Now and next: a simple transition card

Print this sheet, or talk through the prompts together. Use only the parts that help. Keep completed copies private.

Use this to make your own small card. Write, draw or add a photograph you have permission to use. Choose just one transition, such as leaving the park or stopping play for a meal.

Our two boxes

NOW: What is happening first?

_____

NEXT: What will happen immediately afterwards?

_____

Example: NOW put on our coats. NEXT walk together to the gate. Avoid filling the second box with the whole afternoon's plans.

How we will introduce the ending

A simple warning my child can understand: _____

The words, sign or picture we will use again: _____

Something that needs to be ready before we give the warning: _____

Continue: Now and next: a simple transition card

One possible choice

A choice we can genuinely offer: _____

Option one: _____

Option two: _____

If there is no useful choice, leave this section blank. For example, safety decisions about crossing a road are for the adult.

Help through the change

What my child may need help doing: _____

What I can say if they are disappointed: _____

A practical adjustment for next time: _____

You can say, “You wanted to keep playing. I will help you with your coat.” The card explains the plan; it is not a demand that your child stop having feelings.

Keep or change?

After trying it, ask whether the two steps were clear. Simplify the card if it creates more instructions to manage. Adapt it to your child’s communication needs rather than expecting one format to suit everyone.

Browse all free resources.