



Strategies for Transition Times with Young Children

Did You Know?

The attention span of toddlers and children varies greatly. If your child seems to be having trouble keeping occupied with an activity, try a different one that more aligns with their personal interests.



You know all those times when you have a few minutes that you need to keep your child patiently waiting—like in line at the bank or grocery store, while cooking dinner, or making a phone call?

Here are four strategies that you can use to make these transition times with your child easier. All of the strategies are also great ways for your child to learn, develop motor skills, or be physically active. Hopefully, your child will think of it as a game, and you will be able to accomplish your task at hand!

Play a balance game.

Have your child stand on one leg and see how long she can balance. Then have her switch to the other leg. You can make it a fun competition by joining her in the game. See who has the better balance! For an added challenge, have her close her eyes. This is a great game to play while you are waiting in line.

Bring small toys, books, paper and crayons.

Wherever you go, try carrying a small toy, a children's book or some paper and crayons. Have these ready for in-between-time entertainment and fun!

Practice some dance moves.

If there is music playing over the sound system (or a favorite song on your phone), have your child practice their favorite dance moves. Join in and challenge him to mimic some of *your* classic moves!

On the go with play dough.

Have play on the go with play dough by carrying a container in your bag and bringing it out for a quick playtime. Encourage your child to make different shapes, or objects to keep his or her hands out of trouble while fostering creativity.

By always having a few transition activity ideas and supplies on hand, you will be better prepared for the unanticipated wait times and transitions that you and your child encounter throughout the day. Keep in mind that you may need to incorporate several activities, depending on the length of time.