



ELTERN POST

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Der Kinderschutzbund
Landesverband Bayern

STEP BY STEP: SIMPLE WAYS TO GUIDE CHILDREN THROUGH CHANGE

Helpful strategies for managing transitions

Dear parents, guardians and families,

Transitions and changes are a natural part of life and an important developmental phase, especially for children. Whether moving from nursery to kindergarten, starting school or moving house - every change brings both challenges and opportunities.

In this post for parents, we would like to give you some helpful tips and strategies on how you can accompany your child safely and sensitively through these phases.

Your team from the Kinderschutzbund Landesverband Bayern



WHAT ARE TRANSITIONS?

Everyone experiences various transitions in the course of their lives, such as moving from nursery to elementary school or starting a career. These events are usually associated with saying goodbye to the familiar and require an adjustment to something new - whether it be new people, environments or processes. Transitions are not one-off events, but involve a longer-term process that goes through several phases: the preparation, the actual change and the subsequent adjustment phase.

For children, it is particularly important that transitions are not experienced as breaks, but as smooth changes. A well-managed transition can promote a child's growth and resilience by building self-confidence and new skills. Conversely, a mismanaged transition can lead to insecurities and negative experiences.

Transitions not only affect the child themselves, but also their entire social environment. The following are important for coping with the process:

- **The child itself (individual level):**
This is about how the child finds their own role and identity in the new situation. For example, a child moving from nursery to school has to adjust to being a schoolchild, develop new skills and adapt to the new environment.

- **The relationship with other people (interactional level):**
During a transition, the child gets to know new friends and meets new teachers or caregivers. It is important that the child is well included in the new groups and has positive experiences with the new people.
- **Adaptability (contextual level):**
This is about the child being able to accept the new circumstances and environment. When a child moves from nursery to school, they have to get used to new rules and procedures. Also changes in family life, such as a new job for the parents or a new sibling, can have an impact on the transition.

To summarise, transitions are complex and multi-layered processes that offer both challenges and opportunities for personal growth. Conscious and supportive guidance can help children to experience these changes positively and master them successfully.





WHY ARE TRANSITIONS IMPORTANT?

Transitions are of great significance for a child's development. Here are some key reasons why transitions are important:

👉 **Developing new skills:**

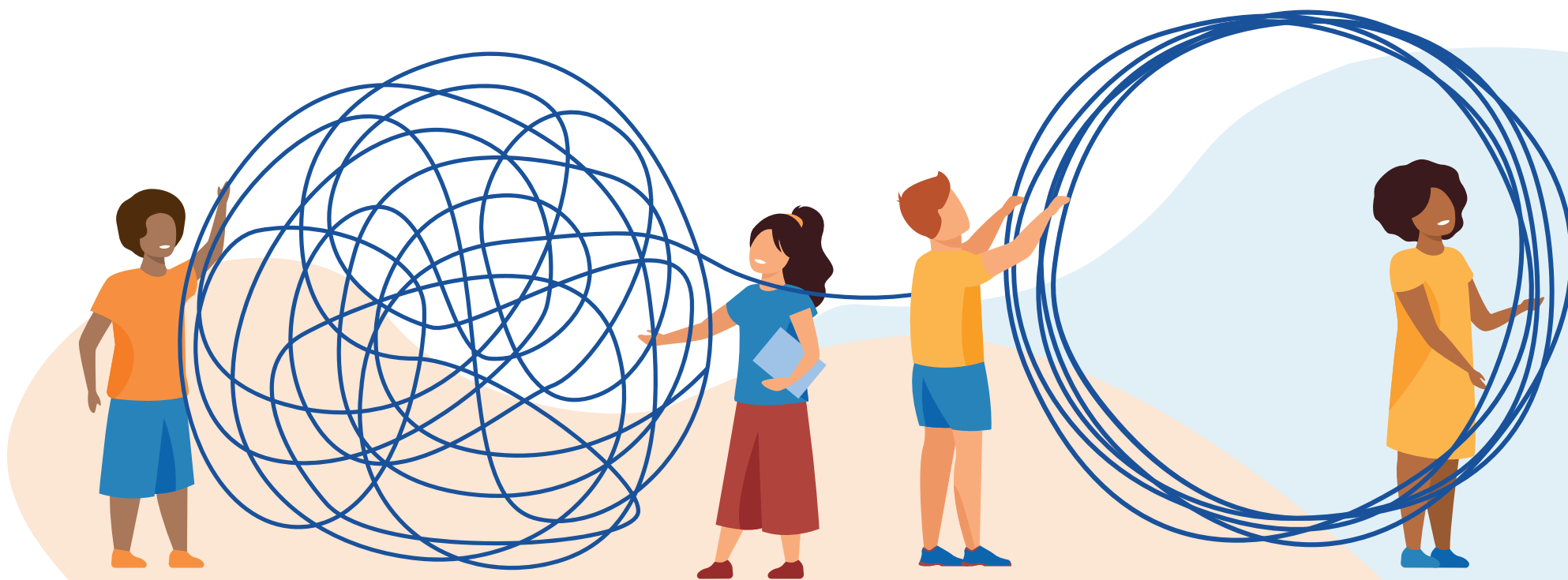
Every transition requires children to adapt to new environments, routines and expectations. This adaptation promotes the development of important skills such as flexibility, problem solving and adaptability. Children learn to find their way in new social groups, learn new rules and master new tasks.

👉 **Self-confidence and independence:**

A successfully managed transition can significantly boost a child's self-confidence. When children realise that they are capable of mastering new challenges, they develop a feeling of self-efficacy. This strengthens their confidence in their abilities and encourages them to face challenges in the future.

👉 **Social skills:**

Transitions offer children the opportunity to build new social relationships and consolidate existing ones. Moving to a new group, such as the transition from kindergarten to primary school, challenges children to make new friends and fit into new social structures. This promotes their social skills and their ability to deal with different people.





👉 Emotional maturity:

Transitions are often associated with strong emotions. Children learn to deal with insecurity, fear and excitement. This helps them to develop emotional resilience and improve their ability to regulate their emotions. With the support of their parents and carers, children can learn to express their feelings and find healthy ways to deal with them.

👉 Significant moments in life:

Transitions mark important milestones in a child's life. They are significant biographical events that shape the child's growth and identity development. These transitions are often remembered and form the basis for future experiences and developments.

👉 Family development:

Transitions not only affect the children, but also their families. Parents become partners in new educational institutions, which changes their role and relationship with the child. This offers families the opportunity to grow together and face new challenges together.



By understanding why transitions are important and how they affect our children's development, we can be better prepared to support and guide our children through these phases. A positive transition lays the foundation for future success and well-being.

WHAT TRANSITIONS EXIST?

There are several significant transitions in a child's life that are often considered as milestones. Here are some of the most common transitions in a person's life:

1. Transition to parenthood:

An important transition for parents-to-be begins even before the birth. Preparing for parenthood involves physical, emotional and practical aspects that profoundly change the life of the family

2. Transition to daycare:

Starting daycare (crèche or kindergarten) is often the first big step for a child outside the family environment. This means new social interactions, first separations from parents and adapting to new routines and rules.

3. Transition from daycare to primary school:

This transition marks the beginning of formal schooling. Children have to adapt to a new learning environment, new teachers and classmates as well as structured learning times and extended requirements.

4. Transition from primary school to secondary school:

The move to secondary school brings new challenges. There are not only new subjects and teachers on the agenda, but often also a larger school environment and an expanded social group.



5. Transition to puberty:

Puberty is a phase of intense physical, emotional and social change. Young people have to learn to deal with the challenges of adolescence, find their identity and redefine their relationships.

6. Transition to the working world:

After finishing school, young people enter the world of work or further education. This is an important step towards independence and autonomy.

7. Transition to adulthood:

The step into adulthood often involves moving out of the parental home, starting a career or university studies and taking on greater responsibility.



This is a major transition that marks the end of adolescence and the beginning of full independence.

8. Transition into retirement:

Finally, the transition into retirement is an important stage in life that offers both adjustment and new opportunities for personal development and spending leisure time.

9. Transition into special life situations:

Some transitions are unpredictable and cannot be planned for, such as relocations, divorces, the loss of a family member or health challenges. These events also require adaptability and support from the people around.





TIPS AND STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS

Dealing with transitions can be challenging for children and their families, but you can help your children navigate these changes successfully. Here are tips on how you can support your children through transitions:

💡 **Prepare and inform early in advance:**

Talk to your child about the upcoming transition at an early stage. This will help them to better adjust to the upcoming change. Obtain any important information about the new environment or new requirements. A visit together in advance can help your child to get used to the new environment and feel more secure.

💡 **Promote a positive attitude:**

Talk positively about the upcoming change and emphasise the exciting new experiences that await your child. Encourage them to look forward to the great things and approach the change with a positive attitude.

💡 **Maintain routines:**

Try to keep as many familiar routines as possible to give your child a sense of security and stability. A regular daily routine can make the transition easier. Small rituals can also help to mark the change and make it easier for your child to say goodbye to the old situation and start the new one.

💡 **Offer emotional support:**

Listen carefully to your child and take their worries and fears seriously. Show understanding and empathy for your child's feelings. Help them to name their emotions and talk about them. This will strengthen their emotional understanding and make it easier for them to deal with the changes.

💡 **Organise social support:**

Help your child make new friends and maintain existing friendships. A strong social network can make the transition easier. Also use your own network to get support and advice from other parents who have been through similar transitions.





Strengthen skills and self-confidence:

Give your child age-appropriate tasks so that they take on more responsibility and become more independent. Encourage them to find their own solutions to problems and make their own decisions. This will strengthen your child's problem-solving skills and self-confidence.

Collaboration with educational institutions:

Work closely with your child's educators, teachers and other professionals to make the transition as smooth as possible. Stay in regular contact with the educational institutions to stay informed about the current progress and any challenges.



Flexibility and patience:

Give your child the time they need to get used to the new circumstances. Every transition is different. It is important to be patient and to give your child the space they need. Also be flexible and adjust your plans if it turns out that something is not going as you imagined.

Use resources:

Don't be afraid to seek professional help if you or your child are having difficulty dealing with the transition. Also use materials such as books, games and other resources that can help your child to prepare better for the change.



With these tips, you can help your child to face change with optimism. Every new step brings exciting opportunities and your support will make these transitions a positive experience. Trust that you will master the change successfully together!



HELP OFFERS

Courses, contact points and advice centers:

- Nummer gegen Kummer Elterntelefon → [0800 111 0 550](tel:08001110550)
- Step-Beratungstelefon → [0211 81 97 10 81](tel:021181971081)
- Online-Familienberatung der Caritas
→ <https://www.caritas.de/hilfeundberatung/onlineberatung/eltern-familie/start>
- bke-Elternberatung (online)
→ <https://eltern.bke-beratung.de/views/home/index.html>
- Starke Eltern – Starke Kinder-Elternkurse
→ <https://sesk.de/kurs-suche/>
- Familienpat*innen
→ <https://www.familienpaten-bayern.de/informationen-interessierte-fampa-bayern/fuer-familien-fampa-bayern.html>

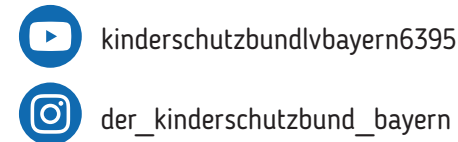


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