



FAMILY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT • ISSUE 3

Helping Children Deal with Transitions



Adults often misinterpret behaviours that are appropriate for a child's age and situation. Children often express themselves openly and may not know how to do so in a manner that adults want.

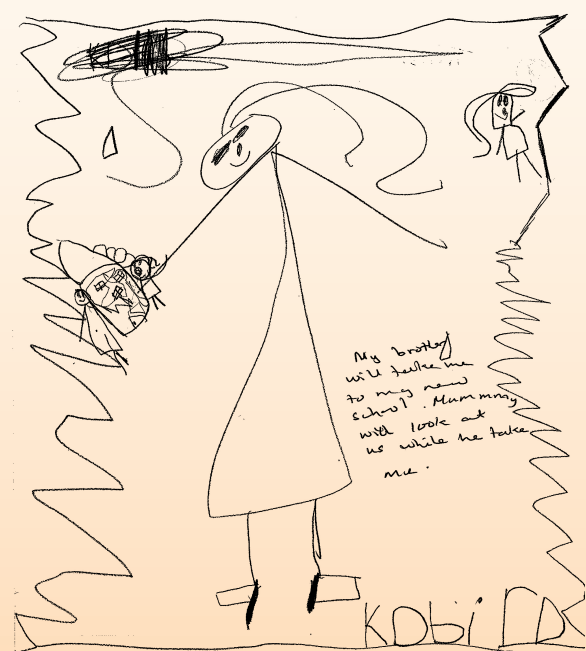
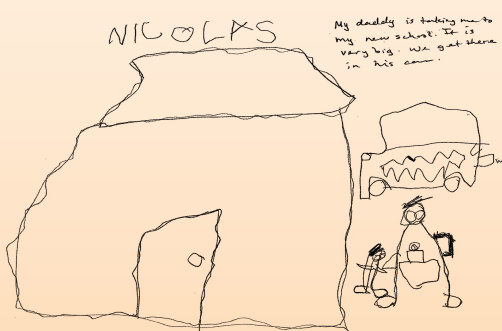
Toddlers and preschoolers sometimes have difficulty ending activities they enjoy. For example, they may find it difficult to stop riding their bike when asked to go indoors. To ease difficulties during transitions, parents should give children advance notice and frequent reminders, and make the upcoming activity sound exciting. It is also important to get down to the child's level and hold him or her gently, encouraging cooperation before he or she begins to cry or have a tantrum.

Think of a child's underlying feelings before focusing on cooperation. A child who says "I don't like you" or "I hate you" may mean, "I'm having fun and I don't want to stop." A possible answer from the parent could be "I know you are having fun riding your bicycle, but we must go inside because we need to bathe. We will come back to play again." This shows respect for the child's feelings and helps him or her learn self-control. While this may not work all the time, be firm, yet gentle. Parents can also help toddlers and preschoolers express how it feels to be interrupted and then give them a reason why they need to stop.

Remember, parents, be reasonable in your expectations for your child. Remember that children need time to deal with change. Finally, plan ahead so that you can allow your child time to play without interruption.

Young children often have difficulty dealing with transitions, especially when they are involved in an activity they enjoy. This poses quite a challenge for today's parents with their busy schedules.

Toddlers are likely to ignore parents or throw tantrums when asked to stop what they are doing because parents want them to do something else. Some parents see these behaviours as acts of disobedience or "rudeness." They fear that it is a sign of how the child may behave when grown up.



IGNITING IMAGINATION THROUGH INNOVATION