

How-To: Flexible Transitions

For many children with autism, moving from one activity to another can be difficult. Here are some tips to help your child be more flexible:

1

Show them!

Provide visuals so they can see what's coming next and how long they have left in their current activity. Written or picture schedules, visual timers, and picture cues can all help your child expect an upcoming activity change.

2

Tell them!

Provide auditory warnings to help your child anticipate an upcoming transition. These can be verbal time warnings (e.g., 5 minutes left!), tone or alarm warnings (e.g., beep with 5 minutes left, clang at time's up), or even a secret phrase that they know means it's almost time to change things up.

3

Praise them!

When your child is able to successfully move from one activity to another without much difficulty, let them know that they did a good job! Get excited! Tell them that they did a good job, give them a high five, or even let them get access to one of their favorite toys. The smoother the transition, the more enthusiastic you should be!

4

Help them do it on their own!

As it gets easier for them to move from one activity to another, slowly start to praise them less. Gradually tone down the enthusiasm and only give praise some of the time. This way, they can learn to transition smoothly without getting a special reward.

Superheroes Social Skills Training, Rethink Autism Internet Intervention, Parent Training, Evidence-based Practices Classroom Training, Functional Behavior Assessment: An Autism Spectrum Disorder, Evidence-based Practices Training Track for School Psychologists. US Office of Education 84.325K. H325K12306

References

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