

PSA Bulletin

This week let's talk about 'Transitions'



Transitions happen all of the time! Some of us cope easily and others less so.

Whether a child or young person is starting primary school, changing schools or classes, expecting a sibling, moving house or even just transitioning from home to school; transition periods need to be managed carefully. Children who are left to struggle with a 'transition' can find that they suffer a negative impact on their wellbeing and academic achievement. During any transition period, it's

important that children and young people are able to talk about their concerns and are supported to cope with any readjustments.

Who might struggle more?

Children and young people with:

- additional learning needs
- mental health problems
- behavioural problems
- limited parental support
- experience of transient living, such as being in care
- anxiety or parents who are anxious
- experience of being bullied.

How might we spot the signs that a child is struggling?

- struggles to make friends
- has ongoing difficulties coping with daily routines
- increased number of late marks, unauthorised school absences or frequent illnesses
- challenging or disruptive behaviour
- lower than expected progress, a disinterest in school or school avoidance

Change is a normal part of life and can provide opportunities for children and young people to develop their resilience.

Action for Children offer advice about [How parents can help children cope with change](#) as well as lots of suggestions about how to support a child to [manage stress](#) or [deal with anxious feelings](#)

For Year 6 families

Transition Mission has been created by a group of young people in Cornwall who wanted to share some of the things they think could help make transition to secondary school easier. Transition mission is full of great advice and really helpful wellbeing ideas. [Download a copy of Mission Transition \(headstartkernow.org.uk\)](#)

At the HeadStart Kernow website you can view more helpful tips including this [short animated video](#) that you may wish to watch together with your Year 6 child.

There are also some fantastic [resources to help parents](#) to understand the changes that pre-teens are going through and how their brains are changing ... I'd really recommend watching the Dan Siegel videos which you will find [here](#), they help us understand why 'feelings and emotions can become trickier to manage for a few years!'

Start Now Website & Online Wellbeing Action Plan

The [Start Now](#) website and the [Online Wellbeing and Resilience Action Plan](#) have both been created by Young People involved in Headstart Youth.

WRAP on the APP

There is now an app version of the WRAP as part of the Your Way App

The App is free and available on both Apple and Android devices

Apple: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/your-way/id1573252976>

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.app.yourway>

Top Tips for parents who are helping a child to cope with transitions

1. **PREPARE:** provide ample opportunity to process the transition by providing them with age-appropriate information. Some children may want to see pictures, learn people's names, or spend time in the environment ahead of time.
2. **TALK ABOUT IT:** Making it part of your everyday conversation. Encourage your child to ask questions or express their thoughts about the transition. Ask open-ended questions. Be curious about how they are feeling and provide space for this to be explored safely.
3. **FOCUS ON WHAT YOU DO KNOW:** Often with a transition there can be some unknown quantities and whilst it is useful to talk about things we are worried about it can be very empowering to focus on 'what we do know' and 'the facts'. Make a list if there are questions that you hope to get answered but spend time reassuring children about the parts we can be sure about.
4. **MAINTAIN ROUTINES AND BOUNDARIES:** Children feel secure when they consistent structure and reassuring boundaries in place. They cope better when we can offer this continuity. At times of change and transition, children rely very heavily on the few things which can remain unchanged and familiar.
5. **PROVIDE OUTLETS FOR EXPRESSION:** Not all children can put 'big feelings' into words, some child will need different means to express themselves, perhaps through art or journaling or using tools to alert you that they are not feeling 'ok'.
6. **PRACTICE COPING SKILLS:** Create a list of calming and coping strategies and practice them often. In some situations, role playing together helps the child feel more confident and gives them options for handling the event in real life. Download this [FREE SELF CARE PLAN](#) for children and role model the value that self-care can have on resilience and wellbeing.
7. **WATCH FOR WARNING SIGNS:** It may not always be obvious when a child is anxious about a transition. Behaviour is likely to be the most obvious indicator; a child may regress slightly or perhaps become more challenging. We must remember that this is communicating 'something' and they need our support. Physical signs might include changes in sleep and eating habits or suffering more headaches or tummy aches.
8. **SEEK HELP:** Remember that a certain amount of anxiety is 'normal'. With support even anxious children can successfully navigate change and develop increased resilience as they do so. If the 'warning signs' give you cause for concern speak to professionals who may be able to signpost you to the appropriate help. You could speak to the school, a GP, a School Nurse helpline or in Cornwall parents can also request support from the [Early Help Hub](#)

How to contact me: It's never too soon to make contact if you have any concerns. You can reach me via text on the PSA mobile **07903 613074** or via email, terri-anne.old@celticcross.education Normal working days are Tuesday and Wednesday 8.00-16.00 and Thursday 8.00-13:00

