



Supporting children through school and year group transitions

Summer is an exciting time with longer days, lighter evenings, and plenty to look forward to. But for many children, (and grown-ups!) summer also brings change. Whether your child is moving to a new year group, a new classroom, or a completely new school, transitions can stir up a whole mix of emotions. You might notice excitement one minute and worry the next – and that's completely normal.

While transitions can feel tricky - even positive changes bring uncertainty. New teachers, new routines, new buildings, and different expectations can feel like a big leap for children. Some children talk a lot about their worries, while others show it through changes in behaviour, sleep, or mood. The good news? With a little preparation and lots of reassurance, children can feel more confident and ready for what's ahead.

Simple ways to support your child

Talk about it – little and often. Create space for chats about what's changing. Try open questions like:

"What are you most excited about?" or "Is there anything you're wondering about?"

You don't need to have all the answers – just listening and naming feelings can be a huge comfort.

Focus on what stays the same. While lots may be changing, remind your child of the things that won't.

Favourite toys, familiar routines, bedtime stories, and supportive adults help children feel secure during times of change.

Practise the practical stuff. Walking past the new school, practising the route, wearing the uniform at home, or looking at photos can all help make the unknown feel more familiar and manageable.

Build confidence by looking back. Gently remind your child of other changes they've managed before: starting nursery, moving class, or trying something new. This helps them remember, *"I did it before – I can do it again."*

Transition Strategies



Expect big feelings It's easy to assume excitement means everything's fine, but feelings can change day to day. Wobbles don't mean your child isn't coping – they're often part of the process.

For parents and carers too ♥ Transitions affect grown-ups as well. It's normal to feel emotional, proud, nervous, or even a little unsure yourself.

Children are very good at picking up on adult feelings, so being kind to yourself and sharing reassurance calmly can make a big difference.

A gentle reminder - there's no 'right' way for a child to feel about change. Some run in with smiles, others take time to warm up, and both are absolutely okay. With patience, encouragement, and support, children usually find their feet in their own time.

As we head into the summer, we wish all our families a restful break and a smooth transition into the next exciting chapter.

You've got this and so have your children.

IT IS OKAY TO

MAKE MISTAKES

NOT BE OKAY

HAVE HARD DAYS

BE YOURSELF

NOT KNOW IT ALL

ASK FOR HELP

START OVER

NEED MORE TIME



A WHAT CAN YOU DO IN THESE FRIENDSHIP SITUATIONS TIPS & TRICKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

WHEN YOU WANT TO MAKE A NEW FRIEND IN CLASS:

Sit next to them, introduce yourself, and ask what their favorite subject is. Starting small can lead to big connections.

WHEN YOU'RE NERVOUS ABOUT JOINING A NEW GROUP:

Take a deep breath and step in with confidence! Everyone feels a bit awkward at first, but you'll find your place!

WHEN YOU SEE SOMEONE SITTING ALONE AT LUNCH:

Invite them to join you! You might just make their day and discover a new friend in the process.

WHEN A FRIEND IS HAVING A CONFLICT WITH SOMEONE:

Encourage them to talk it out and remind them you're there to support them. Friendship means having each other's backs!

WHEN A FRIEND IS FEELING DOWN:

Offer a listening ear and ask if they want to talk or hang out. Sometimes just being there makes all the difference!

WHEN YOU WANT TO INCLUDE A FRIEND IN AN ACTIVITY:

Extend an invite and say, "Hey, we're doing this cool thing and it wouldn't be the same without you!"

WHEN THERE'S A MISUNDERSTANDING WITH A FRIEND:

Sit next to them, introduce yourself, and ask what their favorite subject is. Starting small can lead to big connections.

WHEN YOU ACCIDENTALLY HURT A FRIEND'S FEELINGS:

Apologize sincerely and let them know you didn't mean to. A heartfelt "I'm sorry" can go a long way!

WHEN YOU WANT TO SHARE A FUNNY MOMENT:

Lighten the mood by sharing a funny story or joke. Laughter is the best glue for friendships!

WHEN YOU WANT TO CELEBRATE A FRIEND'S SUCCESS:

Give them a shoutout or plan a small celebration. Everyone loves a cheerleader in their corner!



Making new friends and keeping your cool this summer

New school, new friends, still you



Starting somewhere new can feel exciting... and a bit wobbly too. New classrooms, new faces, new routines; it's a lot for your brain and body to take in. If you feel nervous, shy, or unsure where you fit, that's completely normal. Your mind is just trying to keep you safe.

Here's the thing: *you don't have to change who you are to belong.*

Being 'cool' isn't about saying the right thing all the time or having loads of friends straight away. Real cool is quiet confidence. It's being kind, being curious, and being yourself even when it feels a bit brave to do so.

Try gentle first steps



Start small – a smile, a 'hi,' or sitting next to someone is enough to begin.

Friendships grow slowly.

Notice shared things – same trainers, same subject you like, same lunch snack. Little connections can turn into big ones.

Give yourself time – you don't need to find 'your people' on day one. Belonging builds over days and weeks.

Be kind to your feelings

Your body might feel fluttery or tense that's just your nervous system adjusting. Try a slow breath in... and out.

You're safe, and you're learning something new.



Remember



- You are allowed to be quiet and still make friends.
- You are allowed to try, pause, and try again.

You are already enough. The right people won't need you to be different they'll like you because you're you.

So take your time, be gentle with yourself, and don't forget: you've got your own kind of cool, and it goes with you wherever you go.



30 little things kids always notice:

- The tone of your voice
- If you make eye contact
- Time you spend with them
- Hugs that last a little longer
- Smilies you share
- How gently you correct them
- Your reaction to their tears
- Words you choose when angry
- If you're truly listening
- Attention during their stories
- Putting your phone away
- Promises you always keep
- Apologies when you mess up
- Laughing at their little jokes
- Reading their favourite bedtime stories
- Showing pride in their efforts
- Celebrating even small victories
- Being patient when they struggle
- Saying "I'm proud of you"
- Sharing memories from your childhood
- Keeping family traditions
- Displaying their art at home
- Saying "I love you" often
- Being present during tough moments
- How you greet them daily
- Including them in decisions
- Asking what they truly think
- Being silly without hesitation
- Comforting them when they fail
- Noticing the little things too

Friendships can be exciting, meaningful, but sometimes a little challenging! Here are some simple, practical ways can build and maintain positive connections with others:

Making a new friend in class:
Start small! Sit near someone new, introduce yourself, and ask a simple question, like their favourite subject. Small conversations can lead to meaningful friendships!

Celebrating a friend's success:
Cheer them on! A kind word, shoutout, or small celebration shows you care and strengthens your bond.

When someone is sitting alone:
A small act of kindness can make a big difference! Invite them to join you, it might brighten their day, and you make a new friend.

Supporting a friend in conflict:
Encourage your friend to talk things through calmly. Let them know you're there for support. Good friendships are built on trust and understanding.

When a friend is feeling down:
Be there to listen. Ask if they'd like to talk or spend time together. Sometimes, simply showing you care can mean everything.

Including others:
If you're planning an activity, invite someone along. Let them know they matter!

Handling misunderstandings:
Talk openly and kindly. Clear communication can help resolve confusion and strengthen your friendship.

If you hurt someone's feelings:
Apologise sincerely. A genuine 'I'm sorry' and taking responsibility can help rebuild trust.

Sharing joy and laughter:
Sharing a funny story or joke can lift the mood. Laughter helps friendships grow stronger.

Joining a new group:
It's normal to feel nervous, remember to try and take a deep breath and give it a try. Most people feel unsure at first, but confidence grows with time.



All feelings are welcome here, feelings do not mean failure

ZONES OF REGULATION REMINDERS

Understanding Feelings and Choosing Helpful Tools

BLUE ZONE (Low energy, tired, sad, sick, slow)



What it means: Your body needs a gentle boost.

Helpful tools:

- Take deep breaths
- Stretch or move your body
- Get a drink of water
- Talk to a trusted adult
- Use a quiet, calming activity

GREEN ZONE (Calm, focused, ready to learn)



What it means: You are in a good place for learning.

Helpful tools:

- Keep your routine going
- Use your schedule or checklist
- Stay engaged in your task
- Encourage yourself, "I can do this"
- Help a friend if you can

YELLOW ZONE (Frustrated, silly, wiggly, worried, excited)



What it means: Your feelings are getting bigger and you need support.

Helpful tools:

- Take a break or use a calm corner
- Try a breathing tool
- Use a fidget or sensory item
- Ask for help or clarification
- Try a grounding strategy (5-4-3-2-1)

RED ZONE (Angry, out of control, overwhelmed)



What it means: Your feelings are too big to manage alone right now.

Helpful tools:

- Step away to a safe space
- Use strong body tools (wall push, squeeze ball)
- Ask for an adult to help you
- Use few words and slow breathing
- Return to learning when you feel safe again

REMEMBER:

- ♥ All Zones are normal.
- ♥ No feeling is wrong.
- ★ What matters is knowing your Zone and using the right tools.
- ★ You can change Zones with support, practice, and the right strategies.

The school holidays can bring connection, freedom, and joy. They can also bring change, noise, boredom, pressure, and big feelings sometimes all in the same afternoon.

This reminder is here to say: whatever zone you or your child find yourselves in, you are not doing it wrong.

Holidays disrupt routines, reduce predictability, and place families together for longer stretches of time. For some, that feels exciting. For others, it can feel overwhelming, unsettling, or exhausting. Many families carry invisible loads like neurodiversity, trauma histories, health needs, financial pressures, caring responsibilities, grief, or simple burnout. All of these show up in bodies before they show up in words.

Feelings don't mean failure.

Meltdowns don't mean poor parenting.

Withdrawal doesn't mean disinterest.

They mean someone's nervous system is communicating the only way it knows how.

Children (and adults) move through zones all the time. Sometimes smoothly, sometimes rapidly, sometimes with a crash landing. The goal is not to stay calm at all costs or keep everyone 'green' all day. The goal is noticing, responding with compassion, and coming back to connection when possible.

During the holidays, progress might look different. It might look like:

- ♦ taking breaks without explaining yourself
- ♦ needing more reassurance than usual
- ♦ adjusting expectations daily (or hourly)
- ♦ leaning on simple tools rather than big plan
- ♦ choosing rest over productivity
- ♦ choosing safety over perfection

Support is not a sign of weakness, it's how regulation happens.

Co-regulation, patience, warmth, and predictability help nervous systems settle. So does laughter, movement, fresh air, and doing less than you planned.

If some days are messy, loud, quiet, slow, or emotional that doesn't undo the good days. It means you're human, in relationship, navigating a season of change.

Be gentle with yourselves and with each other.

All zones are welcome here.

RAPID - PAUSE BEFORE YOU REACT

A simple way to slow down and make better choices when big feelings show up. Use this when you feel angry, upset, worried, or overwhelmed.

www.SocialWorkersToolbox.com

R Relax your body Take a slow breath in and out. Let your shoulders drop and relax your body.	A Acknowledge the feeling Notice how you feel. You might feel angry, sad, worried, or frustrated. All feelings are okay.	P Pause before reacting Stop for a moment. Give yourself time to think before you act or speak.	I Investigate what happened Ask yourself: - What just happened? - Why do I feel this way? - What would help right now?	D Decide what to do Choose the best thing to do next. Try to make a choice that is kind, safe, and helpful.
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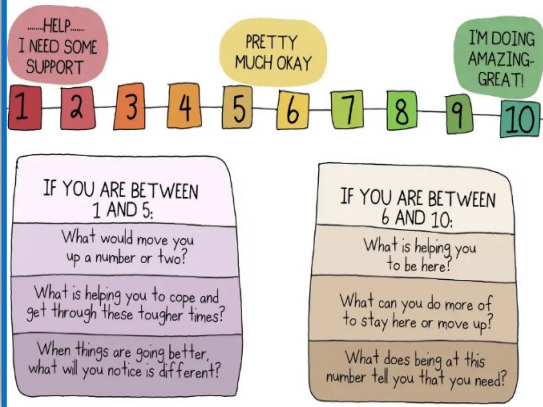
Techniques to Stay Calm

Birthday Candles Pretend your fingers are candles. Blow them out one by one.	Deep Balloon Breaths Imagine a balloon in your belly. Breathe in to inflate it, then slowly breathe out.
Wiggly Jellyfish Shake your arms and body loose like a jellyfish!	5-4-3-2-1 Grounding 5 things you see 4 things you touch 3 things you hear 2 things you smell 1 thing you taste
Gentle Circles With your thumb, make slow circles on your palm or arm.	Heart Hug Cross your arms over your chest and give yourself a loving hug.
Star Stretch Stretch your arms and legs wide like a big star!	Lemon Squeeze Pretend to squeeze a lemon, then relax your hands.



Small check-ins, big difference

On a scale between 1 and 10, how are you doing?



Talking to teenagers about how they're really feeling can be tricky. Direct questions like "Are you okay?" often lead to one-word answers or a shrug. A simple **1-10 scale** can make check-ins feel easier, less intense, and more respectful of a teen's independence.

The number matters less than what it opens up. Thank them for answering and respond calmly:

- "Thank you for telling me."
- "What's made it feel like a 4 today?"
- "Is there anything that would help right now?"

If your teen shares a low number, avoid panic or problem-solving straight away. Let them know they're safe, believed, and not in trouble. Choice is important, they may want to talk, or they may just want to be heard. Used regularly and without judgement, the scale helps teens build emotional awareness and reinforces a simple but powerful message: you don't have to deal with this alone.

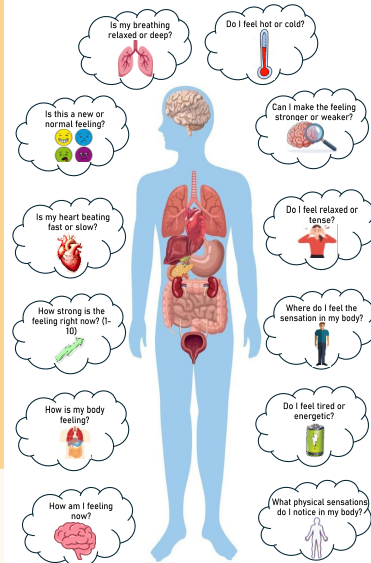
Learning to 'scan' your body is a simple way to understand your feelings and what you might need.

Sometimes you might not have the words for how you feel, but your body already knows your breathing might be fast or shallow, your heart could be racing or slow, your muscles might feel tight (like your shoulders up near your ears or your jaw clenched), or you might notice feeling hot, cold, heavy, or restless.

Taking a moment to pause and gently notice these signals without judging them can help you figure out what's going on inside. For example, a fast heartbeat and tight chest might mean nerves or anxiety, while low energy and heaviness could mean you need rest. Once you notice these cues, you can respond with small, helpful actions, like slowing your breathing, stretching, getting some fresh air, or taking a break. The more you practice listening to your body, the easier it becomes to understand yourself and take care of what you need.

BODY SCAN

Becoming aware of emotions



Speak with intention

Keeping your words minimal prevents unwanted conflict and misconceptions
Tip: Speak wisely – silence is its own answer

Don't place high expectations on others

When expectations are too high, disappointment follows
Tip: Control what's yours and let go of how others act

Let accomplishments make the noise

Let actions carry the weight, not words
Tip: Let dedication stay quiet and results speak loudly

Different minds, different views – stop pleasing and focus on yourself

Pleasing everyone is unrealistic and emotionally draining
Tip: Approval passes but self-respect endures. Stay true to yourself

Learn to protect your peace

8 ways to preserve your inner calm

Let intelligence guide you, not emotions

Emotional responses can impair judgement
Tip: Pause, then respond; control comes from clarity, not impulse

Attention from hates means you're doing something right

Criticism is something approval in disguise
Tip: Turn negativity into growth, not self-doubt

It's okay to say 'no'

Protect your time and energy by setting boundaries
Tip: Every 'no' to what exhausts you, is a 'yes' to your wellbeing

Chose growth over perfection

Chasing perfection causes stress and limits growth
Tip: Aim for progress over perfection; growth is what truly counts

Cheap Hobby Ideas for Students





BB4K arty amusements



DIY butterfly fruit feeder

Everyone knows a garden full of the right flowers will bring in butterflies, and that's certainly true. Adding a fruit feeder to your garden or window sill can help you attract butterflies. It provides a treat for fruit-loving birds, as well.



Kids think this is MAGIC when the sun hits it

Parents say their kids are obsessed with watching the colours melt and shine.

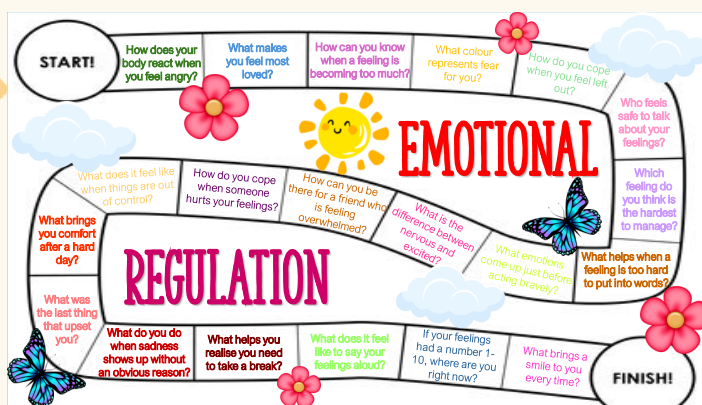
Ingredients: old crayons, wax/baking paper, scissors, iron (adult help) and string

Step 1: Grate the crayons into tiny colourful pieces.

Step 2: Spread the shavings on wax paper in any shape you like.

Step 3: Cover with another sheet of wax paper and gently melt with an iron (adult help).

Step 4: Cut into shapes like a sun or butterfly. Add string and hang in the window.





Modern parenting!

The great parenting adventure (featuring snacks and negotiations)

In a development that has stunned experts and absolutely no one who has ever tried to leave the house with a toddler, or teen parents across the nation have confirmed that 'getting ready' is now a full-contact sport.

"It used to take me 15 minutes to leave the house," said one parent, whispering while hiding in the bathroom for 'a break' that has stretched to 12 blissful seconds. "Now it takes 45 minutes, three snacks, one emergency cuddle, a shoe negotiation, and a detailed discussion about why we can't bring a rock collection to Tesco."

Researchers have identified several key stages of modern parenting:

Stage 1: The Plan - you confidently announce, "We'll just pop out quickly." This is your first mistake. The children immediately sense weakness. The teen needed three hours to prepare.

Stage 2: The Countdown - "Five minutes!" you call. "No!" they reply, as if you've declared war.

Stage 3: Dressing the Child - you attempt to put trousers on a human who has suddenly developed the flexibility of a professional gymnast and the determination of a goat. You looked at the teen's shoes, now they have to change whole outfit.

Stage 4: Snack Acquisition - despite eating approximately four minutes ago, your child is now "STARVING" and requires a snack immediately or will simply fade into dust, and only from the red bowl.

Stage 5: The Shoe Saga - one shoe is on. The other shoe has vanished, presumably to start a new life elsewhere. Eventually found in the fridge.

Stage 6: Leaving the House - you finally get outside. Someone needs the toilet. Maybe even you!

Experts now believe that parents walk slower not because they are tired, but because they are constantly stopping to admire sticks, discuss the emotional needs of pigeons, and answer critical questions like, "Can clouds fall down?" and "Why can't I marry a dinosaur?"

Meanwhile, bedtime remains the greatest unsolved mystery of the modern age. What begins as a simple task (brush teeth, story, sleep) evolves into a Broadway production featuring encore requests, philosophical debates, and a sudden, urgent need for water and the meaning of life. "I've read the same book 6,000 times," one parent reported. "At this point, I think I'm the Gruffalo."

Despite the chaos, exhaustion, and a suspicious number of crumbs in places crumbs should not exist, parents report unexpected side effects including laughing at things that would make absolutely no sense to anyone else.

Because at the end of the day, parenting is a bit like assembling flat-pack furniture without instructions: confusing, occasionally painful, and somehow, against all odds you end up with something brilliant, even if you're not entirely sure how.

Now if you'll excuse me, I'm off to enjoy a quiet cup of tea... that I will absolutely not get to finish. Happy summer.



Annoying Times When Your Kids Are Right



The importance of practising self-love

In a busy world focused on caring for others and meeting expectations, self-love is easily overlooked yet essential for wellbeing, resilience, and health.

Self-love means treating yourself with kindness and recognising your worth, even on difficult days. It helps build inner strength, manage stress, and improve relationships by allowing you to feel secure within yourself.

It can be as simple as setting boundaries, taking breaks without guilt, or acknowledging "I did my best today." Small, consistent acts of care make a big difference.

Self-love isn't a destination it's a practice. By being gentle with ourselves, we strengthen our ability to care for others and grow into more resilient, compassionate people.

12 ways to practice self-love:

DO THINGS THAT MAKE YOU HAPPY:

Identify and focus on the hobbies and interests that bring you joy

ACCEPT YOURSELF:

Your flaws and imperfections are apart of who you are, embrace them!

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF:

Eat, drink and sleep well. Try to be physically active and practice good personal hygiene

LET GO:

You cannot control what other people say or think. Ignore negativity and focus on what you can control

BE KIND TO YOURSELF:

Talk to yourself positively and celebrate your achievements. Try to create daily affirmations

SET TARGETS:

Set yourself realistic targets and challenges. Be proud of yourself no matter how big or small the achievement

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS:

Surround yourself with a strong support system of people who value and share mutual trust

CHALLENGE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS:

We all make mistakes, accept and forgive yourself when you get things wrong. We often learn most from our mistakes

TAKE TIME-OUT FOR YOURSELF:

Make time for yourself and learn what you enjoy in your own company

RESPECT YOUR OWN BOUNDARIES:

Set personal boundaries, it's okay to say no to things you do not enjoy or want

HAVE SCREEN BREAKS:

Too much screen time can lead to attention problems, reduced social skills and low mood

FOCUS ON YOURSELF:

Constantly comparing can make us feel inadequate, we are all unique and beautiful