

## Nurturing Transitions:

Supporting Children and Families  
in Early Childhood Education  
and Care Settings



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### Meet the speakers



**Amanda Higgins**  
Pedagogical Consultant



**Sharon Carlson**  
Head of Pedagogy



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### Today we will cover:

- Common challenges
- What is transition
- Your environment
- Prioritizing and cultivating collaborative relationships
- Nurturing and supporting the child's transition process
- Documenting of the child's transitions
- Strategies and considerations



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## Transition challenges



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## What are your transition challenges?

Poll



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### Transition challenges:

- ✦ Parents rush the settling process
- ✦ Parents expectations
- ✦ Explaining daily routines & rituals
- ✦ Child and family haven't attended any settling visits
- ✦ Lack of educator consistency and messaging
- ✦ Time to spend with all the children as they settle
- ✦ Language barriers
- ✦ 21st century families want online info
- ✦ Time poor



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## Transitioning into ECE



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"Transition is referred to as the **process** of change that is experienced when children (and their families) move from one setting to another. It includes the **length of time** it takes to make such a change, spanning the time between any pre-entry visit(s) and settling-in, to when the child is more **fully established** as a member of the new setting"

Fabian & Dunlop 2002, Transition in the early years (p. 3)



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## Your Environment

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“Every environment implies a set of values or beliefs about the people who use a space and the activities that take place there”

Curtis & Carter, 2003

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How **BIG** is your welcome mat?



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A collage of signs and photos for a child care center. On the left, there are three signs: a 'GATE SAFETY' sign, a 'SMOKEFREE AND VAPEFREE' sign, and a 'Lost Property' sign. A large blue arrow points from these signs to a central photograph of a hallway with a patterned rug and a desk. To the right of the hallway photo is a smaller photo of a desk with a chair. A small floral logo is in the bottom right corner.

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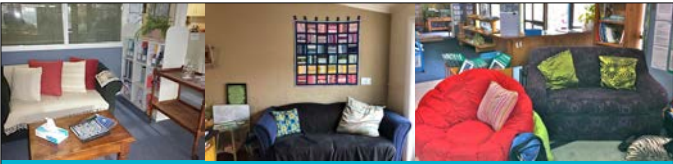
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What spaces do you provide to support your families to feel welcome?




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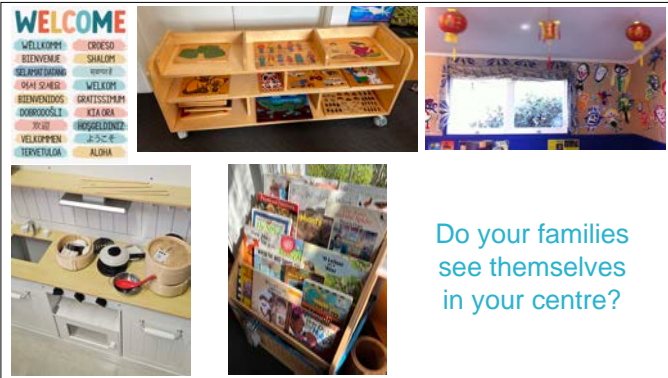
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Do your families see themselves in your centre?

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Children learn and develop best when their culture, knowledge and community are affirmed and when the people in their lives help them to make connections across settings

(MoE, 2017 p.20)




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**Anna Blandford**  
 Early Years...  
 Auckland New Zealand  
 And I have a connection with  
 Ngāi Tahu  
 Whānau  
 Children  
 Connections

**Making Connections**

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**PHILOSOPHY**

**Your program philosophy**

*We strive to make 'our place' somewhere everyone - children, whānau, teachers, and community visitors - feels warmly welcomed, included, respected and valued.*

Our vision and our philosophy leads our commitment to working in partnership with our families and to be responsive to their aspirations for their children's learning.

**We believe in building a strong community spirit, and working in partnership with whānau (families). We value shared decision-making, open communication, and sharing information, working together in the best interests of each child.**

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**Strategies for your environment**

- Welcoming
- First impressions
- A place they feel they can stay
- Families can see themselves in the environment
- Review your philosophy - do families feature?




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## Building Collaborative Relationships

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If you believe your business (ECE service) is built on **relationships**, make building them your business.

Scott Stratten



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## How can you develop a partnership with families?



Children **thrive** when families and educators work together in partnership to support young children's learning.  
(EYLF, p.9)



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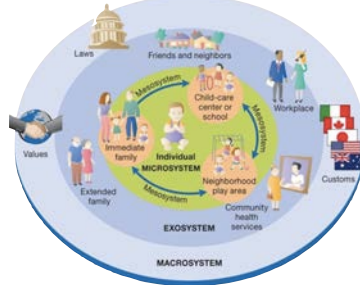
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### Bronfenbrenner



Mesosystem tools to connect the child to people around them

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### Bi-directional communication

#### Mutual trust

built through frequent ongoing everyday responsive communication with parents by educators

#### Shared goals

built through reciprocal collaboration and consensus between families and educators

#### Balance of power

built through mutual discussion by families and educators when decision making on behalf of the child




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What processes do you have to develop and grow your relationship with families?




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## Make the time now to build the foundations of these relationships

- Welcome
- Introductions
- Share information
- Share the benefits of sharing
- Value their knowledge
- Value their contributions
- Respond
- Utilize information shared
- Share the settling-in



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- Our team
- Our philosophy
- Welcome/Introduction
- Settling your child
- What to bring & what to wear
- Sun smart practices
- Our learning program & how young children learn
- Daily routines and rituals
- Drop-off and pick-up routines
- Your child's profile book and documentation
- How you can participate
- Excursions - going out in the community
- How to find out what's going on
- What happens if your child has an accident
- What if your child is unwell
- Emergency drills
- Communication and sharing online

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## Social stories photo book

<p>I am starting at Little Stories</p>	<p>My educators will be Meg, Kim, Lyn, Beth, Amanda, and Sharon</p> <p>If I need some help, I can ask one of the educators.</p>	<p>Before I eat I need to wash my hands</p> <p>Then we sit down together to eat some food from our lunch boxes. We have a drink from our drink bottles.</p>
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# Introducing your team





### Meet the team

Welcome Tom and family.

We look forward to getting to know your family and working in partnership with you to empower Tom to fulfil his unique potential. We value your knowledge of Tom and encourage you to share your ideas and aspirations with Tom's educators.

Meet the team of educators in Tom's room, we are all experienced and dedicated educators here to support, care and nurture Tom.

**Our team:**

 Sharon Carlson Room Leader	 Athina Skliva Educator
 Amanda Higgins Educator	 Hannah Colloff Educator

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# Introducing your program philosophy

At Little Stories, we are guided by our centre philosophy. These values and beliefs influence our teaching, actions, relationships, and environment. Our philosophy is reviewed every two years with input from the team, children, and families. We look forward to your contribution!

**Philosophy - Relationship with children**

Our goal is to build secure attachments with children. We believe it's imperative to a child's learning and development that they have a strong relationship with at least one educator first. We support this by providing continuity of care. Each infant and toddler has a small team who work together to understand the child and their routines and requirements. This results in strong, positive and nurturing relationships.  
<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/publications/pdq/entries/continuity-care>

**Philosophy - Relationship with families**


We understand that parents are the child's first teachers, with this in mind we strive to create and nurture our relationships with families. Encouraging a partnership to grow the sharing of information and collaboration of ideas to strengthen our understanding of their child. We do this in a variety of ways through online communications via Storypark in in-person conversations and gatherings.  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2304/ijech.2012.2.13>

**Philosophy - Relationship with the environment**

We believe in teaching children about sustainability and how to care for and nurture their world. We strive to embed this knowledge into our practice and support children to create and maintain sustainable environments. Our environment is the 3rd teacher and provides a rich array of resources, materials, natural resources. Children are encouraged to construct and deconstruct their environment to meet their needs and interest. Educators provide changing, challenging and suitable provocations to provide complexity and interest when needed.  
<https://teagovemba2015.wordpress.com/environments-as-3rd-teacher/>

**Philosophy - Relationship with self**

It is important for children to have a strong identity. We work with children to gain a sense of being within our environment, to self regulate by discussing emotions and feeling and learn to manage big emotions as they develop.  
<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10543-006-0139-2>



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# The Power of Video

## WELCOME NIKAV!

We are so excited about you starting at Little Stories! It was great to meet you when you started this week. We know there is a lot to take in all at once, so here is a video that your parents can show you to help you know your way around!

We hope it answers some of things that you might want to know about - like who are your teachers, when and where do you eat your lunch, where do you keep your coat and bag and even where the toilets are!

Please tell your parents if there is anything else you would like to know and they can just ask us!



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*At the beginning of the term, Mason started Kindergarten. He hadn't been to a pre-entry session, but on his first day, he came up and asked when we would be able to use the hammers.*

***"You know", he said to me, "like on that thing you gave Mom at home".***

*He again referred to seeing it at home when he asked to work in the carpentry area.*

Otatara Kindergarten Report, Pg 11

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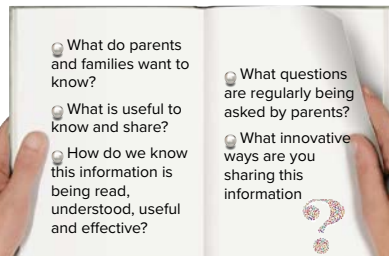
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## Families transitioning into your early childhood service



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## How do you cater for the 21st century online families?



Poll



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### Espoused theory



Theory in action



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Feedback for review

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### Parent survey results, what parents wanted:

- ❖ To be **informed**
- ❖ Be **listened and responded to**
- ❖ Be invited to **participate**
- ❖ Be given **decision-making opportunities**
- ❖ **Ideas to extend** learning and interests
- ❖ To be **regularly informed** about their child
- ❖ **In-person and online**



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### Ideas to encourage participation

- ✦ Parent evening
- ✦ Family gathering
- ✦ Sharing a talent
- ✦ Joining committees
- ✦ Reading a story at book week
- ✦ Cultural celebrations - Chinese New Year...
- ✦ Recipe sharing
- ✦ Resource collection



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### Partnership verses involvement



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Why is it important for families to understand the importance of their partnership?

What are your services' expectations of families to share knowledge of their child?



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**Some other strategies to support parents**

- \* Have a parent night
- \* Invite parents to stay
- \* Use a primary/key educator system
- \* Make time for informal conversations
- \* 6 week catch up with parents after they start
- \* Use visual routines for families

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**Summary of Strategies for building family relationships**

- \* Create a welcome book or video
- \* Introduce your educators and philosophy
- \* Utilize multimedia, consider a safe online platform
- \* Understand families communication requirements
- \* Parent surveys
- \* Prioritize family relationships and 2 way sharing

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## Nurturing and supporting children

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**“Children face many important changes** in the first 8 years of life, including different learning centres, social groups, roles and expectations.

**Their ability to adapt** to such a dynamic and evolving environment directly **affects their sense of identity and status within their community** over the short and long term.”

Pia Vogler, Gina Crivello and Martin Woodhead, 2008



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### Children need to know:

- ✿ They are safe here
- ✿ They belong here
- ✿ They are affirmed and respected
- ✿ Where to find the things they need
- ✿ How to get from one space/area to another
- ✿ Where to find quiet spaces, noisy spaces



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Do your children see themselves in your centre?




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Do your children see themselves in your centre?




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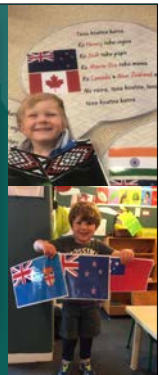
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- ✓ Hello Song
- ✓ Hello how are you?
- ✓ Kia ora kei te pehea koe? (Maori)
- ✓ Saws Day how are you? (Canadian)
- ✓ How are you today?
- ✓ Mingalaba how are you? (Singapore)
- ✓ Bonjour how are you? (French)
- ✓ Dia Duit how are you? (Malay)
- ✓ How are you today?
- ✓ Xin Chao how are you? (Chinese)
- ✓ Ni Hao how are you? (Taiwanese)
- ✓ Kumusta how are you? (Filipino)
- ✓ How are you today?
- ✓ Konnichiwa how are you? (Japanese)
- ✓ Malo e leilelei how are you? (Hawaiian)
- ✓ An Nyeong haseyo how are you? (Korean)
- ✓ How are you today?
- ✓ Talofa how are you? (Samoa)
- ✓ Kia orana how are you? (Cook Island Maori)
- ✓ Ayubowan how are you? (Sri Lankan)
- ✓ How are you today?
- ✓ (Other nations)




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When children see their lives and interests reflected around them, they feel safe, known and affirmed.



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## Documenting children's transition

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### Child's first day or week



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Add photos/video of the child on their first day

How have they settled in? What supported this?

What did they explore? What did they enjoy?

What were they interested in?

Your child's first day with us is the beginning of them:

- engaging with new children and adults
- developing safe and comfortable relations with their educators, and educators getting to know them
- developing relationships with other children and building friendships
- engaging with and being part of a new community
- exploring their new environments
- taking part in new customs, rituals and routines
- being involved in new activities, play and learning

## Child's first day or week story

Our educators will support your child and nurture their sense of identity and self. We will foster their sense of belonging and well-being while encouraging communication, contribution, involvement and exploration.

How did your child react, or what did they say about their first experiences with our centre?

Please share a couple of insights in the response area of this story. We appreciate any feedback and insights you share with us.

We have shared a plan: "All about me", with you. You will have received a Storypark notification to access this plan. Go to the plan, and please share information about your child and family with us - it would be great if you could add some photos too! Your sharing of information will assist us in getting to know your family, so we can work together to support your child. If you have any questions, please talk with our educators.



## A room transition story Nikau moves to the Pre-School Room

Nikau, how quickly time has gone since you have been at Little Stories!

You are now moving to the 'Pre-School Room' and while we are really sad to have you leave us, I know you are really excited about joining this new group.

To support you with this transition we have been doing regular visits together.

Things we have noticed that are different:

- They have glue guns and more complex tools at the carpentry table which you have already explored
- You 'sign in' in the morning, this helps you practice recognising and writing your name
- You bring your own lunch box instead of having the food provided by our kitchen - you love your marmite sandwiches! (this helps you learn about portioning your food throughout the day, and practicing opening your lunch box and unwrapping/opening your food etc)



Remember to come and visit us across the hallway! Your special friend Hemi is already in the Pre-school room so he will be your special buddy to support you as you settle into your new space. And of course all your educators are there to help you too!

*Miranda and Kirema, things you might notice that are different:*

*-our learning stories will have learning toys (see right hand side of Story) that link to the school curriculum to get you more familiar with this*

*-you will receive a learning story at least once a month, with a greater emphasis on mathematics and literacy.*

*Please let us know if you have any questions or queries in regards to Nikau's transition*

*We will really miss you all! All the very best with Nikau's next steps*



## Hunter

### Welcome to the Kakapo Room



Kia ora Hunter, Aloha and Māhū. My name is Marie and I am Hunter's key teacher. I'm very happy and excited to be part of Hunter's learning and development and look forward to documenting Hunter's learning experiences and adventures. I will be Hunter's own special teacher who takes general responsibility for his overall well-being within the group care setting. No relationship should be exclusive, this means the Kakapo team working together building a trusting relationship with Hunter. The Kakapo team will work with and alongside Hunter gaining his trust and will be there when I'm not.

Aloha, Māhū and Hunter we are all delighted to have you join the Kakapo family and look forward to getting to know you all and sharing Hunter's magical moments and adventures with you.

## First stories for

## Jackson

### Gloop, Gloop, Glorious Gloop



How much fun is gloop to explore?

It is this much fun!

Today Jackson you got to explore gloop! We placed a large shallow tub on the ground and poured some gloop into it, we also poured some onto the floor as you were watching the children explore it. We glooped you on the floor next to the gloop and watched as you started to explore it with your hands.

You seemed to find this fascinating as you moved the gloop around on the floor and looked over at your friends who were also exploring alongside you. Gloop is a wonderful sensory experience. There is so much to explore and learn about, the feel of the gloop, how you can pick it up like a solid form, rub it into a ball to then have it turn to a liquid and drip through your fingers. So much fun!





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## Final Takeaways

### Strategies and Considerations

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**Takeaways**

- \* Revisit and reflect on your centre philosophy
- \* Consider first impressions and your environment
- \* Consider how children and their families are represented and supported
- \* Partner with families to uncover their insights
- \* Relationships with families - how could these be strengthened?
- \* Explore online digital content and platforms to deepen family engagement about their child's learning.

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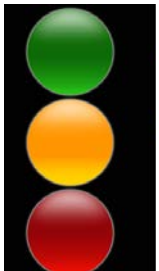
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What actions will you take from today?

**Go!** start doing

**Continue!** to do

**Stop!** doing



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**Next Steps**



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**Supporting resources**

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Storypark

**Questions?**

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Storypark

**Nurturing Transitions:**  
Supporting Children and Families in Early Childhood Education and Care Settings

Josh McKnight  
Account Executive | Storypark

September 2024

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Our purpose

To help every child fulfill their unique potential by connecting and empowering the community around them.



Storypark.com

Storypark

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What is Storypark?

Software app for early childhood centres to build community & document children's learning.



Learning



Communication



Documentation



Routines



Planning



Reporting

Storypark.com

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easy to use

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\* Book a demo to claim and sign up before 30 October. Annual plan only. Must be signed up as a new customer and registered for this ECI webinar



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**Thank you!**

- Keen to get started with Storypark?  
Let us know in the ECI survey and our team will get in contact
- Keep an eye on your inbox!  
We'll be sharing more resources with you

**CONTACT US**  
Storypark.com  
hello@storypark.com



storypark.com

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