

## **SOUTHWEST HRA HEAD START**

**Section:** Early Childhood Development  
**Subject:** Learning Center Transitions  
**Revised:** March, 2000; February 2010

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### **REGULATION REFERENCE:**

45 CFR Part 1304 (Nov. 1996) Performance Standards 1304.21(a)(1)(iv), 1304.21(a)(3)(ii),  
13-4.21(c)(1)

NAEYC Guide to Accreditation by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs

### **POLICY:**

Classrooms are organized into learning centers, therefore, there must be a system or transition in place that allows children to select areas in which to work during learning center time. This also allows freedom to move from one area to another according to the child's interest.

### **PROCEDURE:**

Creating the transition:

1. Some suggestions for the transition include:
  - a. Children move their picture/name strip each time they change areas. These pictures are made during the first home-visit before the child enters the program OR as the child arrives his/her first day in the classroom. The picture/name strips are attached to posters at the entrance to the centers with velcro.
  - b. There are color-coded necklaces or clothespins at the entrance of each area. The children must put on a necklace or clothespin in order to go into the area. If no necklace or clothespin is available in an area, the child knows there is no more space or the area is closed for the day.

### **Using the learning center choice transition:**

1. Teachers are encouraged to use their imagination when beginning the transition process of getting children into the learning centers. Some ways of accomplishing this are:
  - a. Let children draw items from a covered container that represents the areas (example: colored chips or construction paper shapes, small pictures to represent the areas, small colored cube blocks, etc.).
  - b. Calling children's names 3 or 4 at one time and allowing them to choose.
  - c. Use of name strips (latter part of program year) is one of the best ways of getting children into the Interest Centers. The teacher holds up a child's name strip and encourages each to recognize his/her own name and then choose an area.
  - d. The teacher can announce "Everyone wearing red shoes may choose an area." or "If you are wearing a blue shirt or blouse, you may choose an area."
2. It is expected that children will want to work in several areas or Learning Centers and that they will be free to move from area to area at their own pace. Teachers may encourage a child to go into another area after staying in one area for an extended amount of time but moving MUST be the child's choice (except in the case of "time out").