons
- Establishing routines
- Stories
- Music & Movement



ROUTINES

- What is a routine?
- What might a morning or evening at your home look like?
- Why are routines so important to young children (and adults, too)?
- What will a classroom routine look like?
- Why is it so important to set up routines in the classroom?

H A N D L I N G S T R E S S

- Acknowledge that it happens
- Take a deep breath and try to let it go
- Be prepared as much as you can for the changes
- Develop morning and after school routines that work for your family
- Show your interest in their day by talking with them about the school day

TRANSITION TIPS

- Excite your child about coming to Head Start:
 - Meet new friends
 - Play with new toys
 - Sing songs, learn dances, listen to many stories
- Have consistent bed and wake times; breakfast if they want it
- Create a special good-bye – make it fun
- Tell them you are leaving; say good-bye and leave
- Give them something to look forward after school; come back on time.

STORIES

- The Kissing Hand by Audrey Penn
- David Goes to School by David Shannon
- Time for School, Mouse by Laura Numeroff
- Llama Llama Red Pajama by Anna Dewdney
- Little Brown Bear Won't Take a Nap by Jane Dyer
- Spot Loves School by Eric Hill
- Corduroy Goes to School by Don Freeman

THOUGHT FOR TODAY

Consistency is more important than perfection

To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong

Enjoy the 2025 – 2026 School Year