

# 7 Ways to Ease Transitions for Children

## 1. Do As Much As Possible Beforehand

Pick out clothes the night before. Make sure the shoes are readily available. After breakfast, if we are leaving home, pack the backpack full of whatever toys they have to have for the day.

## 2. Give Plenty of Warnings

One example would be to warn at the half-hour, fifteen-minute, five-minute and two-minute marks. At least if they know what is coming, it is a bit easier to get them out the door.

## 3. Set the Timer

Some families live by the timer in their house! The only way to get where they need to go is to obey the timer. An added bonus: the timer is the Bad Guy. "I can't help it; the timer says it's time to go. You can play when we get back."

## 4. Teach the Child to Tell Time

The sooner you do it, the easier it becomes for your child to understand the passage of time and how it works. Sometimes it's helpful to begin with using TV-intervals. "It's half of a Wonder Pets episode..."

## 5. Make Sure All of the "Background Activities" Are Taken Care of Beforehand

It is easier to get out the door when the child can't pause when it opens and exclaim, "I have to go to the bathroom!" Take care of those needs before you walk out the door. Do the same with food and drink. Better yet, bring a water bottle and a snack. It will be one less excuse for your child to dawdle.

## 6. Never Underestimate the Power of Social Stories

Social stories are a wonderful tool for working with kids. The value of seeing their name in print with clear expectations can be golden for children. A social story is a simple story naming the child along with the story of what you want them to accomplish. With some practice, they can become an invaluable resource.

## 7. Make the Child Part of the Team

Enlist your child's help in order to get out the door on time. Have a checklist and allow the child to check off what gets done. Or have the child help load key items into the car, if you are leaving. Walk them through getting ready for bed yourself. As you do the same, they watch you and mimic you.