A Special Issue on Transitions
We’re focusing this issue on transitions because the summer and fall are times of changes for many children. That theme also plays a part in our newest week of programs GOING AWAY & COMING BACK, scheduled for the last week of August.

Transitions
It’s no wonder the Neighborhood Trolley is a favorite of many children. Anything on wheels fascinates them. But there may be a deeper reason why children like the Trolley: it helps them make the transition between Mister Rogers’ television house and the Neighborhood of Make-Believe. It’s a link between where they’ve been and where they’re going. It gives children a chance to settle in and be ready for the shift to Make-Believe...and back again to Mister Rogers’ neighborhood. Transitions help children cope with changes.

In their child care day, children deal with lots of changes: from home to child care and from activity to activity. Changes are hard for all of us. They’re especially hard for children. Transitions can make changes more manageable.

Your Help With Changes
The most important help comes from your own experiences. How do you feel when someone interrupts you and asks you to do something else? Think about how hard changes are for you. Children don’t have our adult ways of coping or our understanding of situations, so to adjust to their changes, they need your help in making the transition from the “old” to the “new.”

From Home to Child Care...and Back Home
Much as they may enjoy being in child care, it can be hard for children to shift from family to provider. And, much as they love their family, it can be hard for children to go from your care to their family at the end of the day.

That’s why it means so much when a parent stays for a few minutes — to make a link between home and child care. It can also help for children to carry something from home, like a “transition object” or to take something home from their child care day.

From One Activity to Another
There are many times when you ask children to stop what they’re doing and do something else — from playtime to nap time; from playtime to lunchtime; from free play to circle time or story time.

Here are some ways you can give them transitions:

• Prepare children ahead of time. Let them know that “clean-up time will be in five minutes.”

• Talk about what’s coming next. That way you’re helping them focus ahead, rather than on what they’re giving up.

• Offer an “in-between” activity. If children are coming in from active outdoor play into lunchtime, before they come to the table, have them do a calming activity, like looking at a book.

• If the next phase is a quiet time, dim the lights or play soft music to help children settle down.

Remember that some children have a very hard time moving on to the next activity. They may need some extra support, like having you right there beside them, even helping them pick up the toys. Your warm voice and your caring arm around them can help them move along.

From Your Program to Another in the Fall
It can help for children to have some “bridges” between the “new” place and the “old.” Talk with them about things that will be the same. Near the end of the summer, you may want to take them on a “field trip” to the kindergarten. In some child care programs, even infants and toddlers “visit” their new group for snack time now and then so that, little by little, they can become familiar with the new people and the new setting...and make their own bridges to the next place. That helps at all ages!

At the touch of the switch, Mister Rogers brings in the Trolley, signaling the transition into the Neighborhood of Make-Believe.

For a free copy of “When Your Child Goes to School,” send a business-size, self-addressed, stamped envelope to Department CC, Family Communications, Inc. 4802 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213.
Dear Parents and Providers,

Many of us know stories like this: a 3 year old becomes greatly upset when his mother decides the time has come to wash his “sucky blanket.” To her, the blanket is dirty and smelly, little better than a rag. For the little boy, though, the blanket is a vital bridge between himself and the world.

The blanket comes out of the dryer, looking and smelling different, but after a bit of “breaking it in,” he’s soon able to find comfort in it again.

We call things like that boy’s blanket, “transition objects.” They are favorite things children latch on to when they are little — a blanket, a toy, perhaps, or a teddy bear. My grandson has “Bear” who has been his beloved companion since infancy. His father had a soft dog called Ann. Rarely can we predict what will become the beloved “best” object.

“Transition objects” become important bridges between what the child knows best — home and close family members — and the rest of the world of new places, new things, and new people. They offer children comfort and a sense of security while they’re becoming more comfortable in those new places (which can take a long while).

There’s another essential way we help children with transitions to new places and new people. It’s trust. Trust is the essential bridge between the child and the rest of the world of people.

The infant who has learned to trust his or her first and closest caregivers can take that trust and extend it to a widening circle of relatives and other caregivers — child care providers, doctors, teachers, and other caring professionals who become important in his or her life.

Transitions can still take lots of time, even when children have had warm, trusting relationships and even when they carry along their “blankies.” Little by little, at their own pace, children will be able to move ahead on their own.

Even though parents and providers may feel some sadness as children move ahead, they can also feel pride in the strengths they’ve given the children as they move from oneness with the mother to a new separate, unique, independent, feeling, decision-making person! What a tremendous journey that is!

Sincerely,

Fred Rogers, host of MISTER ROGERS’ NEIGHBORHOOD, begins his 26th year on PBS.
Almost all parents have trouble getting their children to bed at one time or another. Bedtime can be hard for children because going to bed means going away from the people they love. And, if they're having fun or interested in something, they don't like to stop and get ready for bed.

Here are some ways that parents have helped with the transition from evening time to bedtime.

Try to make bedtime the same time every night.
- Bedtime can be easier if children know when to expect it each night.
- If a very young child cries at bedtime, you might be able to help with a back rub or sit in the room a few minutes for some reassurance.
- It's okay if your child doesn't fall asleep right away. Some children need a little time to settle in. Quietly reading a book or listening to music can help. Just let your child know it's important to be in bed at that time.

Try to have the same routine every night.
- Doing the same things every night helps a child know what's coming next. That way, your child can be more ready for the time when you say "goodnight."
- Be warm and comforting. And at the same time, be firm about the routine.
- Here is what some families do every night:
  - take a bath
  - put on bedtime clothes
  - read a book or tell stories
  - sing softly
  - say goodnight to the chair, the window, the bed, and other objects in the room
  - say goodnight softly and leave the room

Do calm and relaxing things just before bedtime routines.
- In some families, the adults like to read the newspaper or a book while the children play quietly nearby.
- Turn the television off at the end of a program just before bedtime, so it won't be so hard for a child to leave the room.
- If your family watches television in the evening, it can help to choose programs or videos that are calming, rather than those that might be exciting, violent, or scary.
- In good weather, you may want to take a walk.

Be firm about the limits.
- If your child comes out of the bedroom, kindly but firmly walk him or her back to the bedroom.
- Calmly and firmly remind your child that the day is over, and that it's time to go back to bed.
- Be firm about the limits: only two bedtime stories...only one or two trips to the bathroom.

Help your child know there are ways children can find comfort when they're trying to get to sleep.
Here are some suggestions:
- Cuddle a stuffed animal.
- Think about a nice wish coming true.
- Keep a night light on in the room.
- Leave the bedroom door open a little bit.

Try not to give in when your child wants to stay up later.
- It may seem easier just to give in to get your child quiet, but letting your child stay up later one night will only make it harder to get back to the routine in the future.
- If your child continues to cry at bedtime, try to be calm and firm.
- Let him or her know you are nearby, but that it's bedtime. You could say, "It's the end of the day and time for you to go to sleep now."
- It will probably take one or two weeks of repeating these steps every night for your child to manage better with bedtime.

Mister Rogers' Neighborhood is produced by Family Communications, Inc., a not-for-profit corporation that produces audio, video and print materials designed to encourage communication between children and adults. For more information and a catalog, please write or call: Family Communications, Inc., Dept. CC, 4802 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213, 412-687-2990.
Check 'Em Out! — Books To Share With Children

July 1 — "Things to Wear"
(On #1675 Mister Rogers reads from Hats, Hats, Hats by Ann Morris.)

July 4-8 — "Abilities & Disabilities"
The Ugly Duckling by Hans Christian Andersen. This story has timeless appeal to anyone who ever felt left out just because they were different. (On #1390 the program includes a puppet play of the story "The Princess and the Pea.")

July 11-15 — "Moving"
The Leaving Morning by Angela Johnson. A touching story about an African American girl whose family is about to move to a bigger home because a new baby is on the way. Ties to the old neighborhood are hard to break as the children look fondly upon their home and street.

July 18-22 — "An Opera"
Pet of the Met by Don Freeman. Norman the Doorman is a mouse who greets all the guests at the Metropolitan Opera House—all the mouse guests, that is.

July 25-29 — "Old & New Friends"
Yo! Yes! by Chris Raschka. Told with exuberant illustrations and very few words, two young boys meet, test out their feelings, and become friends.

August 1-5 — "King Friday's Birthday"
The Boy Who Was Followed Home by Margaret Mahy. Robert decides that 27 hippopotami are just too many, even for grandpa's birthday party. But when the hippopotami disappear, the troubles are not over for Robert and his family. (On #1447 Mister Rogers reads from Helen Oxenbury's Numbers of Things.)

August 8-12 — "Looking Back & Ahead"
From Me to You by Paul Rogers. A grandmother shares her interesting life and special hand-sewn lace with her granddaughter.

August 15-19 — "Going to School"
Jessica by Kevin Henkes. Ruthie's parents insist that "There is no Jessica," but Ruthie is determined to bring Jessica to the first day of kindergarten. She soon discovers that a make-believe Jessica is fine, but a real one is even better. (On #1461 Mister Rogers shows The Big Treasure Book of Wheels - 70 Things that Move on Wheels.)

August 22-26 — "Josephine the Short-Neck Giraffe"
The Whales' Song by Dyan Sheldon. Grandmother shares stories with Lily about whales and tells her that if she gives the whales something special, they may give her the gift of song.

August 29-September 2 — "Going Away & Coming Back"
Roundtrip by Ann Jonas. Black and white drawings recount a trip to the city and a return home. The artist cleverly constructs a story that literally turns upside down in an optical illusion.

September 5-9 — "Learning"
Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh. After three white mice discover red, yellow, and blue paint, through play they learn about other colors.

September 12-16 — "Competition"
The Woman Who Flummed the Fairies retold by Heather Forest. Based on an old Scottish tale, a master baker tricks the Fairy King into letting her bring her entire household to his kingdom.

September 19-23 — "Play"
Changes, Changes by Pat Hutchins. In a wordless picture book, two wooden toy dolls use building blocks to create and change their neighborhood.

September 26-30 — "Making an Opera"
Gilberto and the Wind by Marie Hall Ets. Sometimes the wind is quiet, but when it blows, kites swirl and Gilberto's bubbles fly. (On #1471 Storyteller Jay O'Callahan tells an original story about a king and a bubble.)
Plan & Play Activities For Aug. 29-Sept. 2/Theme: Going Away & Coming Back

Thoughts For The Week
As we think about times that are difficult for children, so many of them include separation (leaving and coming back). If that moment of parting comes as a complete surprise, it can trigger real alarm. If, on the other hand, adults have talked things over ahead of time, and a child understands that the separation will last a certain period of time and then the adult will be back, that child may be able to manage better.

Pretending about going away and coming back gives children the chance to work on the feelings they may have about separation, whether it’s the brief separation of naptime or the longer separation of being away at a child care program.

#1676 Monday
Mister Rogers brings a rolled-up map and talks about some ways people travel, going away and coming back. Mimi Dan Kamin visits Mister Rogers and the Neighborhood of Make-Believe.

#1677 Tuesday
Mister Rogers visits with paramedics who show what an ambulance has on the inside and how they use the equipment to give caring help.

#1678 Wednesday
Mister Rogers plays basketball outside while he waits for a visit from exercise teacher, Marilyn Barnett. They visit a gymnasium to watch wheelchair basketball players during a practice session. In the Neighborhood of Make-Believe, everyone’s looking for a secret tunnel.

#1679 Thursday
Mister Rogers uses a cardboard tube as a tunnel for a toy car and sees a video of Mr. McFeely’s trip through a car wash that seems like a tunnel. In the Neighborhood of Make-Believe, more clues are found that lead to a secret tunnel.

#1680 Friday
In the Neighborhood of Make-Believe, the secret tunnel is found! Mr. McFeely brings a videotape that shows how people make tortilla chips from blue corn.

Ingredients for salsa:
1 cup finely chopped tomatoes
1/2 tablespoon finely chopped green peppers
1 tablespoon lime juice
2 tablespoons water
1/2 teaspoon finely chopped onion
tortilla chips, crackers, or pita bread

Salsa and Tortilla Chips
Let the children help you measure and mix the ingredients early in the day. Let the mixture sit for a while before serving. You can serve the salsa at snack time while you talk about how people make tortilla chips, or other things that children remember from the program today.
Highlights of Coming Programs

Watch for two musical visits with one of children's favorite folksingers, Ella Jenkins, on program #1435 (scheduled for July 15) in the week about MOVING and #1682 (scheduled for September 6) in the week about LEARNING. There are lots of ways to use music — for fun, for learning, for expressing feelings, and for transitions.

Big Bird comes to call on program #1483 (scheduled for September 14) in the week about COMPETITION. Henrietta Pussycat is jealous until Big Bird assures her that he's just passing through and won't take her place as X the Owl's best friend.

Mister Rogers meets wheelchair basketball players on program #1678 (scheduled for August 31) in the new week of programs about GOING AWAY & COMING BACK. Being an athlete takes hard work and practice.
# How To Use The Broadcast Schedule

The broadcast schedule identifies the *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* programs that PBS stations broadcast on specific dates. (Check with your local PBS station to find out if it broadcasts *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* on dates different from those shown on this schedule.) The schedule also shows the theme for each week of programs and some of the events occurring in each episode.

The specific episode number (for instance, "#1675" for July 1st) corresponds to the program description and activities in the *Mister Rogers' Plan & Play Book*. The 370-page Plan & Play Book contains easy and appropriate activities for preschoolers. It also contains words to many of the songs from *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood* and a special section with recipes and how-to's.

Copies may be ordered from your local public television station or Family Communications.

A Special Note
The activities for programs 1676-1680 (scheduled for August 29–September 2) appear on the opposite page. You may want to save this newsletter so you can have the activities on hand when the programs repeat next year.

## July

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