



Successful Transitions

BrightStart Children's Academy has been designed to provide the needs of children (and families) aged 12 mos – 12 years. Your child is able to enter our facility at any age and transition to the next program with ease, due to the fact the (s)he has probably already seen or met his/her new teachers in the building and new room. Despite the familiarity, transitioning to a new program still represents something new and different for your child, so we would like to let you know what to expect.

Please note that we *consider* transitioning Infants (to Toddlers) around 20 months of age, and Toddlers (to the 3-5 yr old program) around 30 months. Many factors are taken into consideration, including:

- your child's birth date
- maturity
- development
- availability in the program

If there are multiple children close in age, then we follow the recommendations of their current teacher, in selecting the child to transition first. Please note that we cannot guarantee that we will have room for your child in the next program, as we cannot exceed our room capacity. If there is no spot for your child to move up, we will discuss options with you such as a change in days of the week or offer alternative programs, if available.

Some parents may ask to have their child transitioned prematurely - possibly thinking that their fees will be reduced to correspond with the program change. Note that even if your child transitions earlier, your fees will only change the month of the 2 or 3 year old birthday.

If you attend part or full time, it may be unlikely that your child will fully transition in one month. Often it can be a 2 -4 month process to successfully transition each day your child is enrolled.

As your child gets closer to transition time, teachers will try to introduce some of the new routines within their existing program. If space permits, they will take every opportunity to introduce your child to his/her new classroom for an hour or two – just to see how they manage.

You will see these changes for the **Infant to Toddler** transition:

- sleeping on a mat (rather than a crib)
- one opportunity for a nap – in the afternoon with all of the other children
- sitting at a table and ultimately feeding himself his snack and lunch
- sitting "still" (for a short period of time) and participating in circle time
- learning to eat his own food and to not grab another's lunch
- opportunity for potty training
- use of sippy cups (rather than bottles) for liquids



You will see these changes for the **Toddlers to 3-5 Group Room** transition:

- Less one-on-one attention from the teachers in all daily aspects including putting on coats, toileting, hand washing, lunch time (ratio is 8:1 compared to 4:1).
- A livelier classroom during nap time, as all the children may not nap.
- Longer and more frequent circle times
- No specific toileting time – Children can go to the bathroom anytime without letting the teachers know when they need to use the bathroom
- Decreased assistance with toileting with the goal of self sufficiency (the teachers will be available to assist with wiping after bowel movements)
- Limited supervision for hand washing
- Reliance on the child to verbalize when they are thirsty (for water) or need help
- No opportunity for spoon feeding a child although lunches are heated and children can ask for help to open packages and containers
- Higher ratio of children per caregiver (see additional information below)
- Less formal reporting (toileting schedules, length of nap, food consumption)
- Working towards self sufficiency in putting on coats and shoes (Velcro or slip-on shoes are best)

The ratio of teachers to children in the 3-5 year old room is 1:8, whereas it is 1:4 in the Toddler program. That is why you & your child may sense less one-on-one or individual care. At first, it may be a bit harder for your child to initiate and follow-through with basic toileting and hygiene routines on his own. The teacher will remind and assist as much as possible, however it is possible that every day may not be successful. Often parents and staff observe a regression in toilet training with more accidents. This is quite normal as your child gets familiar with his new environment and learns to initiate and follow through on his bathroom needs.

To ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible, one of the teachers will be assigned to the transitioning child. This teacher will become your child's "go-to person" who will receive information from the staff as well as initiate the relationship with you. She will be the person that provides the extra TLC (tender, loving care) that your child will require the first little while. If this teacher is not available during your child's drop-of or pick-up, you can request a phone call from her, to enable you to ask specific questions.

We look forward to this time of transitioning, and will work together with you, the parent, to nurture your child's growth, so that your child can feel positive about himself, his contributions and accomplishments.