

## **Moving Right Along: Planning Transitions to Prevent Challenging Behavior**

### **Front Porch Series**

#### **Broadcast Conference Call**

Micki Ostrosky: Welcome, everyone. Typically on the fourth Monday of the month, it means that it's time for our monthly Front Porch series, but due to Memorial Day next Monday, we're gathering earlier. So, thank you all for joining us. This is Micki Ostrosky. I'm a faculty collaborator on the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning. The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning is funded by the Office of Head Start.

Our Front Porch series is a collection of broadcast conference calls where we gather to hear national experts on a topic related to quality teaching and learning and young children. On behalf of my colleagues and I at NCQTL, I'd like to welcome all of you to our broadcast call today.

Today, the focus of our topic is on planning transitions to prevent challenging behavior. And with us today, we have two experts who have a wealth of practical experience and knowledge that they'll share with you, and I'm going to just tell you a little bit about the two of them. First, Kathleen Artman Meeker is an assistant professor at the University of Washington. She's served as a K-3 special education teacher, a pre-service supervisor, teacher coach, and researcher. She's worked extensively with teachers around preventing challenging behavior and promoting young children's social-emotional competence. Kathleen also works with NCQTL to create products and provide training to support coaches in Head Start classrooms.

Our second speaker is Kiersten Kinder, who is the site director of the Susan Gray School of Peabody College. Susan Gray is an inclusive childcare center that serves as a lab school for the early childhood special education program at Vanderbilt University. Previously, Kiersten taught for 10 years in inclusive pre-K programs, she coached teachers to implement the pyramid model, and participated in research on coaching, preventing challenging behaviors, and embedded instruction, and she developed some professional development training and materials that we use at NCQTL. And now, without further ado, I'm happy to turn over the mic to Kathleen, who will start the presentation.

Kathleen Artman Meeker: Hi, everyone. We are really excited to join you today for the Front Porch series. Our conversation, as Micki said, is going to focus on helping preschool children engage in transitions successfully. So, we'll really focus on practical tips and strategies that you can use every day to help children be successful in transitions and to prevent challenging behavior.

Before the call, Kiersten and I were just joking. We're both parents of 2 1/2 year-old, almost 3-year olds; so, we talk about transitions all the time and we talk about challenging behavior and transitions almost all the time. So, this is a really kind of personal and fun topic for us to share with you today.

One little logistic point to think about. We're going to ask you to participate occasionally, just for yourself. So, it's a good idea to have some scrap paper and a pencil nearby, just to jot down things as we go through, as we pause for thought moments and to kind of get some participation.

Before we get started, we just want to make sure that we're all on the same page, making sure that we're talking about the same thing when we talk about transitions. What we're going to focus on, today, are classroom transitions. So, we're focusing on when one child moves or groups of children move from one activity to another; so, maybe going from group time to free play, indoors to outdoors. What we're not talking about today is that kind of big systems transition; so, when a child transitions into pre-K from Early Head Start or into kindergarten from preschool, although those also bring their own kind of different challenging behaviors or different issues. We're going to focus today on classroom transitions and how to support children.

So, to get us started, let's think a little bit about the transitions that you go through or that each of us as adults go through every day. So, take just a second with that scrap piece of paper and think about the transitions that you've already had this morning. What are the things, the steps that you've gone through this morning? Did you get out of bed? Get in the shower? Turn on the coffee maker? Just jot down the things that you've done this morning. And I'll pause for just a second while you jot those down. Now, as you think to yourself about that quick list that you're just having a chance to jot quick ideas down, did you have any challenging behavior during any of those transitions this morning, or did you see any? So, maybe on your way to work this morning, was traffic bad? Did you see any road rage? Did you have any moments getting snippy maybe with a spouse or a partner or a child? And why do you think that those kind of challenges happen during these kind of high-stress transitions: getting ready in the morning, getting to work on a Monday morning, cleaning up breakfast -- all of those things -- getting your kids dressed and ready to go.

Why are those transitions sometimes challenging? And if we think about those transitions and how we feel as adults, we can see some kind of connections with how transitions work for children and why transitions can be a little bit more challenging for children. So, why do you think challenging behaviors occur during transitions? Thinking about your own experiences, just this morning, thinking about how you moved through your day; now, think about the children that we see in classrooms. Why do you think transitions sometimes bring out challenging behaviors in children? Just jot down a few ideas on your paper, and I'll bring up some reasons that we know through the research and from our own experiences that transitions tend to bring about some challenging behavior.

So first, just compare how this looks with your own list. Often, our transitions involve wait time. So, if you're thinking of yourself as an adult, you're waiting in the car because of traffic. That might cause some challenging behavior. It might cause some yelling, some fist pumping on the steering wheel, or looking at your cell phone to check what's going on at work or what traffic looks like. All kind of challenging behaviors in one way or another. For kids, wait time: We really might want to get on to the next thing. As a child, I might be bored with nothing to do in the place where I am. I'm waiting; I'm sitting on the carpet; I've been sitting criss-cross as long as I can; I'm ready to go to the next thing. And so, I'm going to show that with challenging behavior. Transitions also might involve stopping something you like and starting something you don't like.

So, if you think about this morning, on a Monday morning when that alarm went off; the thing you like might've been sleeping in bed. And getting out of that bed didn't feel like something you really wanted to do; so, maybe you pressed the snooze button a couple times. Maybe, you grumbled a little bit. Maybe, some things you did delayed that waking up this morning. And for kids, we can think of that really similarly. So, if I'm playing and I'm really into the Lego structure I'm building, cleaning it up is something I don't really want to do. Stopping the computer is something I really don't want to do and going on to this next thing. So, we have to think about the kind of motivation that draws us at different ends of transitions. Another issue might be that children don't know what to expect from the transition or they don't know what's expected of them. So, if I don't know what's coming next, then it's a little bit more comforting to stay where I am; I don't know what to do in that next thing. Or if the expectations always change when I go to that next thing, then it makes it a little scary or a little hard.

So, if you think about yourself maybe going in to work, and the system for picking up breakfast has changed; there's a new kitchen system for getting your breakfast card; it might make it a little bit more challenging to go get that breakfast. You might get a little bit grumpier or have to go talk to somebody about how you get your dishes and how things change. And that might make you a little bit upset.

Or if there's a new clock-in system in the morning that you don't know how to work; that might make you a little bit frustrated. And so, kids have those same feelings, when they don't know how to sit down or clean up from breakfast. Do I pour my milk in the sink? Do I drop it in the garbage can? What do I throw away? What do I put in the bin? When do I wash my hands? When do I brush my teeth? I don't know what my order of steps is. And it can be a little bit frustrating for the kids. And finally, young kids are still learning. They're just building the communication skills, the social skills, and the cognitive skills that they really need to move through their days.

And kids develop on a continuum. We have young 3-year-olds in preschool; we have 5-year-olds in preschool, and we've got kids on all ends of the age spectrum at different ends of development. So, we're just thinking about how these young kids can communicate when they're frustrated or communicate when they don't understand what to do next. And often how that gets communicated is challenging behavior. And so, that's something that we have to think about, look through that lens, when we're thinking about transitions. And with that, I'm going to hand it over to Kiersten to walk you through a little example.

Kiersten Kinder: So, this is Kiersten, and I have the privilege of introducing you to Charlie. Charlie's a 3-year-old who loves school. He knows all his friends' names and greets them excitedly when he walks in the door. He likes to play with cars and trains and really, really loves to get messy. When he gets engaged in something he likes, he jumps in and seems to lose track of anything else around him. I'm wondering if Charlie sounds a little bit familiar to anyone. His teachers in the Fantastic Frog room make sure that the classroom day is full of activities. There's three small groups every day, a large group time with books and songs, teaching games, lots of things going on. But, the teachers have noticed that not only Charlie, but several of his friends miss a lot of what they've got planned and they're just really stressed all the time, because it takes so long to get the kids there and get them to the next activity. There always seems to be a struggle between two children or a straggler that's got someone lagging behind, and a teacher has to stop what they're doing and get everyone back on task. More often than not, Charlie needs the most help of all.

Sometimes, a teacher will even have to bring Charlie kicking and screaming to the next activity. However, it just takes a few minutes, and then, he's happily doing what everyone else is doing. So, we want you to have a Charlie in your mind, as you go through this webinar. We want you to think about a child that you're working with, someone in your class maybe, who struggles with transitions, too. Maybe, it won't be in the same way that Charlie does, but you can bet that any given day -- during cleanup, line up, wash hands all of those transition times in our typical classroom days -- there is going to be a struggle for that child.

So, be thinking about that as we go through the webinar. As Kathleen said, today we're going to help you think about how to plan for that "Charlie success" by first thinking about the classroom schedule and environment and making sure they're both set up for all the children to have successful transitions throughout the day, and then we're also going to give you some ideas about how you can support your Charlie specifically, because he sounds like a child that might need a little more. So, we'll do this by giving you three tips. Go ahead and... yep. The slide.

The three tips are: To examine your schedule. And so, that's really going to involve looking broadly at your day and see how it might be setting the children up for less transition success. Thinking like a kid, which we're going to give you a lot of fun transition tips that can really prevent some challenging behaviors. And prepare to personalize: Thinking about more children like Charlie. How can we personalize some supports just for them? Overall, we want you to remember that we know transitions are going to happen, so the best thing to do is to plan for success. And these tips will really show you how, okay?

So, let's move into our first one: Examining your schedule. A classroom schedule can be a hidden source of transition successes or struggles. Schedules can be really tricky, because they aren't always in your control. You might have an assigned playground time or a meal time; but even some minor tweaks and changes in your schedule you'll find can make a really big difference. Two really important considerations are, when you're just starting out, is to think about: How many transitions children are making, throughout the day and how long is it taking to make those transitions? To know how many transitions children are making during the day, you'll need to count those. And be sure to count transitions within blocks of times or other transitions, like rotating through small groups or assigned centers. If a child has to stop an activity and move and start to a new one, that's a transition.

So, let's move along and look at the Fantastic Frogs classroom schedule. All right. So, what we've got here, it's a pretty typical structure of the day. Children come in, have some entry time, play a bit, go to large groups, nothing too out of the ordinary. What I've done is I've added some red explosions to mark some potential transition troubles that I'd want to talk about with you today.

So, let's take a look at number 1, that little bitty free play time. So, that short time and free play in the beginning of the day could set up a really hard transition. Children don't have time to get engaged in a preferred activity, and then they have to leave it quickly for possibly an unpreferred, teacher-directed activity, especially children like Charlie, who once they get engaged, it's really hard to get him out.

So, let's take a look at number 2 next. The issue there is the really long group time. This could set up for some big struggles for children to get to group, to remain at group. That's a long time during the day to have kids be sitting. Even if there's lots of great, engaging activities, it's still something to think about when you're looking at your schedule and thinking about transitions.

Number 3 is what I mentioned before. It's one of those blocks of time in the day that requires children to make several transitions. Here, it's going through different small groups -- four of them -- in only 45 minutes. When this happens, it's really important to ask yourself, "Is there a way to get the same goals accomplished a different way?" So, we'll be thinking about that, too.

Number 4 and 5 on this Fantastic Frog schedule, they really share the same issue: Everybody's doing the same thing at the same time. So, everybody's lining up at the same time to wash their hands; everybody's waiting for snack at the same time. That long wait is inevitable, and challenging behaviors are really likely to happen during that time.

So, with a whiff of a magic wand and a shift of the slide, we're going to look at a new one. So, let's take a look at this new -- a new Fantastic Frog classroom schedule. Okay? So, we've changed the beginning of the day and made a predictable, structured entry to help children transition into the classroom and avoid that short free play time to transition out of, because remember, that's a breeding ground for transition troubles. I'm going to even share a great visual for this time of the day later on in our tips, so the children can know what to expect. There's still some child choice in there. Kids can still choose what to do, but it's a little bit more controlled and a little bit more structured. That also can help with children coming in and not -- having some trouble leaving parents, so transitioning into the day, because they know exactly what to expect. A free play time might be a little bit more scattered, and not quite under-- kids might not be as able to jump right into, okay?

So, the next change we made is we shortened circle time a lot. So, there's less time in large groups, less waiting for activities to happen. Remember, we want to make those group times short and move quickly through, especially at the beginning of the year. You can always add more time slowly, decrease that center time as kind of the "big K" approaches to kindergarten. But it's really important to think about meeting children where they're at, to avoid challenging behaviors and to teach the behavior expectations you want to happen.

So, let's think about that circle time being much smaller and maybe, limiting all the activities that might happen in there, thinking about when they might happen later in the day or at different times of the day, okay? And then, look what we did to our center time. Instead of having a small group center time that kids rotate through and kids are told where to go, it's more open and more free.

So, there's a longer time for children to get engaged in the activities; they have some choice; but there also might be some of those small groups activities happening during center time as well. So, there might be, maybe 20 minutes into center time, a teacher says, "Okay, we're going to have an activity here. Our group game is starting. If you'd like to come and play Bingo, come on over to the table," and we can invite kids in that way. And kids can have a little bit more time to control what activities they participate in. It's really important to think about, when you have a longer center time like this, your classroom environment and making sure that it does serve as that extra teacher in the classroom, making sure your environment's set up for children to interact with it and learn from it with some teaching support and introduction.

So, easily accessible materials, clear instructions, teaching how to use materials, introducing when new games come in, doing that; those are all things that can really help, okay? By adding the music and story time -- oh, I'm sorry. Let me go back to another kind of really out-of-the-box thing -- might not be out of the box for everyone, but thinking about, "Can we have snack happen during center time?" So, can that be a choice that happens? Can kids come to a small table and eat snack together in smaller groups? There might be some opportunities to work on social skills there, not as many kids crowded around a sink or moving to another place to have to wash their hands all together. So, it might be a more easy, more fluent -- more fluid way to have snack accomplished and eliminate some of those transitions. Let's also look at the music and story time, too. Instead of having everybody finish at one time, you can just send the kids in small groups to -- while the waiting kids are still kept busy by still participating in the songs. So, you may not be able to make all these changes, but this was a good example, we thought, about how to think about where you might need to make changes and why. And a few ideas how, okay?

So, let's move on to our tip number 2, which is: Think like a kid! And kids want to be kept busy; they want to know what to do, and they want to have some fun with their friends. And so those three tips are going to -- those three things that we know kids love to do are going to kind of guide our tips, this tip number 2 to think like a kid, okay? So, for keeping me busy, let's think of a time in -- children's time spent waiting in transitions like water in a water bottle, okay?

So, if part of the time is filled up by that child washing their own hands, what's going on the rest of the time? Because, if a child's not engaged in something, children are going to find something to fill that space. They're going to be engaged. So, if it's not something that you want to have happen, then what is it going to be? And that's where the planning comes in, okay; because, often what fills that gap is challenging behaviors, right? So, let's think about some ways to keep kids busy.

One idea -- go ahead and slide -- is an "all done" bucket. So, a place, a designated place that we know, when you're all done and you're waiting -- or some places I've seen it called a waiting bucket -- here's a place you can go. Really simple, really effective. It can have books in it, little toys that are easy to transition out of; so, maybe not necessarily the most favorite racecars that Charlie's going to get into and not want to transition out of, but maybe some fun books, some classroom books, picture books, photos of the classroom, those kinds of things would be great for an "all done" bucket.

The next thing to think about is just some waiting games. There's a what's -- I've seen lots of classrooms use "What's in the bag?" Just have a classroom item in the bag and kids have to give several clues, and children have to guess. "Guess what I'm drawing" is another really fun way to build some guessing skills and some prediction skills as well. You just draw one part of a simple object, and with each line you add, have children guess, and then by the end, they're taking turns guessing and don't even know that time has passed, because they're being kept busy. Another game that you can play, some other waiting games, just really quick, easy, active songs. [Sings] "Everybody do this, do this, do this! Everybody do this just like me!" So, simple; so easy, but kids really connect to it; they get involved; you can change the actions really quickly. Maybe, you have a visual up right by the door with different songs, different ideas. Because, when you're in the middle of transitions, sometimes you're a little scattered, too. There's a lot going on.

Let's go ahead and move along to the next slide. Another idea is wanting to know what to do, okay? So, this is the other piece that we think is really crucial for planning for success, is do children -- are we sure they know what to do? And even if we think they might know what to do or, you know, we think, "They've been doing this for two months; they should know what happens," some children might not know what to do. And so, let's assume that we've given them all the supports we can to be sure that they understand what the next steps are. Another thing this does, on the teacher side, is it also helps when there're subs or new people in the room kind of jumping in to help, because it gives them quick and easy instructions of what children should be doing.



So, it's a two-fer for that one, for sure. So, for example, this one's just got three quick pictures of what the children should be doing when they're transitioning into circle time after cleaning up. And the teacher teaches what each picture means and walks them through. Let's move on to the next one, because the next one I think is a really great example of a transition that happens in a lot of programs, is moving outside of your classroom to another part of the building, okay? A lot of times that can be a struggle for children, not exactly sure where we're going when we leave the classroom.

So, having a board like this with little pictures on it that are removable, that can change depending on where you're heading to, and taking that small piece of cardboard with you and just showing the kids before you walk out of the room: "Look, first we're going to go to the bathroom. Everybody needs to hold on the rope, and we're going to get to the gross motor building -- gross motor room. Hold onto the rope again, and we'll be back at circle time." And referring back to that as you're walking, as you're moving. Possibly, singing a fun transition song on the way, to tell everybody where you're headed to, is a great way to show kids what's happening and to make it fun as you go, okay? All right, let's take a look at the next one.

So, routines is another area where you might think, sure, children know how to wash their hands, but if they're moving from something they don't want to leave, moving to something else that they do not want to do as much maybe, having to stop and start and that transition time, having a visual reminder there can really help. So, it can help by reminding them what comes next. It can help the teacher by just pointing to remind them, "Yep, remember, okay, we're all done with the water. Time to get soap." Or, "Time to get the paper towels."

Another thing this might really help with is if your school has some kind of quirky rules where you might need to use the paper towel to turn off the faucet or you only use three pumps to get an appropriate sized paper towel, all of those things can be written into a visual schedule of what happens in these routines. The one on the left is an entry routine; so, when the child comes into the room, they know they have to hang up their backpack, put their folder away, move their bear to check in, pick out their chair, and then go ahead to go to the bathroom. So, those specific to that classroom, what does it mean to get from into the hallway into the beginning of the day? So, really focusing on teaching what children should be doing during that time.

Okay, let's take -- I think the next slide gives us another example -- yep -- of thinking about the seasons. So not everybody -- I taught in Chicago, so, I definitely had the privilege of everything that children come dressed in, during the winter months; so, making sure that you flex your visuals as the seasons change. You might need to have more time during that transition. So, your schedule might even need to change, but also the supports you give children would need to change as well. All right, let's take a look at one more under: "Show me what to do." Oh, I think we got a couple. This one is wonderful.

One of the biggest transition tips, I think, are transition warnings. So many times, young children don't know what to expect. Time doesn't have as much meaning when you're very young. We know this cognitively, and it's not a concept that's mastered at that time. And so, giving kids a heads up: Giving a two-minute warning, just saying what's going to -- you know: "Two more minutes to play; two more minutes and then it's circle time." Those things can be really helpful. You can do those in a lot of different ways. You can just, like I did here, just kind of shout out, turn off the lights, giving children an idea of exactly how much time is left by using either a high-tech timer or a timer clock, which the red disappears as time goes on, so children have a good, really visual, clear idea of what's happening.

But then there are some low-tech ones. A sheet, a paper with just some green and yellow and red circles to take off as the time passes. So, if a child's at easel, they might have that strip of paper there with three green circles. As you walk by, tear one off, keep going. Give them the warning when you get to the yellow. And then when they're at the red, they know it's time to choose a new center. And then, egg timers are another way to be very helpful, okay?

The next one, this is what I was talking about earlier, that morning table activity. So, when a child comes into the classroom, they know to check the schedule to see; first, I need to sign my name notebook or whatever it is; maybe, moving your picture from home to school; whatever it is that really is the first thing that the child needs to do to signify that they're in the classroom. And then there's the choices. Those are the three things that are options for right then, and you can see that they're removable.

So, it starts the day off with kids knowing what to do in a really clear and an independent way. We know young children love to be independent. They love to "do it myself," as I hear at least 75 times a day. So that's a great way to do that. All right, let's take a look at the next one.

Kathleen: All right, so the next kind of key strategy for thinking like a kid is making sure that you're setting up fun with friends. And so, a key way to make transitions work is to make them fun. We build excitement for what comes next, and at the same time, we're also building some social skills, we're helping kids learn about their peers in their classroom, learn each other's names, learn how to work together, pair up, all of those good things that need to happen in our classrooms. So, a key way to do that is to include pictures, children's pictures, in transition materials.

So, find your picture, find your friend's picture, roll a picture cube dice -- this dice that you see here in the middle -- roll to see who goes next or to pick your partner for this transition or for this activity. So, again, that builds social skills; it makes it exciting, adds a little bit of anticipation, and helps make the transition move a little bit more smoothly. And I'll show you a few more examples.

So, here are a few more great ways to keep little minds busy and little bodies busy during transitions. So, you see examples here of some symbols that are fixed onto the floor where children can line up. And I apologize if you hear a garbage truck beeping in the building outside my office. Sorry for the background noise. But children then can go find a symbol; say, the teacher has a little card that she hands to them, "group time;" to transition out, they go find their symbol, and they go line up there. It gives them something to do, and they're paired up with someone next to them. The same thing with the feet of different colors or different numbers. You can work on lots of different kind of goals that you might have for kids right during the transition as well, and you get a lot of information.

One of my favorite things and favorite ideas to do is having partner sticks where you can draw sticks for kids to partner up. You see the example here, where these popsicle sticks or craft sticks have matching stickers on one end of them -- you can see the frogs on one end -- and those go sticker side down into this jar, and the teacher can then draw at random -- or not so random; I'll tell you about that in a second -- can draw at random two sticks. Kids can come draw, and they can find their partners that way.

If you want to be really intentional about some children being paired up with others or certain kids needing experiences and pairing up with other kids, you can put a little dot on the end of the stick that you can see, and then you know that that is Charlie's stick, and you can pair him up to go with a certain child or to go to a certain area; so, that you can just kind of help facilitate that transition as much as you need to. Another way to keep it fun is to involve kids' interests and to give them something to do.

So, Kiersten mentioned transition warnings being a key strategy to help kids stay engaged. And here's a really great idea that has been developed and that is -- we'll share our resource for this, at the end of the presentation today. But a countdown glove where it's the child's job to go around and announce that transitions are happening. So, they get to wear the little glove that has these pieces with Velcro on it counting down from 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. And they can go around and call out, "Five more minutes 'till clean-up! Four more minutes 'till clean-up!" And that's their job, to go around and check in. And you can see an example here of using a child's interest. There was a child who was really interested in Mr. Potato Head, and kind of that kept him engaged in the transition; so, they used those symbols. So, there's a lot of different ways that you can do it.

Another easy, low-cost way and low-effort way, if you don't have time to make the transition glove or think it would be too complicated to manage in your classroom, is just one of the little microphones from the dollar store that the child whose job it is can go around and announce, "Five more minutes 'till clean-up," can go around and give individual transition warnings in each of the centers -- can go to the block area, can go to the book area, the art area and let kids know that transitions are about to happen. So, that might be a nice job for a child who might actually have a difficult time transitioning, that they get to take kind of a leadership role during that transition, and they know the transition is coming up, and they're announcing it, and they get to kind of help their peers as well.

So, the final tip for success with transitions is being ready to personalize and individualize for kids who need some more support. So, at the beginning, Kiersten described Charlie, who had a hard time coming in, but once he got in, he was ready to go. He always played and engaged, but transitions were a little bit hard. You might have some kids that you've tried a lot of things with, but nothing seems to work. And so, those might be kids who need even more levels of support than just adapting your general classroom schedule or coming up with a few strategies. They might need individualized support. So, this is assuming that things in your classroom are working pretty well for most of the children. You've thought about your schedule, and you know that it's appropriate and it's working pretty well. You have some systems in place, but some children need more support.

So, we're going to meet a child named David, who's 3, and he has trouble responding to those classwide transitions and to really any transition in the classroom. He enters crying and clinging to his mom in the morning; he doesn't want to part with mom; he resists washing his hands, putting toys away, and joining the group. When the rest of the class begins to transition, David throws himself on the floor and cries.

He hits, kicks, and screams at adults, and during centers, he just kind of wanders. He doesn't really engage. His teacher already has a classroom visual schedule that other kids are using and that the whole class is using to let them know what's coming up next, and she's taken some data and has made a plan to help David get more engaged in the classroom. and to feel more like he's a part of the classroom.

So, here's what she's tried; we'll walk through. She has some individual warnings, scripted stories, first/then boards, and transition items. And I'll show you what those look like. So, here's a scripted story that they made for David to help him come into the classroom. And this is available through the CSEFEL and the TACSEI websites that I'll show you in just a moment for more resources. But this is an easy scripted story that's in PowerPoint format, all ready to go, that his teachers were able to swap in some pictures of his own mom and his own family, his own special toys, and help to walk him through the day. So, this is called "I Go to Preschool." "Sometimes I get sad because I miss my family. It's okay. I can have fun playing at school. And I can bring something special from home." And there are more pages of this story that explain the things he can do with his friends, that explain what he can do if he gets sad, who he can talk to, where he can go, those kind of things; so, that it helps with that transition. And this is something they can keep at home, that his family can read. They can also keep it in the classroom as a reminder as well. It's a really low-cost, easy strategy to use that helped David really understand what to do in his classroom.

They also worked really hard on developing some individual strategies to help David be more successful. So, you saw, when Kiersten was talking, some of those mini schedules for different routines that work for all of the kids in the classroom. So, here's how you get your snowsuit on; here's how we wash our hands in this classroom. For David, they developed some individual schedules for things that he could -- how he could come into the classroom, and things that he could do. So, they used pictures of him; they used toys that really motivated him; they used things that they knew that he liked to really personalize and motivate for him. And the teacher spent a lot of time talking with him, getting down with him, showing him that schedule and working through, you know, "You can come in; you can put on your coat; you can say hi to Ms. Rosa; you can wash your hands," all of the things that he would go through. They also used a lot of first/then charts, and this is just an example that you see here. There's lots of different ways to do them, but it was "first" something going on in the classroom and "then" something really exciting or interesting for David. And they could gradually just move that on to really kind of typical routines. So, first we wash our hands, then we have snack, those kind of things.

So, as we begin to wrap up, we just wanted to leave you with some ideas to keep in mind as you're thinking about your own transitions in your classroom. So, a quick transition checklist, some ideas to keep in mind are, first, can your schedule be changed or can the transition be changed? If you're struggling, is there something that adults can do to make the whole transition flow easier? So, thinking, like Kiersten showed you, with changing the schedule, changing how and when kids come in and out of different activities or times of the day. Second, are the kids busy? Do they have something to do? Or, are they finding their own things to do that aren't necessarily consistent with what you would want them to do? Do they know what to do? Do they know to go wash their hands? Do they know to go throw their breakfast foods away? Do they know to sit and wait as the peaches get passed around in family-style dining? Do they know what comes next and what they do next? And does everyone have what they need to be successful? Are all kids getting the support that they need? And if you answered "no" to anything, then the following resources can really be valuable for you.

So, quick -- this presentation was inspired by an article that is in "Young Children on the Web," and it will be coming out in "Teaching Young Children" relatively soon, an adaptation of it, as well. So, that's available as a resource to you. And we also want to give a lot of credit to Rochelle Lentini and the team that presents "Transition Tips and Tricks," and I'll show you another resource where you can find those materials online in just a second. So, TACSEI, the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention, has make-and-take workshops online that are fabulous. This month's featured make-and-take is "Thoughtful Transitions to Reduce Traffic Jams and Challenges." And you can find many, many resources there that you can download, you can print and use right away. So, this is where that countdown glove with the 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, those templates are, and many, many other visual supports that you can use in your own classrooms. They also create really nice "Backpack Connection Series" handouts that you can provide to families, and that you might be able to find some tips for yourself for your own classrooms, as well. But these are nice ways to talk with families about transitions and help them understand how to support their children during transitions in the home and as they come into the program.

And then, the "Teaching Tools for Young Children" is another resource that you can find easily online with lots of downloadable resources much like those make-and-takes for transitions, but they have routines, guides, and questions that you can ask yourselves and ask questions to families when children are having a hard time during a lot of different routines. And two final ones, there is a "What Works" brief from CSEFEL, the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning about helping children make transitions, between activities that's available online.

And then, finally, NCQTL does have a 15-minute in-service about helping manage classroom transitions with a lot of great resources and a video that you can share amongst your own staff. And this is available online as well through the ECLKC website.

Micki: Thank you. I think, you know, underscoring the importance of we need to teach children the expectations. So, if you're in situations like that where children need to be quiet because of the way the schedule works and where things are located, teaching children these are things they can do, but then the expectation of using quiet voices or quiet bodies. Great. This was a fantastic way to kind of end this academic year of Front Porch series. We take a break during the summer, and we'll join again. So, I think in August is when Gail and I will schedule the next one; so, keep looking on the NCQTL website for ticklers of when the next Front Porch series will be. And I hope everybody who -- I hope everybody who's listening, you have a great summer, you get at least a little bit of time to get outside and enjoy some sunshine and, hopefully, some nice weather So, thank you, Kiersten and Kathleen. Really appreciate your sharing your ideas with us. Bye, everybody.

Kiersten: Bye. Thank you.

Kathleen: Bye. Thank you.