

# TRANSITION

## Transition

Transition is about *change*.

It usually involves the disruption of an existing set of circumstances, followed by a period of time to readjust and get used to a new set of circumstances. Adults and children experience transition periods at various times in their lives as they grow and develop.

### Life Transitions

- Physical and emotional changes with adolescence/puberty
- Moving house
- Changes in a significant relationships
- Unemployment
- Parent separation and divorce
- Death, illness or disability of a loved one
- Pregnancy

### School Transitions

- Attending school for first time
- Having a new teacher
- Leaving kindergarten/child care services to go to primary school
- Moving to a new class/group away from some friends
- Attending a new school
- Leaving primary school to attend secondary school
- Leaving secondary school to go to work or further education

All of us experience a series of transitions during our lives. Some changes are welcome and we look forward to what they may bring us. Sometimes unwanted changes are forced upon us and we are left wondering how we are going to cope. Some children may be excited about a new school, while others may be anxious and afraid of the unknown. This anxiety may be displayed in a variety of ways, including:

- Difficult or disruptive behaviour
- Withdrawing
- Concern about making new friends
- Decrease in self-confidence
- Challenging teachers at the new school
- Trying to avoid school
- Concern about work standard

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## Finding Solutions

- Talk to your child – share your experiences of change with them and let them know that everything worked out ok for you in the end. Ask your child about their concerns and reassure them that they will be ok too
- Help your child to become familiar with the new school – plan visits, meet teachers, obtain a map
- Ensure that your child regularly attends school
- Discuss any concerns with the school - they will be able to work with you to develop strategies to support your child
- Encourage your child to get involved in school activities (music, sport, debating, etc.) so they can make new friends
- Encourage your child to speak to the Year level coordinator or a staff member they can trust, if they are unhappy
- Have an active interest in your child's education - help your child with his/her homework, participate in school activities, share a skill with the school
- Talk about the positives of the new school!

## Remember

- Children seem to cope better with transition and change when they maintain as much of their normal routine as possible (this includes sending them to school)
- Providing a routine, combined with regular attendance at school helps children to regain a sense of control over their lives
- Encouragement, communication and acknowledgement build self-esteem and self-confidence that is vital for a child to experience success at school

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