

Makes Appropriate Movement between Activities

What does “Makes Appropriate Movement between Activities” mean?

This skill shows how a child handles transitions or the time in between classroom activities. Transitions allow the whole class to move together from one activity to the next, like moving from center time to lunchtime. To keep the class on track, it is important that transitions between activities are smooth. A child that demonstrates this skill stops the current activity and follows the teacher’s directions to go to the next activity. This skill is important because it shows that children are learning about the flow of the school day and understand that the class must stop and start activities together to be successful.

TIPS for FAMILIES

How can I explain this skill to my child?

You can explain the importance of making appropriate transitions to your child by describing a safe trip from one place to another. You can ask your child to imagine you’re going to visit a friend. To get there, you need to follow the directions from your home to your friend’s home so you don’t get lost. You also need to travel safely so you don’t get into an accident. When we follow the directions and travel safely, we get where we want to go faster and can spend more time having fun.

What are some things I can do to help my child learn this skill?

TIP1

Teach your child how to Name it, Tame it, and Reframe it. Making appropriate movements between activities is tough because it requires children to stop and start activities when someone else says so. Being told to stop an activity can be especially frustrating. You can help your child learn to handle their frustration by teaching them to *Name it, Tame it, and Reframe it*. Building this skill will take time and your child will need to practice it many times with your help. Follow these steps to help your child learn this process, and don’t forget to let them know when you see them trying to use it!

1. **Name it.** Tell your child that when they feel an emotion they don’t like, they should take time to identify it. Give your child an example of what naming an emotion looks like. For example, you can say, “If I don’t want to turn the TV off to eat dinner, I might feel frustrated,” or “If I don’t want to stop drawing because I’m not done with my picture, I might feel frustrated.”

2. **Tame it.** Once your child has identified what they are feeling, tell them to take a few deep breaths or count to five to help themselves feel better. For example, you can say, “When I feel frustrated, I count to five to help myself feel better.”
3. **Reframe it.** After your child has calmed down, tell them to reframe the situation in a positive way. For example, they can focus on the next activity or on coming back to what they are doing later. Give children examples of how to reframe a situation. For example you can say, “When I don’t want to turn off the TV to eat dinner, I feel frustrated, but I am also hungry at dinner time and once the TV is off I can eat,” or “When I don’t want to stop drawing because I’m not done with my picture, I feel frustrated, but I can save it for later and finish it then.”

This strategy was adapted from, Mulcahy, W. (2012). Zach gets frustrated. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing Inc.

TIP2

Develop a daily routine. When children know their daily routines, it can make changing activities easier. Knowing what is next helps children get ready to move from one activity to another. One way you can help your child prepare for activity changes is by making a picture chart of a routine. Post the chart in a spot where your child can easily see it.

Get up	Use the bathroom	Brush teeth	Get dressed	Eat breakfast	Put on shoes & coat	Leave for school
						

TIP3

Break transitions up into steps. To make appropriate movements between activities, your child needs to use several skills that they are still developing, like following directions and being patient. To help your child learn how to move between activities, try these steps:

1. **Make sure you have your child’s attention** before telling them to stop something and start something new. For tips on how to get your child’s attention, check out Tip 1 for “Listens and follows directions.”
2. **Coming Attractions.** Children respond better to changing activities when they know a change is coming. Before a transition, give your child “coming attractions” to let them know what activity is next. For example, you could say, “After you finish reading that book please put it back on the shelf. Then we will put our shoes on and go to the park.”
3. **Countdown.** Give your child warnings about the amount of time left until a transition. You could say, “Avery, in five minutes it will be time to get your shoes on.” You can also use a timer and set it to go off when an activity is over.
4. **Transition Activity.** Give your child something that they can do when changing activities to make them more fun. For example, you can:
 - Ask your child to help “alert” everyone about a transition. For example, ask them to ring a bell or sing a song to let the family know it is time for dinner.

- Ask your child to sing the “Clean Up Song” (words to the song are below) when it is time to clean up their toys. You can join in and sing along too!

Clean Up Song: Clean up, clean up, everybody, everywhere! Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share!

How can I encourage my child when I see them trying to learn this skill?

Acknowledge your child for their efforts! For example, tell your child, “Nova, you did a good job getting yourself ready to go to school this morning after breakfast” or “Avery, I see you are trying your best to be patient and wait for your sister before we leave for school!”

To learn more about the tips and where they came from, please visit our references page: ckphilly.org/citations