

Teacher Time: Supporting Infants and Toddlers and Their Families Through Transitions

Treshawn Anderson: Hi, everyone. Welcome to Teacher Time. And happy Friday.

Judi Stevenson-Garcia: Whoo-hoo! Hi.

Treshawn: I'm Treshawn Anderson, and joining me today is Judi Stevenson-Garcia. Hi, Judi. How you doing?

Judi: I'm doing all right, Treshawn. How are you?

Treshawn: Oh, I'm good. I'm great. So, hope everyone else is doing good out there, too. So, we're from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, and we're excited to be here today to talk about a new topic – supporting infants and toddlers and their families through transitions. And today, we have a very special guest with us, and she's going to help us host our webinar today, so be looking out for her. We'll introduce her right after we go through some of our housekeeping items.

Judi: So, in case this is your first time using this platform for our webinars, I'm just going to go over really quickly a couple things that'll help you use it and that'll make it a little bit easier. You look at the bottom of your screen, you'll see a couple of different widgets that you can use, and all of those widgets are for you to customize and move around so that you can make your screen work the way that you need it. So feel free to move them around, open them up, close them, and use what helps you the most during this webinar.

We're going to use the blue chat room, and I see a bunch of you in there saying "hello" and introducing yourselves, so hi, everyone in the chat room. Jan Greenberg is our chat-room facilitator. She'll be in there to chat with you, and she'll also be in our Q&A widget, which is purple. If you have questions for our guest cohost or if you have questions about the technology or using the platform, you can put them in there, and we'll try to get to those questions as soon as we can.

You can find – All of our resources that we mention today are in the green resource-list icon, so the copy of our slide deck for today and some additional resources will be in there and also our viewers' guide, which is really helpful. If you have technical issues, there's a help widget that could help you out with some of – answers to your technical questions, and we're going to have an on-demand version of this webinar available about 30 minutes or so after the webinar, and you can access it at any time just using the same link that was sent to you earlier. And then we'll also post it on MyPeers for those who want to view it there.

And then the last thing is, at the end of the webinar, we will post a link for you that goes to our evaluation form, and we'd love it if you would complete that evaluation. We do use the information that you provide to improve our future webisodes. And then, also, after you complete the evaluation, you can download a certificate of completion for your participation in this webinar. And if you're viewing the webinar with colleagues on one computer and only one person is registered, you can just forward the evaluation link to your colleagues who also viewed the webinar, and then they can complete that evaluation and get that certificate of completion. So we're looking forward to a really fun and interactive hour together, so please

use that chat box to chat with each other, and if you have questions, use that purple question-and-answer icon, and we'll just get started.

Treshawn: All right. Thanks, Judi. So, we're going to get started on our topic today – supporting infants and toddlers and their families through transitions. And if you've been with us for our first two webisodes, you know that we've pretty much based this series on the Framework for Effective Practice, and sometimes you may call it the House Framework.

So, our first two infant/toddler episodes, we talked about creating a safe and nurturing learning environment for infants and toddlers, which included the foundation of the house. And then, for our second infant/toddler episode, we talked about implementing curriculum with fidelity, and a lot of you guys joined us for that one. And so, that topic was related to the left pillar, which is implementing research-based curriculum and teaching practices.

And so, for today, we're going to be talking about transitions and specifically how we can support families and their infants and toddlers through the many different kinds of transitions, and, as you can see, engaging with families is there at the center of our House Framework. And although many of our transition supports that we'll talk about today fall within the foundation of the house and our interactions and the environmental supports related to transitions, we'll primarily focus on how these and other activities really help you partner with families to ease transitions for families, infants, and toddlers, and that's why we've highlighted the center of the house for today.

And as you may know, transitions for infants and toddlers can be really challenging, and we know that, when families are prepared and engaged, it really helps make a successful transition.

Judi: Exactly. So, we're going to say that word "transition" a lot today, but that's good. That's why you're all here. So, it's time for us to introduce our special cohost for today's episode. We're very happy to have Gail Joseph here with us. She's from the University of Washington, and she supports us here at the National Center to lead our work on the development of resources around transitions. Gail was also the founder of Teacher Time. This is her vision to really connect directly with teachers in this way, using technology, and so we're so glad that she's back on the Teacher Time set today to help us understand how we can support children and their families through transitions. So, hi, Gail. Welcome back.

Gail Joseph: Hey. Thanks for having me. It's great to be back. I love what you've done with Teacher Time.

Judi: It's a little different, but we're hoping for much of the same feel and the same -- we have the same goals, so we're really happy to have you here. So, let's just get started really kind of with an overview and setting the context for what we're doing today. Can you just tell us kind of what we should be thinking about generally when we say "transitions?"

Gail: Sure. I'm happy to talk about that for the whole Teacher Time. So, I think we can think about transitions in two ways, and probably our viewers/participants today are already thinking about the two different ways that they think about transitions. So, we can think about the big transitions that children and families experience together, such as moving from one early-

childhood program to another, so we can think about maybe leaving an infant-and-toddler home-based program and moving into a center-based pre-K program as a big transition.

You can also think about those big transitions as going from classroom to classroom, maybe an infant classroom into the "waddler," or the toddler, classroom might be a transition. And we can also think about a big transition, which is moving from home into a childcare care center or into a family childcare home, so going from being at home with your child and moving into that center. And so, when we think about that, we know that it's not just the child who's making that transition. It's really the family making that transition, as well.

And, second, we can think about smaller transitions that happen each day. So we can think about those transitions between routines and activities that happen, and these can be things like dropping the child off and picking the child up. It might be a transition of a way of a child's development, like moving from milk to eating solids could be a transition. We could think about some other transitions, as well. We can think about transitions, like, between activities, such as going from lunch to nap time. That's one of my favorite transitions we could think about for myself.

We could think about getting ready to go outside, which is often a big transition within the context of the classroom. We could think about transitioning from playtime to getting your diaper changed to going back to playtime. There's several little transitions in there. And then I was thinking we could just think about all of infant/toddler development, which is such a time of rapid change. There's so many transitions going on, and being aware of how many transitions are happening just for a child's kind of growth and learning makes us extra sensitive and responsive during those transition times, such as maybe drop-off, when a child is going through that separation-anxiety period. So, we can think, again, about big transitions – and we're going to talk about those – and then the little transitions or smaller transitions that happen during the day.

Judi: Yeah, I think that's great. I love that you're mentioning developmental transitions because I think that that's maybe one thing that we don't always think about, and it's so important in those infant/toddler years. It made me think of when my son first started to walk. He got so frustrated when he would, like, lose his balance and fall, and he got mad about it. And that was some – It was, like, emotional for him but also physical, and we kind of had to, like, work through that together. And that is a big transition, right, going from just kind of crawling or cruising to really being able to walk independently, so I think that's great.

And we've seen, in the chat box, some people have already mentioned, because we have an opening question, about how they support families through transitions, and some have mentioned classroom transitions, talking about routines with families and how the routines maybe similar or different to, you know, what children experience at home. Some have mentioned the big transitions, like having visits with parents or sending letters home to talk about the transitions. So these are really helpful, and if you guys want to add any additional information in the chat box, we'd love to hear from you about transitions that you've experienced with children and their families. It could be the big ones, it could be the smaller ones, but tell us in the chat box what you think. I see Marka just says, "Transition has a broad

meaning, but, for most, it means preparing a child for change." And that's so true. That's exactly what we're talking about today.

So, Gail, can you just tell us a little bit more about what you mean when you say supporting families and children through transition?

Gail: Sure. So, I think that sometimes we think about the transition, these kind of big transitions, as simply moving the child from one program to the next or from this classroom and then they're going to start going to this classroom, so we really just think about it as child transfer, almost. But this exclusively child-focused view is just not enough to really help children and families transition successfully, and I know that our viewers know that.

So, instead, we can really think about it as more of a complex, interactive web that helps us think about kind of really making connections across the different settings and making connections -- and you can see on the interactive web connections really across peers to peers. So the child might be getting acquainted with peers in their next environment, so connecting the child with future peers, connecting teachers to each other -- we'll talk about that -- connecting a family to a family in the next program or families that have children in the next classroom that the child is going to.

So, you can think about it as a web, and the more connections a web has, the stronger and more supportive it is, so we really want to think about that when we're thinking about transitions. How strong can we make that web as the child is moving from one program to the next or one classroom to the next or even through these developmental periods?

Treshawn: That's awesome. Yeah, I was reading in a chat box, and Yasmin said, "Transitioning a child from an IFSP to an IEP." Like, we don't really think about that transition a lot, but, you know, that's a whole new partnership, a whole, you know, other staff that will help the child transition, and that could be a lot on the family, so that's great. So, I know we're going to talk about a concept in our next slide.

So, it seems that big and small transitions are really a part of life for all children and families, and that means it's really important for teachers and family child care providers to understand how we can provide support through these transitions and communicate with families so that they are successful for everyone involved. So, can you tell us a little bit about how effective transitions can help children, Gail, like, especially in these early years?

Gail: Oh, absolutely. So, I know we all know -- and this is why we do the work -- that comprehensive early care and education experiences, such as in Early Head Start and in Head Start, can close the opportunity gaps, but we also know that stability and consistency between settings, such as from Early Head Start to a pre-K program or between classrooms and between home and school, is really crucial to children's continued success and their healthy adjustments to change. So I think that's really what we're thinking about here, is how can we help children make healthy adjustments to these changes that are occurring? And one of the things we know from research is that, the more transition practices -- So, let me just be clear. That's supportive transition practices that we'll talk about -- not the more transitions, but more supportive transition practices that are in place, the better the child and family will adjust to the new school, the new program, the new classroom, the new community, and better adjustment and

more positive relationships with teachers are not only related to improved social-emotional skill development. So, we know that.

So, if we're less stressed and we know what's coming next, we're less likely to engage in some challenging behaviors and more likely to engage in some pro-social behaviors, but we also see that these transition periods, when they are supported, are also related to children's cognitive skills, as well. And we know that these concepts of stability and consistency are particularly important for children who are dual-language learners. They rely on consistency and predictability as they learn to navigate new environments and the multiple languages. This really means paying closer attention to transitions between settings. So, again, it's not just the child is moving from one program to the next, but it really takes our intentional support to make sure that we are as supportive as possible in helping them do that. It's a really important part of our work.

And we also want to make sure that we provide stability, consistency within the daily experiences, so, again, going from those big transitions, from maybe different programs and different settings, to really thinking about the same concept, that stability and consistency are important when we're thinking about daily experiences and those smaller transitions. And for children with developmental delays or children with diagnosed disabilities, it's really important to be aware and make adaptations or modifications and adaptations for those children's individual needs.

So, for example, when we're making these small, daily transitions between activities, children might need more time. They might need an extra reminder, or they might need additional information and support about what's coming next. And for very young children and for young children with developmental delays, it might mean that, in addition to using our words about what's coming next, it might be showing them. Like, for example, it might be showing them the diaper. I have a diaper here, and it might be showing them the diaper before you're moving on to the changing table, or it might be showing them a spoon when you're saying that, "We're about to go have a snack." Or even showing them a toothbrush. Now, this is very -- I'll make this small. A small toothbrush before it's time for us to brush our teeth. So providing that extra information about where it is that we're going next can help children make those transitions.

Treshawn: That's awesome. I got to start bringing props with me on my next Teacher Time episode. I love it. So, thanks, Gail. It's so true that stability and consistency are really important, and even for adults. So, thinking about that, keeping that in mind, we're going to take a quick poll from the audience. We want you to now think about a transition that you may have had in life, like moving to a new city – I know I have moved to a few myself – starting a new job, getting married, becoming a parent, starting school. There's a whole list of transitions that we can think about, and just think – what really helped to ease your transition?

So, if you can see the poll – You might have to turn off your pop-up blocker in order for it to come up, but if you see this poll here, it asks, "What helped ease your transition? Did you have a lot of information ahead of time about where you were going next? Did you know someone at the new job or the new city you're moving to? Did you have supportive family members during the process?" Maybe some aspects of your life are going to stay the same – same routine, same school, you're just moving to a new neighborhood. Or maybe you had enough time to prepare?

What do you think? What helped? We've got some people answering. All right, while people are answering, I really liked your idea of showing the child, you know, certain things like a diaper and a toothbrush. Someone asked a question about having a child, you know, crying for an extended period of time, since August, maybe during these transitions. And although you're probably doing a great job at giving them reminders and letting them know the transition's coming up, I really like the idea of having a visual. You know, it's not a picture on a card, but an actual diaper, an actual toothbrush. I think that could help, you know, this child.

So, let's see. Let's look at what people had to say. So, a lot of people had supportive friends and families during the transition. Little bit – Everyone pretty much picked everything. The majority is having a supportive relationship, and that's great because that's what we're really talking about today, is really supporting children and families through transitions.

The next step was lots of information, and I would say, after that, would be "had enough time." We all need time when it comes to transitions. Sometimes, "Just give me a minute," you know, and then we can transition. So, let's talk about these a little bit more in detail.

Judi: You know, it's interesting, those responses – like, as an adult, what helps us transition are very much like what children need, right? They need some time, they need some information, and having supportive relationships really will help in that transition. So, that'll make it easier maybe for us to think about babies. Like, what helps us in transitions is also going to help infants and toddlers, as well. So, Gail, I know you have an easy way for us to think about this, about what children and families need so can you tell us a little bit about your easy approach, a good way for us to remember what's important about transitions?

Gail: Yeah, absolutely. So, people are asked this question, and I have to say that Jennifer LoCasale-Crouch kind of gave me this easy way to think about transitions, and it's always stuck with me. But every time we ask people about transitions, no matter what the transition is – maybe it's getting married, maybe it's moving, maybe it's retiring, maybe it's becoming a parent – anytime somebody's making a transition, typically, what helped them with that transition are very similar to the things that folks said, and that is that you can think about it as information, relationships, and alignment. So, any transition that somebody's going to make, when we can make sure that we have information about where it is that we're going next, if we have some relationship – So, relationships buffer stress. So, I always think about this, like, when I walk into a new – if I walked into a workshop or if I walked into a new class or even if I was -- got invited to somebody's birthday party and I went there, as soon as I see somebody else that I know, it just, like, helps me relax, and that's the same thing, so relationships and having relationships consistent but having relationships both in kind of where I'm leaving and where I'm going – incredibly supportive around transitions. And then the last thing is alignment, some things that stay the same, that you can predict they're going to be similar.

So, it might be a similar environment, it might be a similar routine that is established, it might be similar people, but things that are aligned also help.

So, information, relationship, alignment – remember those three things and get those in place during a transition, and you're pretty good. So, think about that -- We think about these both, like, kind of with -- with big transitions, it might make a lot of sense, but there's also -- you can

kind of think about them being applicable to those smaller, daily transitions. They're not necessarily as dramatic as big transitions, like starting a new program for a child or moving to a new classroom, but remember those concepts of stability and consistency.

So, for infants and toddlers, to experience stability and consistency on a daily basis, they need information, relationship, and alignment. You can think about that -- or familiarity -- even in those very small transitions. So, think of the example that I gave earlier about moving from -- from playtime to diaper time and back to playtime. Information would be letting the infant or toddler know that you're -- you're going to pick them up or lead them to the changing table, and then that relationship that you've developed with a child really kicks in during these transition times, because you know what their reaction will be to those transitions, and you can support them. So you might know that that toddler really likes to actually hold the diaper and take it over to the changing table and that that makes that transition a little bit smoother for that child. And then you always use diaper-changing time to build the relationship by talking with the child.

And, finally, some kind of alignment or familiarity. So this can mean consistency that transition each time. It might be that -- So that children can know what to expect is the point there. It's also helpful to talk with parents about how they transition to and from diaper changes at home so you can use those same strategies and use that same language to increase consistency for children.

So, I remember working with a family when I was a teacher, and they always called diapers "nappies," and so it was important for me to use the word "nappy" for that child, right? So using familiar language, using familiar routines. So I had another parent that told me that her child really got squirmy towards the end of diapering, and so what she found helped is when she would say -- she would, at the very end, she'd count down and say, "3, 2, 1, done!" And so I started doing that when I had the child in my care, too, and that helped, so having that consistency or familiarity.

Treshawn: Awesome. So, information, supportive relationships, alignment -- those are three easy things to remember. And then Gail's going to give us some strategies to -- for each of these -- to help us support us in what we're doing every day, what you're doing every day in your classrooms. So, first we're going to start with information. To help us understand, Gail's going to give us a couple of ideas about information, but, as you're thinking about those things, that about what types of information you think is important to have and to share with families when they're going through big transitions or, like, moving from one class into the next. What kind of information are you providing to parents?

Judi: And I think we've seen some examples in the chat box of information where they've communicated with families or sent letters home, or some have said that they do -- they'll do a home visit between the transitions, either from Early Head Start to Head Start or before the child starts the program. But we'd love to hear more from you in the chat box about what information is important for parents to have so that they can really feel supported through those transitions of their children. I -- There was a question, Gail, and maybe you can help us with this. Someone in the chat box -- Let me see if I can find her name. Oh, it's an -- Oh, so -- Oh, Viola. She asks -- She said -- I don't know if this is a different person. I'm sorry, I can't find her

name. Anna. "How do you help a parent that's not ready for their child to transition from infant to toddlers but the child is ready?"

Gail: Wow.

Judi: What do you think about that?

Gail: That's a great question. I'm going to – I'm going to think about that one for a little bit. I wonder if Treshawn has an idea.

Treshawn: Yeah, sure. Let me think about it as you're talking through information here.

Gail: Okay.

Judi: Information might actually be a helpful first place to start.

Treshawn: Yeah! So, let's start. So right. So anytime – So, Gail said this before. Any time infants and toddlers are moving from one activity to the next or from one environment or program to the next, they're experiencing a transition, and babies really experience many transitions. For example, when infant/toddlers first experience being cared for outside of the home, so many feelings may come up for the children and families, and this kind of hints at what we're talking about.

Families may feel like their babies won't remember them or, you know, they're not sure how they're going to be cared for by someone else. No one's a better parent than themselves, so, often, transition strategies are really geared towards helping the parents feel comfortable, which is true, but it also needs to help, you know, children transition, too, and settle into their new environment. And as important it is to provide a solid plan for families, we also need to think about transitions for children. So, we can help transitions go smoothly by providing information to both children and families, and I think this is important when it comes to talking with this parent.

You know, they might be wondering what their child is going to be doing in the next classroom. You know, they go from infants to toddlers, they may feel like, you know, their child may get stepped on if they're not mobile yet, or, you know, the foods that they eat in the toddler room may be different or, you know, just the routine, the nap time. They may go from sleeping in the crib to, you know, mats on the floor, and that can be a little bit scary for parents sometimes, so I think it's – along with this information, it's important to let them know, like, what's going to happen in this new classroom and see how they feel about it and see, you know, what they want to change or maybe adapt for their child just to help them feel comfortable in moving to the next room. I know that was the case, you know, when I was – I mean, when I was a parent, I am a parent – my child going from the infant room to the toddler room.

You just don't know what to expect. You just see this tiny, little baby, and you see these big toddlers, and it's nice to be able to talk with the teachers both in the infant room and the toddler room to just say, "Hey, this is what we do every day. Come and visit. Come sit with us so that you can see it's not so scary and the children actually really love it." So I think that's one of the big things that I did to help parents transition. So, Gail, if you want to talk through some of these points here.

Gail: Absolutely. So, I would -- I think that, just to finalize that point, it's so -- I do think sometimes transitions can be harder for families or for parents than they are for the child, and so it's really important because children take such emotional cues from their parents that it's so important to include parents and families in transition practices so that they can feel relaxed and supported -- we'll talk about that, too -- so that the child can take cues from them there. But you're right. I think that we sense that there might be some -- You know, change can be scary, and it can be a time of loss sometimes, and so helping the parent through that is -- into this brand-new, exciting world of "toddlerhood" would be really great. And so, one of the ways to do that is by providing some information and getting some information. So remember our three things? Information, relationships, and alignment.

So, let's talk about different ways that we can both provide information to families but also get information from families, because it's so important to be partners with families during these transition times. So, one great way to do this is with home visits and having some type of home visit where you visit with children and families before they start in your classroom or in your childcare to answer any questions that they may have about starting in your program is great. And when you're at home, you can really start to understand the languages that they use. You can start to ask them about different languages they have for different transitions. So thinking about, "What do you call diapers?" as an example. Oh, my goodness. Sorry. And you can start to use some of those familiar words during your transition times. Oh, my goodness. And then, for children with disabilities or children with delays, during those home visits, you can learn so much from parents about how they make modifications and adaptations, how they've learned little things that can help support their child that you can start using in the classroom, too. So home visits are a great way for you to get information about the child so that you can create an environment that's going to be stable and consistent, but it's also a great time for you to answer any questions that the parents have and tell them about the program.

Another great one that I think maybe you even talked about, Treshawn, is doing tours, so giving tours of your family childcare or of your classroom, showing parents how children are learning and what they're doing in different learning centers, answering parents' questions, and, also, asking parents questions like, "Which area do you think your child's going to love the most? Where do you think they're going to spend the most time?" to get some more information about their child and talking about all the different ways that you'll help support the child in that classroom. Providing a "Frequently Asked Questions" type of a handout that's in the family's home language, that answers common questions that they might have about the daily routine and activities, about transitions between home and school, and thinking about things that a parent really wants to know beyond just the schedule -- but what happens if a child starts to feel sick during school, what happens -- what happens if my child is -- doesn't nap well -- things like that that a parent would really want to know so that they feel really confident and comfortable with where your -- where their child is spending time. And then, if the child is in a center-based program and transitioning from one classroom to the next, it's really important for staff members to talk with each other, so that teacher-to-teacher connection.

So, if you think again about our web of support that we're trying to create, one of those things in the web was teacher from the sending program to teacher to the receiving program and making sure that they have a relationship and that they are sharing information. So their

former teacher has so much information about that child, and the receiving teacher needs that information so that they can start to make those modifications or adaptations, they know where the child's developmental skill level is. So sharing information between teachers is also important.

And we know that, again, it's just that, when parents have more information, they're going to feel more relaxed and they're going to feel more comfortable. And when they are feeling relaxed and comfortable moving into that next setting, the child, taking their emotional cues from them, are also going to feel relaxed and comfortable and ready to have fun and learn.

Judi: These are all great examples of things that we can do to support families and children. And I just have to call out some of the participants who have come up with – they're sharing some really great ideas about how they support children and families. They – Mona said that they have the children – the parents help the children create an "all about me" poster to kind of give us some information about the things that they're interested in. And I keep – I'm trying to scroll, and the – the chat box keeps moving on me.

Roxanne said that they have the children bring in pictures of their families to post in the classroom so that the children can see their families during the day. And then also reminding parents that they're welcome to visit so that they are part of the classroom. It's not just you have to drop your kid off and walk away and hope that you – hope that they're okay. And then Mona also said that they use their summertime socializations as kind of a way to start talking about transitions, so for home visiting, I suppose, into a Head Start setting. So, these are great. So keep sharing your strategies. Oh, Roxanne said they have Early Head Start and Head Start open house before the classes start for the new year. This is great. You guys have some really great ideas here.

So, you mentioned asking questions during a home visit about children's home languages, and I wanted to highlight, for those of you who don't know, there's a great resource on the ECLKC, and it's in our "resource" tab. If you take a look at our "resource" tab, it's called "Gathering and Using Language Information from Families," and it's a really helpful resource that provides questions that we can ask families about their children's language backgrounds and experiences. So if you haven't seen that form or haven't used it, that's definitely a great one to use with your families as you're getting to know them.

And I'm also thinking about what you talked about earlier regarding those kind of smaller, daily transitions, so maybe not the big ones, moving from one classroom to the next, but we know it's really important to help young children transition as much as it is for parents. So when we give information to families, we also want to think about giving information to children. And maybe we don't think as much – you know, we hand a packet to the parents or we do a home visit where we give them information and collect information, but maybe we forget that we – that children also depend on information. And it's kind of like you said, you know? "The diaper is going to show me something. It's going to tell me that it's time for this transition time." And it might not feel natural to say to a baby, "Okay, we're going to – " you know, you might not have to say, "We're going to transition," but, "It's time for a diaper change. Are you ready? We're going to go do our diaper change," to give them that information ahead of time. So how can we make sure that we're doing that on a more regular basis?

Gail: Oh, sure. So, I think that during daily transitions, infants and toddlers feel so respected and valued and cared for when parents and teachers and family-childcare providers take time to just talk them through transitions. "What's gonna happen? What are we doing?" And there's so many creative and thoughtful ways to give that type of information to infants and toddlers to help them through those transitions.

Treshawn: Yeah, and we have some videos that we're going to watch now of some teachers with their toddlers using creative ways to help them move through daily transitions. So, as you watch, tell us in the chat box what you notice about how these teachers are supporting children's learning through the transitions. And so, remember, you can move the video widget, when it does come up, to the side so you can still see the chat box and be able to respond to the videos. But let's see – let's see these teachers. We're going to watch two, so be prepared for those two.

[Video one begins]

Teacher No. 1: One more minute until cleanup time. ♪ One more minute ♪ ♪ One more minute ♪ ♪ Till cleanup time, till cleanup time ♪

Teacher No. 2: We got one more minute.

Teacher No. 1: ♪ One more minute ♪ ♪ One more minute ♪ ♪ Till cleanup time, till cleanup time ♪

Teacher No. 2: See the eye, yeah? Say, "Go on up." And the owl. She pointed to the owl. Do you like the owl?

Teacher No. 1: Okay, Maysie, one more minute, and we're gonna start cleaning up so we can start group time.

[Video one ends]

[Video two begins]

♪ Jadier has a yellow toothbrush ♪ ♪ Brush, brush, brush your teeth ♪ ♪ Vanellope has a purple toothbrush ♪ ♪ Purple toothbrush, purple toothbrush ♪ ♪ Linus has a red toothbrush ♪ ♪ Brush, brush, brush your teeth ♪ ♪ Brush, brush, brush your teeth ♪ ♪ Brush, brush, brush your teeth ♪ ♪ Brush, brush, brush your teeth ♪ ♪ Brush them till they're nice and clean ♪

[Video two ends]

Treshawn: Okay. So, those were two really cute transition songs. Christina seems to think so, also. So the teachers really sing these songs to prepare children for the next transition. They're calm. Yeah, Justine, they're calm, they're repetitious. The teacher also talks about what's coming next. In the cleanup video, she's like, "Okay, one more minute we're gonna clean up." And then, in the "brushing the teeth" video, you know, she's – the teacher's talking to the children -- well, singing to the children – about the colors of their toothbrush, you know, definitely putting into their language development, as well. Teachers are allowing the children to brush their teeth independently, so it gets some fine motor skills going there. And then the children don't really have to wait and do nothing. They can sing along with the teacher. You can

– If you have older toddlers, you can maybe try to have them guess the color of the toothbrush and, "Who's toothbrush is that?" So I'm glad you guys are really liking some of these ideas, because using songs as a form of transitions can be really useful for children, especially those ones that are dual-language learners, because hearing this familiar tune every day is just one more way to help them understand what's coming up next.

Judi: Right, exactly. Like, "So even if I don't understand all the words, I recognize the tune," and so that's going to give me a cue as to what's coming next. That can be really helpful. Okay, so, that's information.

Let's take a look at the second way we can support infants, toddlers, and their families through transitions – through supportive relationships. So, earlier in the webinar, we asked you to tell us some strategies that helped you with a big or a small transition, and some of you mentioned knowing someone at the new location and having supportive friends and families made your transition success – more successful.

So, Gail, can you tell us a little bit about the importance of supportive relationships and how they help children and families through transitions?

Gail: Absolutely. And I talked about this a little bit before, that it's really about that relationships help to buffer stress, right? "I know somebody's there that knows me. I know somebody that's familiar." So, moving to a new environment can be really stressful for young children and families, as we've heard, especially if they're not familiar with the adult and the environment or with the routines.

So it's important for us to help infants, toddlers, and their families to transition into or out of programs by building relationships with them in our current program, which I'm sure we're all doing, and supporting them in developing relationships with people in their new settings. So thinking about connecting families – Can I connect a family with a family in that new environment? Do I know another family that's moved to that center program that I can connect them with? Can I say, "Oh, you remember Jack? Jack's actually in the – is in the toddler classroom, and you know his parents." So kind of building those relationships for them. It's really important for us to help infants and toddlers connect to transitions into and out of programs, building relationships in those new places, and understanding each other's cultural perspectives is also an important part of building these meaningful relationships, and I know that we all know that so well.

It's helpful to know the family's expectations for their child, for their program, too. So not only kind of daily routines, but thinking about what their expectations are for even the child's development. And this includes having families share some of their -- share in some of the decision-making around transitions. So, thinking about will the family feel more comfortable staying with the child a little bit longer during the day, when they transition to a new environment? And letting the families have some of that decision-making, so, "Of course they can stay, feel welcome," but helping them know when it might be that they might shorten drop-offs. So really helping them make some of those decisions.

And I think thinking about other ways that you might begin to build relationships with children and families and their next teacher and school community, and I can think of a few other

examples, and people are probably already chatting in some of their examples, to meetings with children and families and new teachers, so setting up times that you can go meet with the new children in the program or families' new teachers, having family nights, having weekend open houses. I love the idea of having weekend open houses, where everyone might gather on a Saturday morning, perhaps, or Saturday afternoon. Organizing family meet-ups for infants. They can all meet the other parents in that program. Playdates at the school for toddlers. Having home visits, again.

So, home visits are gonna serve a lot of purposes – not only that information exchange, but clearly such a great vehicle for building relationships. So, home visits with children that are going to come to my program. And parent communication at pickup and drop-off. So, one of the ways that we know that relationships happen is with this, like, daily dose of positive interactions, that we can provide our frequent positive interactions, and so thinking about all those times that you can make that positive deposit to build those relationships.

And for children who are dual-language learners, if the staff in the new program or their classroom do not share that same home language or do not speak that child's home language, consider asking another staff member, another staff person, or a parent volunteer who speaks the child's language to visit that new classroom or that new program each day to speak with the child so they're having that consistency and predictability. And for children with special needs, with a suspected delay or a disability, it might – it's helpful to pass along specific strategies that you had, modifications and adaptations in the environment with the – with the receiving teacher, too. And so, those relationships between teachers.

Judi: These are all really helpful strategies. And you're right, lots of people have been mentioning the strategies that they use to build relationships. And I just think, you know, especially with infants and toddlers, building a relationship with the families is so important, right? Because – And I remember this. This is very close to my heart. You know, it is not easy, no matter who you are, to – to hand your baby to someone on a regular basis and trust, you know, that – that this person is gonna love them and take care of them, you know, while you're doing what you need to do, going to work, and so, having that relationship with the teaching staff and with the program staff, I think, makes all the difference.

And like you said before, children pick up on your cues, right? So if the parents are comfortable walking in and the child sees the parent having conversations with the staff, then that makes that transition easier for the child, as well. And it was always hard for me when my – when my son didn't want to leave school and didn't want to let go of his teacher and come to me, but that's a good sign, right, when my son is comfortable enough and has a solid relationship with the staff that he's with every day, and so much so that he's like, "I don't need you, Mommy. Like, can you come back later?" That's, like, a really positive thing, so thanks for that.

Treshawn: Yeah. So, we're going to share an example of how a family-childcare provider worked to develop a relationship with a new child starting in her program. So, as you listen to this story about Jalisa, who is 10 months old and her first time in group care, think about the ways that this family-childcare provider supported her transition from home to this new setting.

So, once upon a time, there was – or during a home visit – the family child care provider, Shana, learned from Jalisa's grandmother that Jalisa really loves music and dancing. And, also, she learned that Jalisa spends most of her day at home with Grandma and doesn't have many opportunities to play with other children. So, in response to this information, "Shana likes to play music," she plans to have music playing in the morning when it's time for Jalisa to arrive and to help – it really helps Jalisa transition from home. And so, she also pays close attention to how Jalisa responds to other children in her program.

So, for example, when it's time to go outside, Jalisa appears to get kind of overwhelmed by all the children getting their jackets on, but Shana picks Jalisa up and walks her around outside until Jalisa gives her the clue that she's ready to get down and play.

So, if you want to tell us in the chat box, in what ways did the family child care provider, Shana, provide a relationship or develop a relationship with Jalisa and her family that really helped them transition? I could think of a few ways. You know, it's interesting, Judi, also, to you – as people are waiting to chat -- your point about your son's wanting – or talking to teachers, you know, before you leave or during drop-off and things like that. Like, I think it was nice, you know, when my son was little, to be able to sit there and talk and get to know the teachers and he can see me interacting with them, but now that he's 3, like, me staying and talking with the teachers is, like, not okay. Like, he's ready for me to go.

Gail: Aww!

Treshawn: So I guess that's good. So, great. So, some people are responding. So, she plays music. Yeah, so using the music that she likes at home. She plays that at school. Being comforted by her singing. Some shared strategies. Yeah, so what Grandma does at home, they're doing at the family child care provider's house. That's great.

Judi: And somebody said...

Treshawn: Mm-hmm. Go ahead.

Judi: Melissa said "following the child's cues," which is so important, right, like, paying attention to what she needs and then when she's ready to transition outside.

Treshawn: Yeah. So she really used that home visit with Grandma to learn about, you know, what they're doing at home and how she can be supportive in her environment, like playing the music to help with drop-off and then, you know, holding Jalisa till she's ready to play with other children, following the child's cues. So that's great. Are we ready to talk about the last idea?

Judi: We are. Okay, so, the last – the last key idea that Gail was telling us, helping us think about, is alignment, or of familiarity. So, Gail, can you help us understand what this means? Alignment is kind of a – I don't know. It's like a new word for me to think about in terms of transitions, but what does this mean for infants and toddlers and their families?

Gail: Yeah, so I think we can – we can think about it as things being similar or – or as same as from the other environment into the new environment, that – and you think about that. When things are consistent or stable, that's also thinking about alignment. And so, alignment can really be thought of as providing that continuity across environments, from one classroom,

from things that might be similar in the infant classroom that are similar in the toddler classroom. So maybe there are similar songs that – that they are singing with the children.

So think about what things can stay aligned. It's some familiarity or alignment across the curriculum and routines, and so, thinking about curriculum, things that we might be using in our toddler classrooms and then children are transitioning into a – maybe a pre-K Head Start program. And so, how is that curriculum kind of aligned together so that what the child is learning as they're toddlers is going to be picked up and continued in their pre-K environment?

And thinking about similar routines not only kind of during the day but during drop-off and pickup. But what things can stay, kind of can stay similar, if you will, or aligned. And when things are aligned or familiar in the next environment or even within the current environment, such as within those daily routines, it makes infants, toddlers, and their families feel less stressed, right? So, nothing can create more stress than when I don't know what's coming next. Some alignment so that I'm familiar with this routine, I know what I'm supposed to do here, really helps.

So, we can think of alignment in terms of those big transitions and the smaller ones. So, for example, it's important to think about and understand the differences and similarities between the group-care schedule that we might have versus what the infant and family are experiencing at home, so remember that -- that transition from being at home during the day to now being in a group-care setting. And we know that, for instance, the daily schedule really revolves around the child's individual needs, and we also know that families' cultural perspectives – we want to keep families' cultural perspectives in mind and talking with parents about the ways they transition children at home from one activity to the next or even some common words and songs that they use in the child's home so that we can keep that language similar, again.

So aligned language during our caregiving routines to help create that home/school connection or alignment, creating that consistency, again, in the way that the child is being cared for. So, for example, we might think about a little 3-month-old, Julio, who may like to be rocked to sleep at home – that's his transition into nap time – and so doing this for Julio in his new family child care setting when possible, rocking him to nap time, will make it easier and keep that continuity between – or alignment between – home and the program. To support Julio's memory, too, of how his family cares for him at home, but also helping him really ease into that nap time. He'll be like, "I know this. I know this rocking and singing is very familiar to me, and this is how I go to sleep."

Judi: And I think it's interesting. Like, I'm starting to see how your kind of three points are all interrelated, though, because I feel like communicating with families and -- about what their routines are or their transition practices and trying to replicate them at home, that's respectful, right? And it shows that you really care about their child's experience. And, to me, that's relationship building, right, to say we respect – we're – we're working together to ease these transitions for children, and I would feel, as a parent, so respected to have a teacher ask me, "Well, what's important to you, and how does this work for you in your home? And how can we replicate things to make things more consistent?" And I think it's also – you know, if you think across – moving from classroom to classroom or into a new program, to have staff communicating with each other, again, that's another way of building relationships across

learning environments. That will create consistency for those children so that it's easier for them to build new relationships when they move into the new environment.

So that's great. Can you just give us a couple of strategies real quickly about ways that – additional ways that we can support alignment and continuity for children and families?

Gail: Yes, absolutely. And this is really for us adults to help create that alignment for children, because I think that, you know, information, relationships, and alignment, as adults, we can seek those out for us, but, for children, we really need to help do that for them. And so, some of the things we might do is, we might know what you're transitioning to, so maybe they're transitioning from our – from our infant/toddler program to a center-based pre-K program.

So we might go visit that pre-K program and see what some of the routines are like, and we can even have children go with us on a little field trip just so that they can start to see what it's gonna be like. That provides them not only with information but – but teachers and – and childcare providers can be thinking about, "What can I maybe take that's similar here or kind of familiar and start incorporating that more into my program so that, as children are transitioning, we have some more of that familiarity?"

So, planning those visits between sending and receiving classrooms, ensuring that staff in that receiving program or in that classroom really get current information about children and so that we can create some alignment with, like, what modifications are supportive, what skills do they have that we can start working on. So alignment across kind of skill development, but also with the environment that might be familiar. Establishing – Again, I talked about kind of similar routines that might happen. Using similar ways of communication. So having a -- You know, this is really a dance between sending programs and receiving programs or sending teachers and receiving teachers, is kind of trying to keep that, the way that we're communicating with parents, similar or familiar to them.

So maybe it's always a monthly newsletter or we always communicate with texts or we communicate – So, keeping those things as aligned as possible. Having joint professional development. So I know that there are a lot of programs that have some joint professional development between infant/toddler teachers and pre-K teachers so that they are thinking about similar curricula, similar assessment information, the ways – the routines that they have with families and engaging families and thinking about that alignment between children's home and in the – and maybe in our family childcare or in our infant/toddler classrooms, thinking about using similar language. We've talked about this a lot, but really understanding from families, like, preferred language, familiar words and songs and routines so that we can keep that alignment.

Judi: Those are great, and I love thinking about having joint professional development, and I feel like sometimes it's like, "We take care of the babies," and, "We take care of the toddlers," and, you know, I think having opportunities to work together as a staff is really important. Well, thanks, Gail. We are almost out of time.

So I just wanted to – I mean, thank you so much for being here. I wish we – We need more than an hour with you, for sure. But do you have any kind of last thoughts, summary thoughts? I

mean, I think you've covered so much of what we're interested in here and need to know, but any closing thoughts for us today?

Gail: Well, I just think it's really about, you know, stability and consistency, and – and one size is not gonna fit all with transitions, so it's really important to be connected with families and provide as many transition practices as we can, because more always seems to be better in terms of really kind of knitting that web tightly so that the child can be really supported, and family, as they're moving from one program to the next, and then even within those daily routines. It's been so much fun to be back.

Judi: Well, thank you, and we'll see you next month for our preschool-transition episode, which will be very exciting. So we're not gonna say goodbye. We'll just say we'll see you later. And thanks so much for being here with us today.

Treshawn: Yeah, thanks, Gail. It looks like Natahsa in the chat box, she's talking about alignment in her program, her infant room. She says their toddler teachers are, like, amazed at how well the children do in their classroom, because they make sure that they're aligned on what they're doing, so looks like these points have been pretty helpful to our members that are on – that are listening – our viewers that are watching. So, thanks.

So, as we've been doing each Teacher Time, we want to highlight the Safe Foundations and Healthy Futures campaign, and here at Teacher Time, we really support safe and predictable learning environments for our infants and toddlers because we know that children and families go through a lot of transitions. And sometimes these transitions can be stressful, but the relationships that we develop with them can help lessen some of this stress.

So, as Gail mentioned, providing that stability and consistency. Those are, like, my two favorite words today. They really help support children's social-emotional development and their cognitive development. And if you want, you can follow the latest news and information on this campaign, the Safe Foundations, Healthy Futures, by joining the MyPeers group. And then, there's also – In your resource widgets, there's links to the ECLKC page that provides resources on creating a culture of safety.

Judi: Yeah, and check – and check out that resource link, the widget, because someone asked if the slides would be shared, and the slides are in there, as well. And, also, so we have – So, don't leave yet. We have an announcement. Next week, the Office of Head Start is sponsoring the Dual Language Learner Celebration Week, so we're really excited about this. There's gonna be webinars; there's gonna be live chats on MyPeers.

So if you're not on MyPeers, it's a good time to join. And then we'll also be posting on social media with lots of great information. And the education manager in your program should be receiving a celebration kit. The box is here on the screen with a bunch of resources, so you can be sure to ask them about it. But, also, there's a link to resources. Oh, I think Jan just put it in the chat box. All of the resources that are in this Celebration Week box are also available online, so if you want to look up those dual-language-learner resources, you can do that, but we're really excited to celebrate our dual-language learners. If you are on MyPeers, you can join this – the CLRP community, which is Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Practices community. There's gonna be a lot going on in there, as well, so we hope you'll join us in

celebrating our dual-language – well, we celebrate them every day, but next week will be an extra celebration.

Treshawn: Yeah, and then there's some other resources that we have – you know, MyPeers. Please join MyPeers. We like to shout out our new members every month, so you might get a shout-out if you join us in March. Text4Teachers is also a great resource. ELOF2GO is available in English and in Spanish, so go ahead and sign up for those.

We've got a couple more Teacher Time episodes coming up – one in March, where we'll be talking about supporting preschoolers and their families through transitions, and then, in April, we'll move to a new topic, talking about ongoing assessment. So, be sure to join us back on that.

And so, before we go, I have just seen one last thing from Kelsie. She said her 7-month-old daughter's teacher is listening to Teacher Time right now – and that's awesome – and that she does a wonderful job every day making her daughter feel welcomed in her class, "as well as making me feel comfortable leaving her there. And she shows that she cares about -- how much she cares about her right now." And so, I think this is great that we're highlighting our teachers. You guys are doing an awesome job in your classrooms, and so we hope that this webinar series has helped you a little bit in your classes. So, thanks, guys. It's really one way to create a community.

Don't leave yet, though, because we're going to share with you the evaluation link. So in the next slide – We'll say our goodbyes in the next slide. Go ahead and click on that evaluation link and complete that for us, and we'll see you next time.

Judi: Bye, everyone. Thanks for being here. Bye, Treshawn.

Treshawn: Bye, Judi.