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See You After Circle Time: Strategies to Support Toddlers' Transition to Group Settings

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Abstract

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Transition occurs when children move from activity to activity or from one program to another. Transition, however, can often create separation anxiety, especially for infants, since children are attached to their caregivers. This can lead to several behavioral or social problems, including being stressed, having separation anxieties or challenging behaviors. Thus, this study focuses on observing children's behavior within infants and toddlers program(ITP) during drop-off time on the first day of school. We first observed children's and parents' initial reaction. Surveys, both hard copy and online ones, were sent out to ask for parents' experience during first day of school and strategies they used to comfort their child. The goal of this study is to learn how families of toddlers experience the first day of school in a group program and help researchers, teachers, and parents better understand toddlers' transitions to group care and identify strategies that may help families and children.

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Introduction

Nurturing relationships and predictable caregiving routines during the early childhood period can significantly affect children's brain, behaviors, and general well-being. Research has shown that although caregiving services have rapidly grown over decades, many families with children under the age of three do not have access to good or excellent care (California Department of Education, 2006). Thus, providing sufficient resources and positive supports when children are growing up is a vital lesson to every parent or caregivers.

What, therefore, is the definition of nurturing, and what is the role of nurturing in a child's life? Love, trust, attention, understanding, acceptance, time, and support all play a crucial role in creating a loving and supportive early parent-child relationships that build foundations for future healthy relationships. Also, studies show that feeling valued by one's surroundings helps build children's self-esteem during the early years, which can indirectly help the child profoundly in adapting to different environments (Walz & Bleuer, 1992). Nurturing, overall, is a role that is critical for children's healthy development.

Creating consistent and predictable routines, on the other hand, can also help young children understand their social and physical environments and to feel secure. A regular routine enables children to reduce anxiety by knowing what is coming next and therefore strengthen their ability to adapt to new environments in the future. Moreover, studies prove that a well-planned routine also helps support children's development of self-regulation, which can indirectly connect caregivers and children on a deeper level by creating partnerships between them (Gillespie & Petersen, 2012). As a result, nurturing relationships and predictable routines are essential in childcare because they empower children to develop a more confident and healthy mind and body.

Over the past decade, as the number of children in group care settings has risen significantly, programs face increased pressure to document children's academic and social outcomes. It has been noted, however, that long periods of a young child's day are spent in transition (Sainato, 1990). Within early childhood contexts, transitions are the times in the day when children move or change from one activity to another. On the other hand, transitions for toddlers are the times in the day when children leave their comfort zone(home) for the school or childcare program. Transitions, however, can be challenging to most children because most of them may have been attached to their parents or caregivers. Attachment is defined as the strong emotional bond between children and caregivers revealed when children are undergoing stress and seeking for comfort. Because children have different backgrounds, different kind of attachments are developed throughout children's life (Honig, 2002). Therefore, children who are not familiar or comfortable when being transitioned can suffer from separation anxiety. Separation anxiety can lead to children experiencing severe impairment in their social, behavioral, or academic achievement (). As a result, researchers believe many factors may influence children's behavior, emotions, and performance during transitions, and transitions are often associated with increased distress, especially for younger children since they are detached from their parents (Cryer et al., 2005). Difficulty with transitions can manifest in a few ways depending on the child and setting. It can take the form of resistance, avoidance, distraction, or mental breakdown. For instance, a child told it is time to leave the playground might throw a tantrum initially because he can't manage his anger or frustration. Most of these challenging behaviors are the result of children being overwhelmed by their emotions. Moreover, children also learn to work to successfully delay or avoid the transition. For example, if the child in the example above found that throwing a tantrum has worked to delay leaving the park, he's more likely to do it again. Therefore, to effectively address and prevent challenging behaviors, initial efforts should focus on helping

parents understand the form and purpose of resistance present to assess and analyze challenging behaviors (Ayvazo& Ostrosky, 2016).

Given the literature on transitions in early childhood, it is essential to help children relieve stress and anxiety associated with transitions. This can be done by individualizing or tailoring strategies towards children's needs and preferences. For instance, many families use musical parenting practices to permeate daily life, facilitating routines and mitigating the stress inherent in transitions (Zur& Johnson-Green, 2008). Transition not only is a hard time for children but also for parents and teachers. Paradoxically, parents and teachers may find themselves stressed by the prospect of finding new and creative ways for easing children's stress during the transition time.

Transitions are a large part of any school or work day, as we move to different activities or locations. Studies have indicated that up to 25% of a school day may be spent engaged in transition activities (Hume, 2008). Designing a schedule that minimizes transitions and maximizes the time children spend engaged in developmentally appropriate activities can be the first step to decrease challenging behaviors. For parents, strategies can include role playing, reading books about school, or creating games that relate to preschool preparation to lessen children's anxiety towards first day of school and keep the focus on fun. For instance, parents can take turns being the parent, child, and teacher and act out common daily routines in school to help children feel more in control. This can also reassure children that preschool is a good place where they will have fun and learn. This type of parenting is also known as positive parenting, a type of guidance to keep children in the right momentum or place them on the correct path. Teachers, on the other hand, play another crucial role in children's development since transitions provide opportunities for teachers to teach social skills and foster emotional development. Teachers, for instance, can encourage children to work together and give compliments to boost their confidence ("Wow, you have your coat on

already? That was fast! Can you help Alex get his coat on”) Acknowledging children’s feelings supports their emotions and helps children learn to handle their feelings appropriately. This can remarkably improve and calm children’s emotions during time of transition (Hemmeter, Ostrosky, Artman& Kinder, 2008). When parents and teachers evaluate transitions and develop specialized strategies to help children, transitions can be fun and successful times for children and therefore, associated with fewer challenging behaviors. Thus, finding possible effective ways that may help adults support children during the transition time is our purpose in this study (Hemmeter et al., 2008). To address this purpose, we developed several key research questions:

1. What strategies do parents believe help their young children prepare for first day of school?
2. What interactions do parents and children have during the separation on the first day of school?
3. How long do parents stay in the classroom, and what do parents do to help their children transition?
4. What strategies or items do parents find helpful to comfort their children during transitions?

Method

Participants & Setting

The participants were all toddlers enrolled in a university-based early childhood program at a major research university in the U.S. Pacific Northwest. All children who attended on the first day of the Infant and Toddler Program (ITP) were observed (n = 56). The ages of children range from 12 months through 3 years. No data were collected on individual children's age, sex, or racial ethnic backgrounds. All children attended a morning or an afternoon play group two days per week. Play group sessions were 90 minutes long. There were approximately 7-12 children in each play group.

Parents or guardians who brought their children to ITP on the first day of school also were observed for the study, and any parent or guardian of a child in ITP was invited to complete a survey. Two observers (graduate students at UW with education background) and the two ITP teachers supported the research.

All observations took place within the two ITP classrooms at the university-based program. They contained age-appropriate furnishings and toys. The rooms were also arranged into several interest areas, including book area, kitchen, block area, and tables where children can choose freely among the areas. Support services (e.g., speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy) are provided in naturalistic settings (i.e., the classroom) and use activity-based instruction to enhance skill acquisition and generalization. Doors exited to an enclosed playground outside the classrooms. Each room had an attached observation booth. Observation booths had one-way mirrors providing visual access to the classroom, and they were wired for audio. Observers sat in the booths and were able to see and hear all adults and children in the classrooms.

Material

Recruitment Materials

Flyers were developed to describe the study. They were distributed in family welcome packets to inform parents/guardians about the project and what to expect from researchers on the first day of school. Welcome packets were delivered to the families via U.S. mail prior to the first day of school. The flyer included the contact information of the researcher.

ITP teachers provided permission for the study to take place in their classrooms. Informed consent documents were signed by each teacher. Consent forms contained the information about study, benefits and risks of participating, an explanation the purpose of the study, availability of counseling services, voluntary participation, and contact information of the researchers. All study procedures were determined Exempt by the university's Institutional Review Board.

Parent/Guardian Survey – online or hard copy

Families of children in ITP were invited to complete a survey (Appendix A). The survey contained 17 questions. The questions were formatted as rating scales, open-ended questions, and multiple choice questions. Parents were asked to evaluate their child's experiences on the first day, their own experiences on the first day, and parents' emotions toward the first day of the program. Parents were offered the choice to complete the survey on paper or online. The paper version was distributed in children's backpacks by the ITP teachers. The link to the online survey was emailed twice by the teachers. The online survey was administered through Qualtrics.com. The data were stored in a password protected electronic format or on a hard copy. Identifying information such as names, email addresses, or IP address were anonymous)

The survey was developed using an iterative process between the graduate researcher and the faculty advisor. An initial draft of the survey was developed, and the faculty advisor (whose own children had attended ITP classrooms) provided feedback. After revisions were made, the copy was reviewed by a PhD student and a professor from Education Department at University of Washington. Finally, the principal of the early learning program approved the survey.

Procedure

Participants were told that the graduate student thesis project would be taking place in the classroom for the quarter. The flyers and consent form that were delivered before the beginning of the quarter informed the participants about the project's purpose, which was to understand toddler's transitions to group care and identify the strategies that may help families and children.

On the first two days of school, two graduate student observers attended six ITP class sessions. Observations were conducted across two days because the ITP program did not meet daily. Therefore, observers attended the Monday/Wednesday session on Monday and the Tuesday/Thursday session on Tuesday, for example. Observations lasted for 10 minutes and were conducted from the observation booth attached to each classroom.

Observations began when first child entered the classroom following by a ten-minute partial interval observation of the classroom. The observations ended when ten minutes are over. Observers used a partial interval recording system to code child and parent behaviors. During partial interval recording, observation periods were divided into small equal intervals and the occurrence or nonoccurrence of the target behavior during any portion of the interval was recorded. The observers recorded a check mark on the coding sheet every time a child

used a target behavior during the 20s interval. However, the observers coded the children's behaviors only when parents were present in the classroom. The duration of observation was 10 minutes. Observers scanned the room globally and coded any behaviors that they saw during each 20 sec interval. If all parents/ babysitters left the classroom and closed the door before 10 minutes, the observation ended

Definition of coding behaviors

All target behaviors were operationally defined prior to beginning observations. The primary observer trained the secondary observer on all codes prior to the study. There were separate codes for children and parents.

Children:

Seeking comfort. Seeking comfort was defined as looking to the parent, touching the parent, being held by the parent, or clinging to the parent/babysitter with the intent to feel physically/mentally relaxed and satisfied

Tantrum. Tantrum was defined as an uncontrolled outburst of anger or frustration. It included lying on the floor, crying, or screaming for any length of time within the 20 sec interval

Wandering. Walking around the classroom without a clear direction or fix plan

Curious or exploring the new environment. Curiosity/exploration was defined as walking around the room, touching materials, looking at people other than the parent to learn about the new environment, people or toys

Escaping from class. Escaping was defined as walking or running out of the room or being unwilling to enter the room.

Unwilling his/her parents to leave. Unwilling was defined as expressing negative emotions when the parents/ babysitter attempted to leave. This included crying or pulling on the parent

as they tried to walk away.

Parents:

Redirection– Redirection was defined as any verbal behavior that gave the child an idea, suggestion, or direction (ex: let’s go play)

Asking help from teacher. Asking for help was defined as any verbal behavior directed towards the teacher with the intent to transition the child away from the parent to the teacher (i.e., “I bet Teacher E. can help you climb the ladder” or “Teacher L. can you help CHILD come in?”)

Comforting their child. Comforting was defined as any verbal or physical behavior that appeared to comfort an upset child. This may include saying “it’s ok”, holding the child, patting the child’s back, holding a hand, etc.

Encourage their child. Encouraging was defined as any verbal behavior directed toward the child that was positive. It could be linked (“You are working hard to pedal that bike”) or unlinked to the child’s behavior (“Good job!”)

PARENT/GUARDIAN SURVEY

ITP teachers sent an email to families at the end of the first week of school with a link to the online survey. The link was sent again 2 weeks later. One month later, the graduate researcher provided paper copies of the survey to ITP teachers, and the teachers sent them home in children's backpacks. The intention of survey was to collect additional data, including parents’ emotions or perspectives toward their child’s first day of school and choices that may help their child’s transitions. The survey was divided into three parts. The first part of the survey centered around children, and asked about items and methods that helped their child’s transition on the first day of school. The second part of the survey

centered around parents/guardians' reactions and emotions towards their child's first day of school. The last part of the survey included open-ended questions related to parents' or guardians' experiences or behaviors on the first day of school. (i.e. how long they stayed to observe their child, anything they would have done differently). During the process, parents/guardians were free to skip any question if they wished.

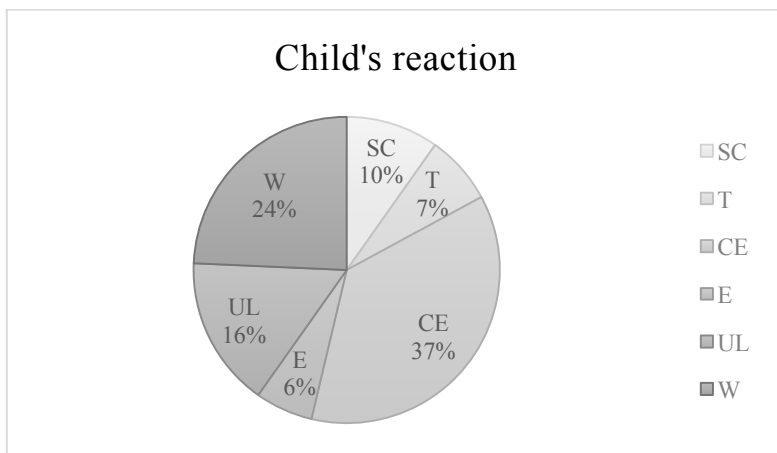
Result

Observation

The observation focused on the interaction between children and parents during the first school day's drop off time. Observers observed 6 classrooms during the first 10 min of each classroom's first school day. Each classroom included 7-12 children, and each parent-child dyad was observed by systematically scanning the classroom. Observers then classified children's reaction into 6 categories, including seeking comfort (SC), tantrum (T), wandering (W), curious or exploring the new environment (CE), escaping from class (E), and unwilling his/her parents to leave (UL). Child data are presented in Figure 1. The most frequent child response during the first 10 min of drop-off time was curious exploration of the environment. This occurred in approximately 36.6% of intervals, followed in frequency by wandering (24.3% of intervals) in which the child moved around the room without interacting with people or materials. The remaining responses appeared with relatively low frequency across this sample, but approximately 15.9% of intervals did include some instance of a child resisting his or her parent's departure.

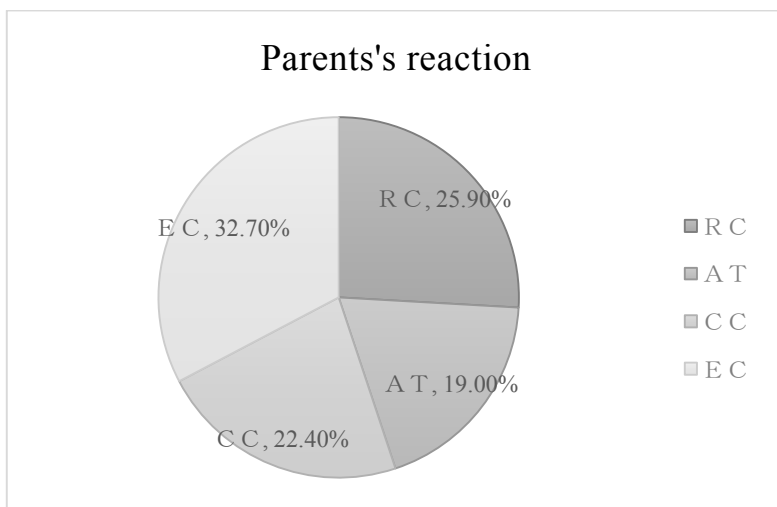
The observers classified parents' reaction into 4 categories, including redirecting their child (RC), asking help from teacher (AT), comforting their child (CC), and encouraging their child (EC). Parents' reactions are shown in Figure 2. The most frequent parents' response to children's action during the first 10 min of drop-off time was encouraging their child to explore the new environment, which occurred in 32.7% of intervals, followed in frequency by redirecting the child with 22.4% of intervals. The third most frequent parent behavior was comforting their child, which occurred in approximately 22.4% of intervals. The lowest frequency behavior was asking for help from the teacher, which occurred in 19% of intervals.

Figure 1. Child's reaction



Seeking comfort (SC), tantrum (T), wandering (W), curious or exploring the new environment (CE), escaping from class (E), and unwilling his/her parents to leave (UL)

Figure 2. Parent's reaction



Redirecting their child (RC), asking help from teacher (AT), comforting their child (CC), and encouraging their child(EC).

Survey Data

The survey investigated (a) parents' perceptions of children's emotions and behaviors during the transition to school and (b) the potential strategies that parents believe help comfort their own child. The survey was divided into three parts: questions centered around children, questions centered around parents, and open-ended questions related to parents'

experiences or behaviors on the first day of school.

Survey results are presented in **Table 1**. Parents reported that their children were most interested in new toys on the first day of school. Playgrounds and interesting materials at tables (art, play dough, etc.) were also of interest. Approximately 11% of parents reported that their child was most interested in the parent—rather than toys, children, or materials--during the drop-off. Roughly equal numbers of parents reported having an easy separation (37.5%) and a difficult separation (37.5%), but approximately one quarter of the parents decided not to separate from their child on the first day. That is, one quarter of parents decided to stay with their child in the classroom throughout the first day. (See Data presented in Figure 4) Parents rated the strategies that their child found useful in the transition to school. Survey data presented in **Table 2** indicated that the most helpful strategies according to the survey data include “interesting toy materials” with 68.75% of parents rating it as very useful and 31.25% of parents rating it as useful. The second most frequent response was “help from teachers” with 62.5% of parents rating it as very useful and 31.25% of parents rating it as useful. The least helpful strategy, according to the data, was “object from home”, which received 25% of parents rating it as unuseful and approximately 30% of parents rating it as useful.

According to the survey data collected from open-ended questions, almost all parents were confident or very confident in comforting their child. Approximately two thirds of the parents reported that they had strong emotions about their child’s first day of school; emotions mainly include excited (41%), nervous (27%), anxious (9.1%), and proud (9.1%). Parents reported that observing from booth, getting to tour classrooms, and help from teacher made them feel more comfortable on the first day of school.

From the reported survey data (open-ended questions), 50% of the parents stayed in the classroom for 5-15 minutes, whereas the other 37.5% of parents stayed for the whole

class, and 12.5% of parents didn't stay at all. Approximately 50% of parents reported that they stayed in the booth for 5-15 minutes. When asked what parents would do if they could do the first day over again, roughly 67% of the parents reported that they would do the same. Observing longer, staying for pick-up, and helping children understand the activities were also noted.

Table 1. Children most interested in during drop-off time

Objects	Percentage (%)
Toys(similar to ones at homes)	10.5%
New toys	21%
Books/quiet area	5%
Objects brought home	5%
Classroom	0%
Playground	16%
Activities/materials at tables	16%
Teacher	10.5%
Other children	5%
Parents	11%

Table 2. Usefulness of Helping Child's Transition to ITP

	Unuseful	Neutral	Useful	Very useful
Tour classroom/school before school	0%	12.5%	43.75%	43.75%
Show child pic/story about school	18.75%	37.5%	37.5%	6.25%
Have siblings attended the program	6.7%	33.3%	13.3%	46.7%
Play with child in the classroom	0%	12.5%	43.75%	43.75%
Stay and observe in classroom	20%	26.66%	26.66%	26.66%
Help from teachers	0%	6.25%	31.25%	62.5%
Interesting toys/materials	0%	0%	31.25%	68.75%
Objects from home	25%	43.75%	18.75%	12.5%
Special routine/phrases	6.25%	12.5%	37.5%	43.75%

Table 3. Programs children participated before joining ITP

Objects	Percentage (%)
Play dates at home	30%
Play groups in community (with parents)	30%
Play groups in community (without parents)	0%
Group child care	5%
ITP at the EEU	30%
Others	5%

Table 4. Usefulness of Helping Parents Comfort Child

	Unuseful	Neutral	Useful	Very useful
Teacher's interaction	0	12.5%	31.25%	56.25%
Materials in classroom	0	0	62.5%	37.5%
Other parents	46.7%	40%	6.65%	6.65%
Objects/materials from home	40%	40%	20%	0
Remind child that you'll be back	6.25%	25%	50%	18.75%
Stay with child	12.5%	18.75%	50%	18.75%
Physical comfort	0	6.25%	50%	43.75%
Talk about what would happen in school	6.25%	18.75	50%	25%
Song/special games	26.6%	13.3%	46.8%	13.3%

Table 5. Usefulness of the following experience in helping parents feel comfortable with their children on the first day

Method	Unuseful (%)	Neutral (%)	Useful (%)	Very useful (%)
Tour classroom/school before school	0%	12.5%	31.25%	56.25%
Show child pic/story about school	25%	43.75%	25%	6.25%
Play w/ child in the classroom	0%	0%	50%	50%
Stay and observe	0%	18.75%	50%	31.25%
Observe from booth	0%	12.5%	31.25%	56.25%
Help from teachers	0%	6.25%	31.25%	62.5%
Interesting toys/materials	6.25%	6.25%	37.5%	50%
Objects from home	25%	43.75%	25%	6.25%
Special routine/phrases	12.5%	25%	31.25%	31.25%
Other parent/family	18.75	43.75%	25%	12.5%
Email/photo from teachers	0%	12.5%	43.75%	43.75%

Figure 3.

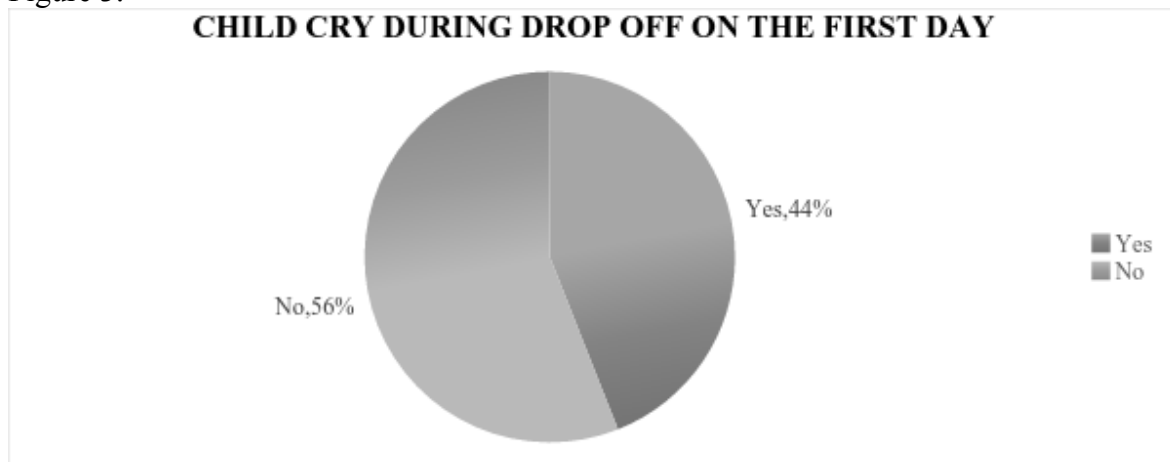
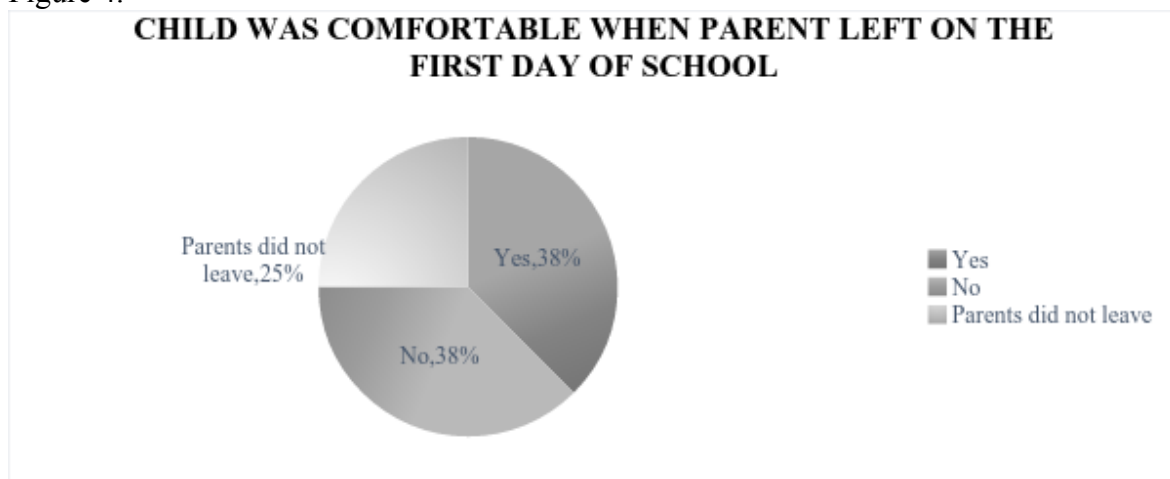


Figure 4.



Discussion

The goal of this research was to discover potential useful strategies that help teachers and parents ameliorate children's stress during transition periods. This research has highlighted several strategies available for early childhood educators in classrooms to help ease children's stress during transition time. The three most noteworthy strategies – new toys, playground, and materials on table – are strategies to welcome children into the program and to distract children from stress on the first day of school. In addition, parents also reported that strategies such as interesting toys and help from teachers were useful in helping children transition.

One interesting finding was the difference between reported preferences and observed behaviors. For example, a large proportion of parents reported that help from the teacher was useful on the first day. However, this strategy was observed relatively infrequently on the first day. There are many possible explanations for this finding. First, it may be due to the time between the observation and the survey. Because the survey was completed between one week and one month after the first day of school, it is possible that the parents' experiences with teachers in the intervening days and weeks influenced their responses. Second, perhaps the first day of school did not fully represent the interactions between parents and teachers. Third, it is also possible that our code did not detect teacher behaviors that parents found helpful. For example, perhaps teachers joined children in play and this was helpful to parents. This would not have been detected in our code as a helping behavior, but it may have influenced parents and children.

Transitions are hard for children because they are transitioning from a preferred activity – something they like doing – to something that they need to do. As a result, strategies that help children know what to expect during transitions can reduce children's resistance. Furthermore, transitions may be particularly difficult for children with emotional

or developmental delays that impact their ability to communicate their needs or to understand the changes going on around them. While the form of a child's behavior may look similar to other children's behaviors during transitions, researchers point out that the reasons behind the behaviors may differ (Hemmeter et al., 2008). Thus, for children with disabilities or behavioral concerns, it may be critical to assess and understand the functions of a child's behavior. Future research could take a functional approach to understanding children's behavior during transitions rather than a broad observational approach as was done in the current study.

Because most research indicates that children may engage in challenging behavior when they do not understand the expectations for the transition (e.g. when there are unclear instructions, when transitions are too long, or children spent too much time on waiting) (Hemmeter et al., 2008), this research mainly focuses on strategies that help children understand and feel comfortable in a transition setting. Parent surveys indicated that children exhibited different forms of resistance behaviors, but the strategies parents used to help comfort them differed across children. The most popular strategies included familiar toys and access to the playground. Familiar toys or activities can help children feel comfortable during transition, and they can give children ideas about what they would like to do in the new setting.

Limitations

Several limitations must be considered when interpreting this research. Because this research was based on surveys and observations in only six classes, its findings cannot be generalized beyond the study settings. Further studies must be designed to examine the validity and reliability of the research. Some limitations in this research include the sample size. Because only approximately 50 students participated in the current study, it might be

difficult to derive accurate insights from the study. Furthermore, since there was only one observer in a classroom size of ten, various circumstances that occurred in the group might not have been noticed by the observer.

Moreover, the response rate on the surveys was low. This could have been influenced by the time span between observation and survey. Parents received surveys a few weeks after observations were completed. This may have significantly decreased the opportunities for parents to accurately recall the first day or respond to survey questions. Teachers also reported that some children had attended center-based early learning programs before, so the behaviors recorded in this study may not have reflected all children's first experience with non-parental group care. In addition, this study took place in a unique playgroup setting, so the results may not generalize to childcare or other early intervention settings. All observations were conducted in inclusive playgroups of approximately 10 children with and without identified disabilities. Furthermore, all teachers had graduate level degrees in early childhood special education and extensive experience as educators.

Lastly, the observation consisted of only one school day. The observations provided a snapshot, but they may not have been representative of the child, teacher, or parent experience. The lack of longitudinal data may decrease this research's reliability. Reliability is highly important for research because it tests if the study fulfills its predicted aims and hypothesis and also ensures that the results are due to the study procedures and not any possible extraneous variables. The limitations listed above might be some characteristics of design that can impact the interpretation of the findings for this research.

Implications for Practice

This study has many potential implications for practice. First, this study sheds light on parents' perspectives on transitions to programs. Teachers and programs could adapt the

survey to ask for parent input on transition supports. It could also be used to gather feedback from families on their satisfaction with the transition. This study also highlighted the importance of providing flexibility to families. The majority of families stayed in the classroom for an extended period of time. This was important for their comfort and their child's transition. For toddlers, it is important to remember that families are the first teacher and an important member of the program team. This transition may be the parent's first time dropping off a child with strangers, so parents' stress is an important aspect to consider during transitions. Teachers can also gain a better understanding of parents' concerns and children's needs to create stronger bonds between both sides. Moreover, teachers can also tailor specific strategies for certain children. To increase the reliability and validity, further research should recruit a larger and more diverse population of families, teachers, and program types. Moreover, inviting teachers to participate in the research and have them fill out the survey may improve the accuracy of this research since they are the ones who spend most of the time accompanying children during transition periods. To better examine whether certain strategies are useful, future research should use experimental methods to examine the effects of specific strategies. For example, an experiment could be designed to evaluate the effects of a pre-survey on families' comfort with the transition. Other research may experimentally manipulate the presence or absence of specific transition supports.

Implications for Research

Even though this research uncovered several strategies that may help alleviate children's stress during transition period, the quest does not end there. The research may have broader impact and applications to the real world. Researchers should take this preliminary research as basis and apply the theories and hypothesis to more contexts and situations. For further study, researchers can include populations in a variety of settings in order to

generalize to childcare or other early intervention contexts. In addition, the study should be systematically replicated to examine children's first day of non-parental care rather than simply the first day of a new school year. The research should also include teachers in the research to bring multiple perspective in the research since they are the group who interact the most with children during the research.

Although stress created by transition time on children is impossible to eliminate, this study focused on the main strategies that help ameliorate children's anxiety during the time. Despite limitations, simple strategies such as new toys, playground access, and interesting materials on tables were relatively easy to implement and effective at engaging children in the first day of school. In addition, outreach to parents (survey collected from parents) also supported the strategies above, helping researchers confirm the strategies observed during classroom visits. The promising strategies identified in this study hold great promise decreasing challenging behaviors during transitions and reducing children's anxiety and stress.

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