

CAPABLE. CONFIDENT. CURIOUS.

From Principles to Practice: Real Ideas. Real Stories. Real Learning.

From the Framework

Capable, Confident, and Curious: Nova Scotia's Early Learning Curriculum Framework highlights that inclusive and supportive learning environments are vibrant, flexible, and responsive to the interests, identities, abilities, and temperament of each child.

Transitions, like other parts of the daily routine, benefit from intentional planning. Thoughtful planning reduces stressors, distractions, and challenges for children while creating natural opportunities to weave in numeracy and literacy.

During transitions, educators can use simple strategies like counting children, singing number songs, using visual schedules, and sequencing steps (e.g., "first clean up, then line up"). Songs and narration can help clearly guide actions and expectations. These approaches are a few ways to support early numeracy and literacy while helping transitions feel smooth and predictable.

About this Issue

This issue explores how intentional and inclusive transitions support children's well-being and sustained engagement throughout the day. It also highlights how responsive strategies, such as visual routines with symbols and words, clear communication, singing, narration, and playful interactions, can promote emerging numeracy and literacy skills.

Making Transitions Meaningful

Submitted by: Helen and Michelle, Health Park Early Learning Centre

By integrating our curriculum framework, we transform these moments [transitions] into meaningful learning experiences. For instance, we encourage personal and social responsibility by using peer mentorship, where older children guide younger peers, and by incorporating interactive games like "I Spy" to make tidying up a collaborative effort. During clean-up, we ask thought-provoking questions, such as comparing weight or estimating capacity, to spark curiosity.

To promote language and communication, we use call-and-response songs [a back-and-forth interaction between an educator and children, where the educator "calls" and the children "respond"]. For example, "If you're happy and you know it..." and literacy-based prompts to organize transitions. These intervals provide an ideal space to prioritize well-being. By practicing mindfulness and deep breathing, we help children navigate the shift from high-energy activities to calmer environments, ensuring they feel supported throughout their day.

Active Play Habit Idea 1: Sunscreen Salon

When are you integrating it? While you sunscreen the children before going outside.

How do you celebrate? A post-sunscreen high five!

What's the habit?

- If you notice an increase in challenging behaviours as children become eager to get outside in the sun, add some focusing movement.
- Open your Sunscreen Salon and invite children to "pay" for the service with a set number of hops or wiggles.
- Did they pay with hops? Apply the sunscreen using dots! Did they pay with wiggles? Apply the sunscreen using zigzags! Count the dots or zigzags together as you apply the sunscreen.
- Don't forget the high five! This active and playful way to get through this routine is fun for everyone.

Try This!

In partnership with Learn Through Active Play, we are sharing two Active Play Transitions for you to try in your program.

Learn Through Active Play (LTAP) is a professional development program that empowers early childhood educators and child care professionals with the skills to build confident, meaningful Active Play Habits that fit naturally into every part of your day.

Keep an eye out for future Learn Through Active Play Professional Learning offerings on EECD's [website](#).



Active Play Habit Idea 2: A Child Hunt

When are you integrating it? When it's a child's turn for a diaper change.

How do you celebrate? A big hug!

What's the habit?

- If you have children who resist having their diaper changed, turn it into a hunt!
- Announce to the room that you're going on a *insert child's name here* Hunt and turn it into a fun movement game where you search for the child. Use descriptive clues and playful narration to build early language skills (e.g., We're going on a Maya Hunt! I'm looking for someone wearing a blue and red striped shirt. Let's tiptoe over to the block area and see if we can find Maya.)
- Once you locate the child (who possibly was in plain sight the whole time) scoop them into a big hug as a more regulated and fun way to transition to changing their diaper!

We'd love to feature your story from an early learning and child care program in the next issue of Capable. Confident. Curious.

If you'd like to include photos, please email us to request an Image Consent Form.

Story topic: **In what ways does your physical environment invite and support early literacy and numeracy learning?**

Submit by: **August 21st, 2026** to be considered for the September issue.

Submit your story to: ELCCprofessional.learning@novascotia.ca

**DO YOU
HAVE A
STORY TO
SHARE?**