Help! Smoothing Out the Wrinkles of Transitions and Routines

Purpose:

- One of the most difficult aspects of being an infant or toddler teacher is figuring out creative and useful ways to transition from one activity or area to another without losing half your class. In addition, all research indicates that young children thrive in an environment that is predictable and familiar. Making smooth transitions and meaningful routines part of your day is essential in an early childcare setting.

Learning Objectives:

- Participants will be able to...
  - Define routines and why they are important to early development
  - Identify benefits of incorporating routines into child care programs
  - Develop a plan for when and how to transition children in various child care settings
  - Design a list of activities to help support transitions for infants and toddlers

Key Points:

- Routines are any repeated, predictable events that provides a foundation for the daily tasks in a child’s life
- Children need routines to:
  - help learn self-control
  - reduce power struggles.
  - guide positive behavior and safety
  - support social skills
  - help cope with transitions
  - use as an opportunity for learning
- Transitions occur any time a child has to pass from one experience, stage, or activity to another
  - Arrival or departure, between activities, changes in caregivers or classrooms, during routines (feeding, naptime, diapering)
- Transition plans help ease babies and toddlers into transitions and create smooth, positive changes for children
  - Observe, Ask, and Respond (OAR) is a 3-step process to use for unexpected changes to the schedule
  - Having simple activities to engage and entertain children makes transition times fun and predictable

Additional Information:

- The following resources are excellent sources of information for learning more about routines and transitions for infants and toddlers:
  - Extending the Dance in Infant and Toddler Caregiving by Helen Raikes and Carolyn Pope Edwards
  - Infant and Toddler Experiences by Fran Hast and Ann Hollyfield
  - MORE Infant and Toddler Experiences by Fran Hast and Ann Hollyfield
  - Simple Transitions for Infants and Toddlers by Karen Miller
  - Daily Schedules and Caregiving Routines a video by HighScope Infant-Toddler Curriculum
  - Zero to Three: National Center for Infants, Toddlers, and Families website http://www.zerotothree.org
  - PBS' website www.pbs.org has some resources for parents and caregivers pertaining to routines and transition