

The Childhood Scene



A regional newsletter for early childhood professionals, parents and the community provided by Child Care Resource & Referral Region 13 serving Chatham, Harnett, Johnston, Lee and Wayne Counties

New Resources For You and Your Families

The Pyramid Model Story Project: Real Stories Told by Real People

If you have attended trainings with Pam Pace, our regional behavior specialist, you have received some information about the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning (CSEFEL/ csefel.vanderbilt.edu) and about how the Pyramid Model provides a framework for programs to use to support children to develop social and emotional competence. Now, if you would also like to HEAR from individuals who have actually gone through implementation and have seen the results, we have a new resource just for you! The [Pyramid Model Story Project](#) is a TACSEI (Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children: www.challengingbehavior.org) initiative where people share their real-life experiences with the Pyramid Model.

and share the positive outcomes that can result, but we believe the most compelling stories about the impact of the Pyramid Model are best told by the programs, professionals, and families who experience the model. Visit the [Pyramid Model Story Project](#) on the TACSEI website (challengingbehavior.org) to watch and listen to the stories and discover the many ways that the Pyramid Model is changing the lives of children.

One of our own, a parent and behavior specialist in the western region of the state is featured. Don't miss this moving story! "As a parent and a behavior specialist in North Carolina, Deidre McMahan was desperate to find help for her young son who was struggling with behavior issues after a serious incident with ecoli. Listen to her talk about how the Pyramid Model changed their lives and provided specific strategies to help him with difficulties such as self-regulation and transitions."

Don't forget that the CSEFEL Website has Parent Training Modules and Articles of Interest written for Parents!

Continued on Page 5

Region 13 Partners



The idea behind this project is that TACSEI and CSEFEL recommend Pyramid Model implementation

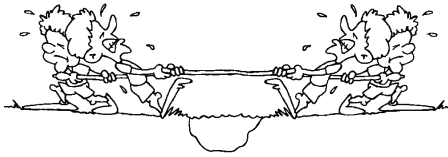


What's Inside This Issue?

Dear Miss Challenge	2
Infant and Toddler Time	4
The School Age Corner	6
Special Days To Celebrate	8



Dear Miss Challenge:



Dear Miss Challenge,

I am a new teacher of four year olds. I have worked hard to set up my classroom and to plan interesting activities for the children in my group. It seems that once they are engaged, everything runs smoothly but transition time is crazy with hitting, wandering, arguing, etc., and unfortunately I have a lot of transitions. Do you have information that can help me?

Sincerely,
Transition Crazy

Dear Transition Crazy,

Here is some information on transitions that should be helpful. You can find a more expanded version in the #4 What Works Brief at the Center on Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Learning website (www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel). It sounds like you are a great planner because the children become engaged in the activities that you plan, but the key to transitions is to plan them out step-by-step as you do any other activity or lesson, just like an intricate project. For specific transition activities, look at the series of "Transition Magician" books that can be found at Amazon and other retailers. Your local Partnership for Children or Resource & Referral may also have books available on this topic.

Promoting Healthy Social Behaviors by Helping Children Make Transitions

What are transitions?

Classroom transitions occur when children move from one activity to another during the day. Transitions happen throughout the day and children are expected to move to the next activity smoothly without complaint or confusion. During transitions, children often use challenging behaviors. Stressful transitions may include before or after mealtime, moving between indoor and outdoor activities, moving between individual and group activities and getting ready for nap time. When moving from one activity to another, children can become confused or frustrated and challenging behaviors may occur.

Why is it important to address transitions between activities?

Transitions take a great deal of time each day, but many teachers do not plan for transition times. During transitions, children often spend too much time waiting to move or to begin the next activity. For example, children might be required to wait until everyone has finished snack before moving to the next activity, or children might be expected to wait quietly and patiently at the table for activities to be set up. In these situations, even the most easy-going preschooler may become fidgety. Children's ability to independently make transitions between activities is one of the essential skills needed in kindergarten. So teaching the skills



needed for smooth transitions is a school-readiness skill! As children become more independent and more focused on what they 'should be doing,' they are less likely to create problems.

What can you do in your classroom?

Some basic guidelines for successful transitions* are:

- Prepare children to move from one activity or setting to another by providing warnings or cues, such as saying '5 minutes until snack,' ringing a bell, dimming the lights, or using a five-minute glove.
- Plan your daily schedule to include transition times and make a plan for each transition, such as singing songs, leading finger plays, playing guessing games or moving to the next activity in a specific way (e.g., 'Let's float like bubbles').
- Individualize transition strategies as needed, such as using photos to help a child anticipate what the next activity will be, giving directions in a child's home language, or providing an individual warning to a child who needs more time to prepare for a smooth transition.
- Help children become more independent as they make transitions, for example, as children finish snack, they are encouraged to go to the carpet and choose a book. Not all transitions have to be whole-group transitions!
- Teach children to help others; they can move as partners to the next activity, or you can ask a child to help another gather his/her backpack.

- Provide positive attention to the children after transitions that go smoothly; for example, comment on the times that children pick up the toys without much prompting.
- Give very specific positive feedback after transitions; for example, 'Nicholas and Jorge did a great job cleaning up the block area and moving to the carpet.'

Research on this topic:

Evidence-based practices are those strategies, documented by research, that have been shown to 'work' with young children. Researchers have shown that planning for and supporting transitions between activities is a strategy that is beneficial to young children. Care must be taken to adapt transition strategies to meet the individual needs of young children, with an awareness of the diversity (cultural and language) of the families served.

Food for thought:

If we fail to plan, we are planning to fail! You can reduce challenging behaviors in your classroom by planning for transitions, and intentionally teaching children what's expected of them during transition times. Having a plan for each transition during your day will ensure that you are planning for the children (and you) to succeed.

Adapted by *Promoting Healthy Social Behaviors* from CSEFEL *What Works Brief #4*. www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/

*Submitted by Pam Pace
Region 13 Behavior Specialist*



Infant and Toddler Time

As of June 28, 2011 the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission will require that cribs made, sold or leased in the U.S. meet new standards. Drop-sided crib rails have become detached at times. This situation has been found responsible for 32 deaths of young children and *possibly responsible* for 14 more deaths of children in the last nine years. **Child care homes and centers must replace any drop-sided cribs with cribs with stable sides by December 28, 2012.**

Replacing cribs is expensive, but the death of a child is a devastating tragedy. While there have been crib recalls in the past, and programs to provide repairs for the identified problems with the drop-sided cribs, these efforts have not resulted in the level of safety necessary to keep children from suffocation and strangulation. Responsible centers and family child care home owners should begin to plan NOW. This ban should be taken seriously since drop-sided cribs have been found to be extremely dangerous.

1. Remember drop-sided cribs will NOT be allowed for use in child care facilities. This is NOT just another recall.
2. To be responsible, it is a good idea to check all cribs now. Read the CPSC on-line information carefully to be sure that you are checking for all possible problems. If you have repaired a crib, be sure that it is

repaired properly, or consider replacing it as soon as possible.

3. NC DCD rules now require that broken materials be removed from all child care facilities. If a crib is broken or damaged it should be removed.
4. There are cribs in the stores now that are in compliance with the new standards. If you purchase a crib, it is best to buy a crib that will meet those standards.
5. If you buy a new crib, ask the seller for a Certificate of Compliance for the crib. Keep this certificate on file in your center or home.
6. Since infants in child care centers are required to sleep in cribs, remember that best practice now strongly suggests that all infants now sleeping in drop-sided cribs need to be carefully monitored throughout the whole time they are in the crib.
7. Don't forget that as of June 28, 2011, it is illegal to sell a drop-sided crib. To give away or sell a crib that you know may be dangerous, is not a good idea. As child care providers, it is important that we care about the safety of all children.
8. If you have any questions about your cribs, you can go to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's web site at www.cpsc.gov/info/cribs/index.html or call CPSC directly at 800-636-2772. Your consultant also may be able to help you.
9. It would be a good idea to post information for the parents of young children, and those who are expecting a baby, about the concerns and ban on drop-sided cribs. These parents should especially be made aware of the dangers of purchasing a second-



Infant and Toddler Time *Cont'd from Page 4*

hand crib, or using family heirloom cribs that do not meet the new government regulations. While the government is not requiring parents at home to cease using the cribs they have, those cribs may still be potentially dangerous. The child care community, as responsible professionals, needs to help inform parents of the specific hazards of drop-sided cribs. Clearly illustrated news releases from the CPSC can be found on line.

Some other requirements for safe/healthy sleep environments:

All beds, cots or mats used for sleeping shall be individually assigned, labeled, and equipped with sheets.

Sheets must be large enough to cover the sleep surface.

Additional sheets shall be available so they can be changed if soiled.

Sheets used by infants less than 12 months of age must be changed when soiled, and at least daily.

Sheets used by children over 12 months of age must be changed when, soiled and at least weekly.

Cribs, playpens, cots, and mats must be easily cleanable.

Mattresses must fit tightly into the crib and be at least 2 inches thick.

Mattresses must be waterproof and washable.

From the NC Rules Governing The Sanitation of Child Care Centers: 15A NCAC 18A.2821.

*Submitted by Jacquelin Montgomery
Region 13 Infant Toddler Specialist*

New Resources ... *Continued from Page 1*

The Latest Family Tool from CSEFEL

Teaching Your Child to Become Independent with Daily Routines

Young children can learn how to do simple daily self-help activities—they just need to be taught what to do. When teaching a child to do self-care skills, you first need to know what you can typically expect of a young child, your child's skill level, and how to provide clear and simple instructions about how to do a task. In addition, providing children with ample encouragement that is both positive and specific will help promote their success. Children can learn, at a very young age, how to wash their own hands, brush their teeth, and get undressed and dressed. The information in [this new Family Tool from CSEFEL](#) will help you understand what you can expect from your preschooler and it provides tips for helping your child learn how to become more independent with daily routines.

*Submitted by Pam Pace
Region 13 Behavior Specialist*



The School Age Corner

Is your afterschool space shared or designated? In other words, does your space belong to your after school group only or do other groups use it at other times?

Often rooms are on loan from a church or a school, or maybe there is a More at Four class in that area earlier in the day. If not, consider yourself one of the lucky ones that can stake out your program's territory ... no having to wheel materials and centers in and out, no worrying that artwork will get torn down, no moving furniture out at the end of the day, no one to lecture you about using other groups' supplies or accusing your program about missing items.

Sound familiar? Of course, the choice about sharing space is rarely ours to make, so how can we make the best out of our environment when we have to share it with others? And more importantly, how do we make sure the children themselves don't feel like invaders or interlopers? It's easy to see through children's eyes how it would make them feel to be told repeatedly "don't touch" or "that's not yours," etc. As adults, we know how it would make us feel, and children are, if anything, more susceptible to feeling that they don't belong. So, first and foremost, it would be important to work hard in every way, every day, to never imply that they don't belong there. As one might imagine, feeling as if they don't belong leads to a profound lack of bonding and buy in to positive participation. Developmentally, school age children take it as a personal rejection, and this can manifest itself in acting out behaviors. E.g., "Well, if I don't

belong here, then I don't want to be here either!" Children can also take their hurt out on materials, equipment, and even fellow after schoolers.

There are several good strategies you could try in order to create the welcoming feeling you want.

The first would be to take care not to use any of the "don't touch that, that's not ours" kind of language. In fact, everything in your program, if it is within reach and sight (as it should be) – i.e., all equipment and materials – should belong to the children or it should be removed from sight. If it's not for their use, then move it out and replace it with things that are for their use.

The other strategy is to work out an agreement with the host as to exactly what the after schoolers can use and what will be left undisturbed. For instance, can they promise one wall or area that can belong to and be used only by the after schoolers? If so, here is where you want the art work displayed or materials kept. Coming back day after day to at least one thing that stays the same helps give a child a sense of belonging and permanence in their lives. Advocate wherever you can for carving out places just for them.

If your after schoolers are sharing a space with More at Four, it's very important not to have the two groups compete for space or materials: neither group "trumps" the other in terms of importance, both belong in the program to the same degree. Therefore, work out a way for materials to be shared, keeping in mind that it is the responsibility of the program owner to **restock** as needed. More at Four funding is not meant to supply after school programs, and sometimes this can be interpreted to mean that school age children



The School Age Corner

Cont'd from Page 6

are not to touch, use, or otherwise come in contact with those items and/or areas.

Perhaps the intent is not to make school age children feel like displaced second class citizens. Sadly, this is sometimes the case in situations where program administrators may not understand how to accomplish sharing so as to welcome all "customers." (For more advice on space shared between an after school program and a More at Four program, you can request a copy of the handout written specifically for this kind of shared space. You can email Jan at jan@childcarenetworks.org to request it.)

Portability is the key to transforming your shared space into an after school program. PRESTO! Materials can be kept on wheeled carts and "rolled out" for the afternoon. Many high quality after school programs rely on this technique! This requires some extra planning and setting aside about 10 minutes before the children arrive to create their after school environment. Some of your centers will basically be housed on wheels, but many times centers can simply be augmented to be bumped up to the appropriate age of development. For example, school age book collections obviously need to contain older choices, such as chapter books and other special interest topics such as sports trivia, etc. You can keep these books in milk crates that can be placed in the cozy/reading area before the children arrive.

The art area requires very little pre-adaptation; several more sophisticated art choices will meet the need, such as beading or knitting projects. Likewise, game and puzzle choices for older children need to be brought in to the space each day before the school agers enter the space.

There are probably as many different variations of shared spaces as there are programs! Some programs can keep the space set up all week and only have to break it down for weekends, e.g., those which meet in churches or community buildings. Other programs must take it down/apart daily. Either way, if extra care and consideration is taken, it is very possible to have a high quality and welcoming space in which children feel at home when they arrive and have a good time while there.

*Submitted by Jan Waugh
Region 13 School Age Specialist*

"We live in a world in which we need to share responsibility. It's easy to say, 'It's not my child, not my community, not my world, not my problem.' Then there are those who see the need and respond, and those people are my heroes."

Fred Rogers (1928-2003)

Just Ask!

Have you ever done a parent/family questionnaire to get feedback as to how things are going from their standpoint? Something as simple as a suggestion box is a great way to get ideas too.

A confident program is willing to ask for feedback from parents, a smart one will consider including some of their ideas.

*Submitted by Jan Waugh
Region 13 School Age Specialist*

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Child Care Resource and Referral**

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**Coalition for Families
CCR&R Lee County**

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**Turning the Page
To Spring!**



March: American Red Cross Month
Nutrition Month
Read Across America Month
Woman's History Month

- 1—Deadline for Early Bird Registration for 2011 Smart Start Conference, May 2-5 In Greensboro
- 2—Theodor Geisel's Birthday (Dr. Seuss)
- 17—St. Patrick's Day
- 20—First Day of Spring

April: Keep America Beautiful Month
National Garden Month
National Volunteer Month

- 1—April Fool's Day
- 15—Registration Deadline for 2011 Smart Start Conference, May 2-5 in Greensboro
- 22—Earth Day
- 24—Easter Sunday

