



The

Connection

Resources
For Families and
Early Childhood
Professionals

JANUARY 2018

Inside this issue:

NEW! Guided Professional Services (GPS) ...	1
The Provider Connection ...	2
Resounding Resources ...	3
Family Connection ...	5
Membership Renewal ...	6
2017-18 Platinum Members...	7

Visit our Resource and Lending Library Monday through Friday from 9:00 am-4:00 pm. You will discover FREE useful resources for teaching, parenting and activities for Quality time with your family!

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Child Connect
for Family Success

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Introducing the NEW Child Connect GPS Guided Professional Services!



Follow the Child Connect GPS (Guided Professional Services) on your journey to quality!

Child Connect's GPS leads early childhood professional development in Livingston County to the next level by providing guided professional services including:

- 1) Intentional planning and customizing professional development for your program;
- 2) Customized training modules and regularly scheduled training modules;
- 3) On-site classroom evaluations (using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT™ developed by the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL) to help you identify areas for improvement;
- 4) Professional consultations and coaching to model the skills taught during our research-based training modules to maximize the overall impact of professional development;
- 5) CDA Scholarship Program;
- 6) Hybrid CDA Program;
- 7) Ready, Set, Learn Kindergarten Readiness Program
- 8) Pediatric and General First Aid and CPR Classes
- 9) Other compliancy classes including Blood borne Pathogens training, Safe Sleep, Shaken Baby Prevention and SIDS Prevention training.

Call **517-548-9112** to schedule your on-site classroom evaluation and consultation. [2018-18 Professional Development Calendar](#)

It's all about Quality.



*A Staff Training Aid*Transitions

A Publication of the Environments Professional Group

Transitions in early childhood classrooms are the “between” times from one scheduled activity to the next. Transitions that work well can make the scheduled activities cohesive and promote successful classroom management. Planned transitions rarely last for more than 5 minutes, but they help keep children on task and ready to move on to the next classroom activity. Successful strategies involve adult support in making the transitions and allowing the children to make choices.

Types of Transitions

There are several types of transition activities including musical, physical, creative, and cognitive.

- **Musical transitions** involve the use of music, songs, or instruments and are popular with young children.
- **Physical transitions** encourage children to use their bodies. Physical transition activities also often include creativity as children pretend and use movement as part of the fun.
- **Creative transitions** frequently involve “let’s pretend” activities that may also incorporate music or physical movement.
- **Cognitive transitions** may incorporate independent play with manipulatives, individual “reading,” or a circle time reading activity in which the teacher reads a book to the group.

Transitions are important for young children as they gear down or gear up for the next activity, and transitions normally precede important routines. For example, before rest time the teacher may read a book to the children and then play soft music to help the children relax and prepare for rest. Other examples include the use of transition activities to help children wind down from outdoor activities, gear down before going to lunch, or prepare for cleanup time. **Alternating active and quieter activities helps make transitions proceed more smoothly.**

Skilled teachers should have a tried and true collection of activities available, not only for planned transitions, but also for unplanned redirection of children as part of a successful classroom management plan. Transitions should incorporate best practices that are extended to

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Tips for Successful Transitions (continued from Page 2)

Recognize transition times as distinct parts of the day. When planning and making daily preparations, include them in the routine as changes occur. **Know what transition activities will be used, and be ready in advance.** This will make it easier to keep active children busy and engaged rather than restless and bored.

- Plan free choice activities for the beginning and end of the day for children to do while waiting for others to arrive or to go home. Organization really helps with this. Have a designated area available for children to use when other areas are not open. This area should have a table for manipulatives and a floor space with mats and cushions for children who prefer to sit on the floor to play.
- Choose materials that relate to themes, seasons, or another topic that children are interested in at the time. Put out art and writing supplies, books, table toys, snap-blocks, and puzzles. **Vary the materials to keep quiet play fresh and interesting.**
- Prepare children for change. Give them advance warning that the activities they are involved in will soon end. Usually 3 to 5 minutes will allow enough time for children to finish what they are doing and to make the mental shift to another activity. **Help the children get ready for change by keeping them informed.** To assist in easing the transition, tell children where they are going next and what the activity will be.
- Keep verbal directions short, specific, and few in number. **Present directions in steps rather than all at once.** For example, children involved in an art activity may be asked first to put up their artwork, then to put away the materials, next to wash their hands, and finally to remove their smocks. Speak clearly and as softly as possible rather than raising your voice to talk over the sounds of active children. This will keep the noise level from rising. Children will become quieter in order to hear what you are saying instead of continuing to play.
- Try to keep the number of transitions to a minimum, but be prepared to move on to a new activity early if needed. Have a repertoire of finger-plays or activity songs that you know well enough to pull out on the spur of the moment to use when needed.
- Sounds can act as signals of transitions. A steady beat played on a drum may be used as an indicator that it is time to come together as a group in the circle area. A triangle may be used as the 5 minute warning that a transition is coming soon.

Make Transitions Fun

Transitions can be made into games for the children. When sending them to wash up for lunch or to get their coats to go outside, you may want to play a version of “Duck Duck Goose.” The child you tap is the next to get ready. Another game that adapts easily to this type of transition is “I Spy.” Describe the children one at a time: “I spy someone in a yellow shirt.” When the child described recognizes himself, it is his turn to go.

Young children love to pretend. If they need to move quietly, as when going down a hallway, turn it into a movement game. Pretend to be quiet little mice as you all slowly tiptoe along. Playing the game with the children – exaggerating the way you walk and your expressions – encourages their involvement in the fantasy.

Be creative. When the transition involves cleaning up, join in with the children and make up a simple clean-up song. This is so easy to do and can make the experience fun and keep young children focused on the task. Use puppets to communicate with children and to get their attention. To heighten interest, the puppet character may vary to relate to classroom activities. Or there may be a special puppet that children recognize as the messenger for important information and directions. Be aware of the individual needs of the children. Toddlers or active older children may need more one-on-one involvement with transitions. It may be necessary to touch and address each child individually to get their attention and show them what to do. Others may only need a signal or a simple direction to know what is expected.

Resounding Resources



Resounding Resources



**Check out our
Family Fun Kits!**

**Many learning kits and
back-packs are now
available at Child Connect
for Family Success.**

**Call 517-548-9112 for more
Information.**

February is National Children's Dental Health Month

Hurry in to Child Connect for Family Success to reserve our mini-dentist office for your make believe center. You can check it out for one week along with our dentist dress-up kit! It is a great way to encourage dental health with your toddlers and preschool children! Call 517-548-9112 for your reservation.

Transitions—Create a Relaxed Atmosphere (continued from Page 3)

When everyone is relaxed, children's days flow more smoothly, and there is less need for adult intervention in behavior management situations. **Everyone is more comfortable and secure in the early childhood classroom where changes in daily activities are anticipated and planned for.**

Follow these steps to help create a relaxed classroom atmosphere:

- Vary the types of transitional activities used throughout the day.
- Be mindful of the developmental levels of the children.
- Avoid keeping unoccupied children waiting for long periods.

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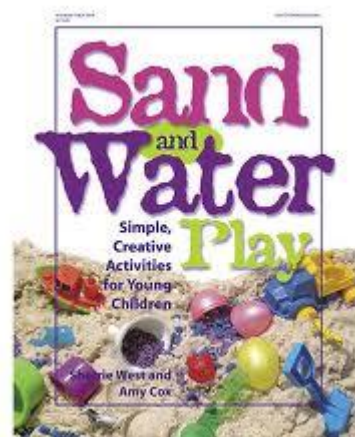
Family Corner: What Does My Child Learn During Sand & Water Play?

Why is My Child Playing? For the young child, play and work involve the same actions: interacting with people, manipulating objects, and making discoveries that help make sense of the world. Learning happens naturally through play. Play is the work of children. For school success, children must develop physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and creatively. Play is a crucial part of this development of the whole child.

What is Sand & Water Play? Children are naturally attracted to experimenting with sand and water, which provide the ultimate unstructured media for young children. Sand and water lend themselves to many imaginative activities and, best of all, they give children a sense of being in control. Shaping sand and pouring water allow self-expression without fear of making mistakes. Sand and water activities may be found both in the classroom, using a sand and water table, or outside. A variety of props and accessories for sand and water play helps extend children's opportunities for exploration and discovery.

What is My Child Learning? Young children are natural investigative scientists, learning from sand and water play as they delight in it. As children explore and follow their natural curiosity and interests, they direct and construct much learning and internalize many basic concepts. Activities with sand and water can be ideal "learn through play" experiences, encompassing the senses, language skills, problem-solving skills, critical-thinking skills, social development, and creative expression. Children make basic discoveries that deepen their understanding of the world around them. Children also find questions they "own" and want to explore—questions to which they want to find answers.

So, the next time you ask yourself the questions, "What Does My Child Learn during Sand and Water Play?" the answer is, "Everything!"



TIME TO RENEW YOUR PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

Membership to Child Connect for Family Success is open to the public: parents, educators, health and human services representatives, businesses, community organizations, early childhood care and education personnel and anyone who cares for and about children and families. Yearly membership begins January 1—December 31.

Membership fees support Child Connect services. Child Connect is funded through private and public contracts, foundation grants, corporate and individual donations and membership fees. Child Connect is a private, nonprofit 501(c) (3) tax exempt organization with a mission to support children and families by developing a quality early childhood care and education system.

Child Connect is a partner organization of the Kellogg Family Foundation, Livingston United Way, Community Foundation of Flint, Howell Chamber of Commerce, Livingston Promise, and Great Start Livingston.

Become a member of Child Connect for Family Success to:

1. **Broaden your knowledge:** Staying informed about the trends in early childhood education will only help you in the long run and will put you one step ahead of the competition!
2. **Take charge of your career:** Take advantage of career resources through professional development and free resources.
3. **Build a better resume:** Listing your membership on your resume shows alignment with the National CDA Council recommendation and the Great Start to Quality system AND is impressive to current or future employers, showing that you are dedicated to staying connected in your profession.
4. **Build your network:** We all know that networking improves overall quality. Making connections is critical, and joining Child Connect will give countless opportunities to create professional relationships. Joining a group allows you to have a sense of security and trust. From this, you are able to support and help one another in reaching your professional goals.
5. **Be a Leader:** Professional association with Child Connect will give you an opportunity to develop your skills as a leader, and this is important not only for your personal growth, but for your growth in the field of early childhood education.
6. **Become a mentor:** Giving back can be the greatest reward and benefit.
7. **Stay Inspired and Stay Motivated!**

Join Child Connect and discover something new TODAY!

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Ready, Set, Learn!

If you are working with a young child with challenging behavior or have a child you are worried about (there seems to be a developmental delay or other special need) FREE services are available to you! Thanks to generous funding from the Michigan 32p Early Childhood Block Grant (with the approval of The Great Start Livingston Collaborative), our agency is able to provide the Ready, Set, Learn! Kindergarten Readiness Program, to parents and child care personnel in Livingston County.

Ready, Set, Learn! provides consultation for families and child care professionals caring for children ages birth-4 who are experiencing behavioral or emotional challenges that put them at risk for expulsion from child care. **Ready, Set, Learn!** strives to reduce expulsions, improve the quality of child care, and assist families and providers to successfully nurture the social and emotional development of infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

Ready, Set, Learn! can help through observation of the child in the child care setting, assessment of the child and classroom environment, coaching, and providing supports, teaching strategies and educational resources for families and providers to learn new ways to interact with the child. Perhaps you need some information on a particular topic. The **Ready, Set, Learn** team can help with that too! We can talk over the phone about your concerns – we are here to listen! We can research information on the topic you are concerned about, and suggest resources from our lending library. We also hold monthly support and training meetings for providers and families.

To find out more, or to ask about a child or any concerns, contact
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517-548-9112

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