TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING BACK TO SCHOOL FOR FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS
AGENDA:

- Discuss strategies and supports for preparing your child for learning in the school building
- Discuss strategies and supports for children that need extra support transitioning back into the school building
- Learn about social narratives
- Discuss the importance of communication with school teams and children
- Link to LCPS Parent Resources and videos
WHY DO WE NEED TO PLAN FOR TRANSITION

• Typical summer transition can be stressful
• Duration of time out of school
• COVID-19 may have increased exposure to trauma
• School will look different
• New expectations
• May take longer for some to adjust
WHAT DOES MY CHILD NEED

- Children’s needs during transitions are varied
- Consider the individual needs of your child and supports needed when communicating with school teams
SUPPORTS FOR TRANSITION

**Verbal**

Exposing your child to something by talking about it in order to prepare them for transition.

**Physical**

Practicing routines in order to prepare for transition

**Visual**

Exposing your child to something by showing them visuals, objects, or places to prepare them for something.
VERBAL SUPPORTS

Have discussions when your child is in a calm state:

• Discuss their feelings and thoughts, actively listen to their concerns, and validate their feelings
  • Topics may include how are they feeling about the return, what they like about school, classmates, or teacher, what they miss about face to face, what they are excited about in their return

• Discuss expectations or changes in expectations and environment
  • Topics should include mask wearing, handwashing, social distancing, temperature checks, changes within the school building (may vary by school)

• Focus on the positives
VISUAL SUPPORTS

• Utilize visuals while having a discussion and as often as needed. Explain the purpose of the visual when your child is in a calm state, prior to beginning a transition

• Examples - daily countdown calendar, written or other visual representations of expectations, schoolwide PBIS visuals, daily/weekly schedules
EXAMPLES OF VISUALS THAT CAN BE USED TO REVIEW AND PREPARE FOR TRANSITIONING BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS:
Maintain 6 feet of physical distance
Por favor use una cubierta de tela para la cara.

Mantenga una distancia de 6 pies cuando sea posible.

Please wear a mask.

Maintain a distance of 6 feet whenever possible.

CLEAN HANDS KEEP YOU HEALTHY.
Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 SECONDS.

www.cdc.gov/handwashing

LIFE IS BETTER WITH CLEAN HANDS

6 pies

6 ft
**EXAMPLE OF SCHOOL PBIS EXPECTATIONS FROM SCHOOL WEBSITE TO REVIEW BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hallway &amp; Stairway</th>
<th>Cafeteria</th>
<th>Restroom</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Outside</th>
<th>Garden</th>
<th>Classroom</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Safety</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• face forward.</td>
<td>• keep food to myself.</td>
<td>• tell an adult if there is a problem in the bathroom.</td>
<td>• stay seated with my feet on the floor.</td>
<td>• listen to all adults.</td>
<td>• walk in the garden.</td>
<td>• use the tools safely.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• watch my step.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teamwork</strong></td>
<td>• walk on the right side of the hallway &amp; stairway.</td>
<td>• work together to clean up.</td>
<td>• keep the bathroom clean.</td>
<td>• keep the bus clean.</td>
<td>• play responsibly.</td>
<td>• work together to keep our garden clean.</td>
<td>• work together to learn and care for our plants.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• will walk in a straight line.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• use quiet voices.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Acceptance</strong></td>
<td>• take another path when I see cones.</td>
<td>• sit with new friends.</td>
<td>• give others privacy.</td>
<td>• sit with anyone and make new friends.</td>
<td>• include others.</td>
<td>• participate with anyone and make new friends.</td>
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SOCIAL NARRATIVES
SOCIAL NARRATIVES

• What is a social narrative
• How can it help
• How do I write one
• How do I implement it
• Where do I get one
WHAT IS A SOCIAL NARRATIVE?

• Individualized
• Short story
• Explains social situations, expectations, or appropriate social behaviors
• Explain feelings and perspectives of the individual or others
Hands to Yourself

Sometimes I have trouble keeping my hands to myself.

I poke my friends and touch things that are not mine.

I need to remember to keep my hands to myself.

When I am working, I only touch my own paper and pencil. When I am listening to the teacher, I am with nice hands.

My friends and teacher are happy when I keep my hands to myself.

When Schedules Change

follow a schedule at school.

Sometimes this schedule changes.

Sometimes we have an assembly, a special activity, or a free skill.

When my schedule changes, I feel frustrated and upset. I sometimes cry or yell when the schedule changes.

I often feel angry and don’t want to change my schedule.

Sometimes the schedule needs to change and I have to follow directions. It is OK to say “I am upset, my schedule is different.”

If the schedule changes, I need to stay calm and listen to the teacher. The schedule will be back to normal again soon!

CORONAVIRUS

Why do I have to stay at home?

A social narrative for children

Sometimes people get sick. Little things called germs make people sick.

When There Is No Chocolate Milk

I have lunch at school on school days. Usually I have chocolate milk for lunch.

Sometimes there is no chocolate milk.

When there is no chocolate milk, it makes me upset.

It is okay to be upset, but it is not okay to scream.

When I scream, no one knows what I want and it may scare my friends.

The next time there is no chocolate milk, I will try to choose something else to drink or ask the cafeteria ladies if there is any more chocolate milk or ask a friend if they would like to trade milk.

Using my words instead of screaming will make my friends and teachers happy.

I will feel proud that I was able to solve a problem without screaming.
HOW CAN IT HELP?

• Pre-teach social situations
• Provides expectations upfront
• May help validate/ease their feelings
• Teaches strategies
• Everyone on the same page
HOW DO I WRITE A SOCIAL NARRATIVE?

- Describe the situation/event and place your child in the event
- Describe the effects the situation/event has on your child or others
- Describe how the situation/event should be best handled
- End on a positive note
HOW TO CREATE A SOCIAL NARRATIVE
STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE TARGET BEHAVIOR OR SOCIAL SITUATION

I am going back to school!

When I am at my school, I will wear a mask.
STEP 2: DEFINE THE TARGET BEHAVIOR OR SKILL SO THAT IT IS OBSERVABLE (SOMETHING YOU CAN SEE)

My mask needs to cover my nose and my mouth.

This keeps my germs in and other germs out.
STEP 3: WRITE THE SOCIAL NARRATIVE USING LANGUAGE AT THE CHILD’S LEVEL, USING FIRST-PERSON (“I”) OR SECOND PERSON (“YOU”) LANGUAGE

My teacher will be happy that I am following the rules and staying safe.

My classmates will be happy that I am helping them stay safe.
STEP 4: CHOOSE THE APPROPRIATE LENGTH OF THE STORY ACCORDING TO YOUR CHILD'S ABILITY AND ATTENTION SPAN

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STEP 5: ENHANCE STORY USING PHOTOS, PICTURE ICONS, COMPUTER-GENERATED ICONS, TEXT, OR HAND-DRAWN PICTURES BASED ON CHILD’S AGE AND UNDERSTANDING
HOW DO I IMPLEMENT IT?

Read the story to your child and model the desired behavior

- Read prior to the upcoming event, as part of the daily schedule, and as often as needed
HOW DO I IMPLEMENT IT?

Reinforce the appropriate behavior when your child demonstrates it
HOW DO I GET ONE?

Create your own

Ask your child's teacher
PHYSICAL SUPPORTS

- Visit the school premises to help ease transition fears. Increase exposure during your visits
  - Lower grades- consider visiting the playground or walking the track
  - Upper grades- consider arranging a time and place for your visit with Admin to ensure an area is available.
- Discuss expectations during the visit (walking on sidewalk, waiting for temp checks before entering etc.)
- Practice daily routine
  - Includes walking/riding routes, getting up early, going to bed earlier
IDEAS TO PREPARE FOR BACK TO SCHOOL TRANSITION:

- Virtual field trip video, virtual playdate with classmates
- Read books about going to school.
- Plan a “run through day” a week before school starts
- Begin nighttime routines and morning routines at least one week before school starts
- Practice mask wearing, hand washing, social distancing!!
THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

- Look at the school website/social media together, look at teacher’s pictures and other photos to give your child a sense of the fun learning that happens at their school
THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

- Make connections to your child's school community
- Draw or research the school mascot
- School spirit colors
- Explore PBIS tab on school website
THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

• Write letters or draw pictures to post around the house or send in the mail to family to tell about going back to school
I NEED MORE...

- Your child may exhibit significant anxiety or behavior challenges when transitioning back to school and may need additional supports
COMMUNICATION WITH SCHOOL TEAMS

Please reach out to your school team if you have any concerns
RESOURCES:

Visit these links to learn more, see examples, and to create your own social narratives

- The Watson Institute: https://www.thewatsoninstitute.org/resources/behavior-stories/
- Story Board That https://www.storyboardthat.com/articles/e/social-situation-social-story
- Vanderbilt Kennedy Center https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/assets/files/tipsheets/socialstoriestips.pdf
- TACSEI Backpack connection: https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/backpack/BackpackConnection_behavior_stories.pdf

LCPS Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

https://sites.google.com/lcps.org/mtss/home-mtss
VIRTUAL LEARNING AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

LCPS has created and posted videos on the following topics on the LCPS Parent Resources site:

https://www.lcps.org/ParentResourceServices

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<td><strong>Setting Expectations Video</strong></td>
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<td><strong>How to Choose Reinforcers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Setting up the Environment</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Using Reinforcers</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Regulating Emotions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Schedules and Routines</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Building a growth mindset</strong></td>
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THANK YOU