

# Autism Education Series: Transitions

## What are transitions?

Transitions happen throughout the day and can be small and big:

- **Small** transitions can include moving between daily routines.
- **Big** transitions can include starting a new school year, moving, community outing.

## Why are transitions hard for my child?

Many autistic children have a hard time with transitions. They may:

- Prefer predictability.
- Not understand what is coming next.
- Find it hard to move from a preferred activity to a less preferred activity.

## There are things you can do to help your child!

- Start small – pick one routine or transition.
- Your child’s behaviour will have to change, but so will yours!
- Goals for you and your family.
- Think about doable strategies to help make it successful.



## Strategies *before* your child transitions

**Motivation:** What does your child like/enjoy? How can you make the transition easier?

- Transition object/songs, offer choices, suggest a preferred activity that will happen after a less preferred activity (first-then).

**Predictability:** How can you make the transitions more predictable for your child?

- Visual supports, timers, warnings.

**Clear Expectations** - Make sure your child knows what you want them to do.

- Develop and stick to routines, clear and concise communication.

**Prevention** - Can you prevent or delay a transition? Can you reduce how many there are?

## Strategies *after* your child transitions

### Positive Reinforcement

- Let your child know when things go well! Reinforcement should be: immediate, powerful, and dependent on your child’s behaviour.

### Specific Positive Feedback

- Provide your child with positive verbal praise when they are successful - be specific!

## Remember:

Reinforcement following a behaviour you want to see more of (e.g., a successful transition) will increase that behaviour in the future!