

10 Tips for Creating Supportive Environments That Can Prevent Behaviors That Challenge Us

Gail Joseph: Hey, everyone. Welcome to Teacher Time. I'm Gail Joseph.

Saameh Solaimani: I'm Saameh Solaimani.

Virginia Tse: I'm Virginia Tse. We are from the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning. We are so excited to have you join us today for a special episode of Teacher Time focused on preschool environments.

Gail: Absolutely. I have to say, it's a very special episode for many reasons. First, we're going to 90 minutes. We usually stop at an hour, but just so you know, we're going to be here for 90 minutes because we hope to get to some of your questions. But we also have packed this episode full of practical strategies to help prevent behaviors that challenge us. Who doesn't want more of those? These are always such great reminders for us too.

The other thing that makes this a super special episode is that we are coming to you live from our Teacher Time Studios, which is in Seattle, Washington. We are right here on the water. We wanted to let you know that because you might hear some boats honking. We can't control that. You might hear some boats honking. Then keep your eyes for real excitement. There is a bridge behind us that actually might go up if a very tall boat goes under it. All to help you know that we are live. We are absolutely live and here for you. Thank you for joining this very special episode.

Let's start by checking in. I think it's always a great idea to check in with how you're feeling. This is the Teacher Time Feeling Creature Tree. You can find it in the resource list if you want to use it check in with your teaching staff, or if you want to check in with how children are feeling as well. Anybody can use it. But the way you do it, is you just find the number of the creature, or numbers, because you might have more than one feeling at the same time that best corresponds to how you're feeling. Then you just try, and identify, and name it.

I definitely am feeling like 18 in that little threesome there, because I love that I have my cohorts supporting me. I'm feeling a little bit like nine. Like, woo-hoo! Here we are live! And hoping that somebody like number four is there to catch me. That's kind of how I'm feeling today. Virginia, how are you feeling?

Virginia: I'm feeling a bit of 16, kind of on that leaf supported by my colleagues here and by that leaf. Also, just excited, like 15.

Gail: Yeah.

Virginia: Fifteen looks super excited.

Gail: Fifteen looks really excited. Teacher Time viewers, make sure that you tell us how you're feeling too. Go ahead and use that Q&A, this is a good opportunity, and enter in which number you are and why. While you're doing that, Saameh, let's check in with you.

Saameh: Thanks, Gail. I would say probably 16 or 12, also feeling very supported, similar to Virginia, and also just being part of this learning community. It's such an honor and pleasure to be here.

Gail: Absolutely is. We see some people commenting – oh, we've got some 10s, some 13s. I'm keeping an eye out. I'm hoping no one's feeling really down. But if you are, we're glad you're with us. We know that teaching is hard work. It's a heart work, as we say. We're so glad that you're here with us tuning in, and we hope we give you some tips that make you feel inspired and excited. We hope somebody is feeling like number 20, just on top of the – on top of the tree today. All right, Virginia.

Virginia: All right. This is a special episode dedicated to tips that can help you get off to a good start. But they can be implemented at any point in time to prevent behaviors that are challenging, and also help maximize learning time. We want to know from you, when will new children be starting in your program? Enter your response below. Perhaps they've already begun, maybe later this month, in September. I know for me it was always September right after Labor Day was when our kids would start. Let us know.

Gail: We'll give people a little moment to finish that. I'm really excited to know this. Yeah, it's definitely, in the Northwest, we would start after Labor Day. But I think people start earlier in – maybe in California they start sooner?

Saameh: I've been surprised to see some August start dates.

Virginia: We've got Adrianna starting on Wednesday.

Gail: All right, yay!

Virginia: That's so exciting! Monday, OK. August. Yeah, quite a few starting in August. Well, thank you for letting us know and it looks like September is the winner.

Gail: September is the winner, but some people already have some new children beginning. That is great to know and to keep in mind, because we're going to talk about some tips that you can use hopefully before children even begin. For those of you starting Wednesday, we want you to get these tips in place. But also, you can use them at anytime throughout the year.

Now, whether you are new to early learning, or you've been teaching for several years, the beginning of the year is just always such a special time to me. I always get very excited about the starting with a new group of children. I said goodbye to the old group. Still missing them, but then really excited about the new group. But it's also a really great time to put so many prevention practices in place that can really maximize children's learning time, maximize children's fun in programs, and really decrease, or prevent the likelihood of challenging behavior from occurring in the first place.

But the other thing that we always want to be thinking about with our new year is really thinking about equity, inclusion, and belonging. We want to ultimately create learning settings that feel like you can belong with your authentic self whether you are a teacher, a teacher's aide, a volunteer in a classroom, but also if you're a child, or a family member of that child, we want to create spaces where you feel like you can belong and bring your whole authentic self. We're always thinking about equity and making sure that the tips and strategies that we're

putting in place, the way that we're teaching, the way that we're supporting learners, that we're making sure that those work for each and every learner in our programs, and not just for a few of them.

As we go through our tips and strategies today because we have ten great tips that we want you to be thinking about, and if you already have these in your place, in your programs, we want to hear from you. We want you to be telling us that. But we also want you to be thinking about how will these work for each and every child in your programs. Always be thinking about that as well.

Saameh: Absolutely, so important. OK, now let's get started on our top ten picks for creating supportive environments that can help prevent behaviors that challenge us. Here we go.

Virginia: All right, tip number ten is about the importance of establishing a predictable schedule. We can do this in a variety of ways. The first is really just to create a visual schedule and using this schedule consistently. It's important to keep the schedule simple and balancing activities throughout the day. It's also important to make sure your schedule is posted and referring to it often. Then also letting the children know when there might be changes to the schedule. Then it's also important to think about the ways that you can individualize or provide individualized schedules for some children that might need that.

Make sure to check out your Viewer's Guide for a helpful handout with these tips for establishing a schedule. I don't think we can say it enough, that having that predictable schedule is just so important.

Gail: Really, we have it as the number ten, but it could be the number one tip for preventing behaviors that challenge us and all the ways that you are presenting it to us are so helpful visually, consistently.

Virginia: Yes. Here are some examples of schedules from learning environments from across the country. Feel free to enter in the Q&A, which one is the one that is similar to the one you use, or maybe the one that you like best. On the top left we see that there is a picture, or a schedule, with words and pictures that's laid out horizontally. The picture next to that is a picture or is a schedule that uses multiple means of representation.

Gail: Love that.

Virginia: We see pictures and little, small cute little 3D objects. I'm amazed how they got those to stick.

Saameh: That's right, fine motor skills.

Virginia: Exactly. This is a great way to represent the different schedule components. The third schedule is a schedule with words in English and Spanish, along with a photograph. Then the fourth picture is a schedule that has words only, but it is in English and Spanish. This schedule looks very familiar to me, because this was in a classroom that I was in.

Gail: Oh Virginia, it's your schedule.

Virginia: Then on the bottom row we have a schedule that has words in English and Spanish, photograph of the children, and then times on these clockwise apples that kind of help

children. They make a hand on a clock, on an analog clock. Then that final photograph is a picture of an educator pointing to a felt board with a schedule that has pictures, and words, and times. Some things to note about these schedules, or to highlight, is that these schedules are posted in multiple languages. They also have photographs that represent the children that are in the programs. Finally, I love that the pieces of these schedules are movable to help indicate when an activity is complete or done, like a check off your list, or just to indicate any changes.

Gail: I love that. People are chatting in. They're talking about what kind of schedules they use in their programs. I know our Q&A support team are sending those out so that everyone can see. We're hearing people also add some ideas there. That idea of checking things off, like removing it when it's all done can be really supportive for children. I love the idea of a schedule that goes left to right, kind of like the way we learn to read. Just really great ways.

But I think the most important thing to takeaway from schedules is to have one and to follow it consistently. Having a consistent way, having a rhythm to the day is what really works for children. They start to internalize it and can decrease in stress when they know what's happening next. It's a great way to prevent some challenging behaviors.

OK. All right, tip number nine is to think about the physical arrangement of the classroom. Now, there are so many tips within this tip. Hold on. We got a few slides here. But the first thing to think about when you're thinking about the physical arrangement of your classroom is to create that welcoming environment where children see themselves, where everyone belongs. We know that children and families in our programs are really the best source of that material. I love the classrooms that I see where they actually have family photo frames, and they're the real families of the children in that program. It creates such a home-like setting, and really can be responsive. We always want to be thinking about that. How do we make sure everyone feels like they belong. But here's some other little tips that we want to talk about.

One thing in the physical arrangement is to make sure that there is a place where children can store their personal items. Here we see some examples from around the country, other programs that have submitted some photos for us. I like this one on the left-hand side. This comes from a program in Alaska. It has not only the children's names above the cubby so they can find it, but there's also some lovely photos and images of Alaskan native children. That feeling of their culture is represented right there. You see the multiple colorful baskets where they have the child's photo, and the child's name. It was often the case in my Head Start classroom that children had to share a cubby. We have both children's pictures represented and their names so that they can find it.

The other thing to think about is how will children find their cubbies. Clearly when they have their photos, when they have their names on there, they can find their cubbies. But also think about where the cubbies are in the classroom, when you think about the physical arrangement. They should be someplace close to where children enter. Because if the cubbies are located all the way across the classroom, it's hard when you're a young child or anyone not to get distracted, and want to play, and stop, and then I put down my backpack, and my coat, and I forgot where it is. That creates some issues. You want to think about where is it in terms of the flow of the classroom. Can it be right near there?

Thinking about how to make those cubbies accessible for children. Some children might need to have their cubby next to maybe a bench. Maybe will be able to take their backpack off, and their coat off if they can sit and stabilize themselves first, and then hang it up so that the cubby is right next to that bench. Thinking about how we can make them accessible.

Then how can you engage families to decorate the cubbies to really up that sense of belonging. One of the things I love to do in my classroom was our first activity that we did either when we were visiting families at their home before the classroom even started, or we would do kind of a warm-up day where children and families would come to the classroom, I gave them a construction paper house. They all got to decorate it. I took a picture of their family and put it on the house. Then also a picture of the child with little bit of Velcro on that to get to another strategy that we'll talk about later on where children would check in. But that way, children when they came to school that day they saw their families in their cubbies, they knew that's where their stuff belonged.

Saameh: Such great ideas.

Gail: Isn't it fun to kind of represent? I know we've got so many ideas coming in, flying into our little Q&A there too. All right, there's another physical arrangement tip that we want to give and that is to make sure that children know where they need to be, and space if you will. We use names and pictures to identify their cubbies. That one's pretty obvious. But here, we have a teacher that is putting out – before children arrive, she's putting out the names and photos of where the children will come sit during their large group time. Their large group time is a time when you get to acknowledge everyone, where you really build some community. When children come over, they just have to find their name, or their photo and sit on that spot. That there you can see it prevents some challenge behavior. They don't have to struggle, and push, and shove, and somebody is not in front of somebody else, etcetera.

Then this teacher is also really intentionally thinking about who might get easily distracted, so I want to put their back to what might distract them, whether that's the block shelf or the classroom door, or the window. They're thinking about who might do better sitting closer to the teacher where the teacher can provide some more reminders. They're thinking about who might do better sitting next to a peer model that can help support them.

Now, I know I've told the story before, so just pretend that you haven't heard it before. You know, how some children suck their thumb to soothe and then rub their ear? Well, I had a boy in my classroom that would suck his thumb, and then he wanted to hold the ear of the person next to him. I always had to make sure that, who is sitting next to Cesar was tolerant with that. Would be OK with that. But the idea here is that you can prevent so much by having this thought beforehand.

What I love that this teacher does too is that because the names are set out before children arrive, if Jovani is not there that day, there's still a spot there for Jovani. The teacher can still acknowledge and pick up Jovani's name card and say, "Oh Jovani is not here today, he's not feeling well. I hope he feels better soon. Let's give him a big hug." That just really creates a sense of belonging, but also keeps the tradition and the routine about finding your spot and sitting down.

All right, I'll talk about a few of these other considerations around the physical arrangement. We've talked about a welcoming place where everyone belongs. The other thing to think about is the physical arrangement should really support the schedule and vice versa. They should work together. Whatever the schedule is, if children arrive and then you want them to find a book and sit down, then you want that book corner to be close to where children enter in. We already talked about where the cubbies might be, so that there's just a nice flow. You just think about how you can create a flow. There's lots of tips and more strategies in the Viewer's Guide, so you can learn more about what we mean when we talk about that flow.

The other thing is to have a variety of learning centers with clear boundaries, so that children know where one learning center is and where another one might start. To have noisy and quiet zones in your classroom, so quiet activities next to quiet activities and more noisy ones next to noisier areas. Avoiding wide open spaces because if you want to promote large motor skills have wide open spaces. But if you really want children to be using walking feet inside the classroom, then you want to avoid wide open areas. Think about that. Maybe you have a wide-open area for circle time, but maybe you can pull the sensory table into that area during center time so that it breaks up a little bit. Because if I am four, and you tell me to get from here to there into a wide-open area, of course I'm going to run, or jump, or tumble, or roll, or do something.

Virginia: Twirl.

Gail: Twirl, exactly. All kinds of ways, which might be really exciting and fun, but if that's not what you want to have happen, then I might not have those wide-open areas. You can visually close areas when they're not open to use. I know that sometimes you might want children to just be in a couple areas because of supervision. If that other learning center is not open yet, cover it up. Maybe there is a curtain that goes over the bookshelf, or the block shelf, maybe you cover it up with a sheet. The computer area, if that's not in use yet maybe you put a little stop sign there so that children know like, stop, that's not open yet but it will be later. Visually close.

Then, of course, intentionally choose materials and resources in visuals. Don't overstimulate. I know some teachers like to start with just a few things in the classroom and get a nice calm sense going before they add more things in that room. Those are just some other little tips and tricks. We see some other people adding some of the tips and tricks that they use too into the Q&A, which is really exciting there.

Saameh: OK, we have tip number eight, establishing routines to the classroom. Routines help your classroom in family childcare run smoothly, which really maximizes learning time and prevents anxiousness and behaviors that challenge us. Routines, I mean they're important for everybody, us as adults too. We really want to know what's going to happen next. It alleviates a lot of kind of that anxiousness. Routines are completed similarly each day. In learning environments where routines are in place, children know what to do with little assistance from adults, so it really frees us up to support children who may need a little bit more assistance to complete the routine. Let's see, so we'd love to hear some of routines that you have in place in your settings. If you could just put that in the Q&A, we would love to hear from you.

Gail: Yeah, I love that. I mean routines really are key to helping everything move smoothly.

Saameh: Absolutely.

Gail: Don't you think?

Saameh: Yeah.

Gail: Like, just giving that natural rhythm of the day.

Saameh: Sure.

Gail: Yeah.

Saameh: I really love the word "rhythm" that you're using, kind of just keeps the beat.

Gail: Oh, I love that. Yeah, keeping the beat of the classroom. That's so great.

Virginia: I feel like that needs to be a song.

Saameh: It should. Keep the beat.

Saameh: That might be a song.

Gail: I love it. I love it. People are putting some ideas in there about just some of the routines that they have. I know when I taught Head Start, brushing teeth, big routine that we always had daily, having daily schedules as a routine, oh greeting absolutely.

Virginia: Attendance check-in.

Gail: These are great.

Virginia: Yeah.

Gail: We've got a consistency is key. That might be a line in our song of "Keep the Beat."

Saameh: I like that.

Gail: All right.

Saameh: Can I borrow that?

Gail: Yeah, exactly. All right, keep that going. Hand washing is a big one. Yeah, absolutely. Keep entering those thing in. We'll move on to our next little strategy here, which is arrival. Thinking about, again, we're still just in our same tip here about routines. But one routine to attend to and to think about for those of you who haven't started yet, is what do you want children to do during arrival time, just thinking about that, what will children do. Will they come check-in?

Now, I love this idea of the home to school check-in. That's the one I was talking about when I had families decorate houses and put those houses in their cubby. Then they had a little Velcro picture of the child by themselves. What children would do is they put their stuff in their cubby, then they take themselves out away from their family, and they check themselves into the school. It gave them just a little bit of control over that, they might have some big feelings about that, but it just gave them a little bit of control because then they knew that they could go back with their family at the end of the day. Thinking about that.

But one thing that was key is that I wanted children to go to the cubby first. They would walk in and the routine was to go to their cubby, put their things away in the cubby. Take themselves -- away from their families -- that sounds so terrible -- but taking themselves away from their family and checking into their school family. That feels better, their classroom family. Then the

schoolhouse where they would check-in was like a construction paper schoolhouse, and it had lots of little Velcro. They check themselves in. That was right next to the sink because the next thing I wanted them to do was wash their hands. That's a way that you can have the physical arrangement kind of support the flow.

You might have children check-in with how they're feeling in the day. Just like that second one, you might have children check-in, or arrive, and wash their hands right away. Think about what that routine is and how you're going to teach that and support all the children. Now, one thing that I also think about with arrival time is in my classroom, children didn't arrive all at the same time. A group of children came with some Head Start transportation. But some children came with their families, and some came a little bit later.

I always wanted to start the day with something that was a little bit low-key that children could just ... A little buffer activity. Maybe that was getting a book and reading, looking at the pictures and reading books on the carpet. Maybe it was starting even outside until all the children arrived. But if you have something like that, where children can be engaged independently, then you can help support and greet the families and greet children.

Virginia: Definitely. I remember I would have journals out. Then they would go grab the marker, the colored pencil, whatever they felt like that day, and we would just draw.

Saameh: I like that.

Virginia: What they wanted to do.

Saameh: Such a relaxing way to start the day.

Gail: Then you could keep that, almost for a portfolio. What a great idea.

Saameh: Documentation.

Gail: I love that, Virginia. Documentation. Yes. Then this is a little bit of what I already talked about with your arrival time routine. Here's just another example of that. Who's here today? Moving from home into the school and then just being really mindful about a sense of belonging. Maybe that is a photo of family and moving from family into the school, because not everyone has a home that looks like that home. Maybe we make sure that the photos really represent where children are, so that they feel that sense of themselves there.

Now, here's another tip on routines. And that is to also think about routines within routines. We think about keeping the rhythm, keeping the beat of the classroom. One way that we can keep that strong is by establishing even routines within routines. Here is our circle time, or our large group. We have a routine within that routine. We start with a hello song, then we look at the calendar, then we do a movement activity or sing a song, and then we look at book, and then we're done, and we move on to the next thing. If we can keep that rhythm going, it doesn't mean the same hello song every day, or the same movement activity every day, but it just means we go in that order so that children start to internalize it. It can decrease some of their anxiety around that. It will definitely reduce some challenging behavior because they'll be able to predict what happens next. Another routine that you can think about how will children wait for a turn. That is so hard.

Saameh: That's a big one.

Gail: It's one of the big skills that we learn in preschool. Here's a couple of ideas that you might want to think about. One is a counting card. I love these. It's just a laminated piece of paper one through 20. The child does touch counting on each square. If they can count, they are counting and they're definitely getting a lot of practice in while somebody else has a turn. When they get to 20, they switch.

Here, you see a turn-taking chart, lots of Velcro going on here. But it's Adam's turn, so Adam finds a photo and his name and puts it on under the computer there. Then Sarah comes along and she would really like a turn, so she finds her name, those are all in those little pocket, and puts her name there. That signifies that when Adam's turn is up, maybe there's a little digital alarm or some kind of turn-taking, when Adam's turn is up, they know that they put their name in the pocket there. Then they go find Sarah, who it's now their turn. We know that lots of timers can help, like some people like digital timers, some people like sand timers.

Saameh: Yes. Speaking of sand timers, let's watch a quick DIY, do it yourself tutorial. How to make your own sand timer.

[Video begins]

[Music]

[Video ends]

Virginia: What an awesome, quick DIY video. I love those. We're on to tip number seven. Tip number seven is to create supportive transitions. Each transition is like a type of routine. You might already be thinking about transition, but here are some other tips.

The first is to eliminate any unnecessary transitions or wait times. Whenever groups of children are transitioning together in a large group, for example down the hall they use the restroom, some children are going to have to wait. You can either eliminate the wait time by transitioning in smaller groups or having independent transitions. But if the whole group transition is unavoidable, it's important to have a plan in place for what children will do as they wait. You can use the counting cards, as Gail just mentioned, but you can use songs, fingerplay, listening to a book, whatever it is just be sure to have a plan in place.

Another thing that's important is to make sure to teach the children the expectations during the transitions. Then finally, using a consistent cue for children to know when a change is going to happen.

For example, ringing the bell, like we see in this photograph, or it could be a song, a chant, flickering the lights, or you can use a bunch of them combined together to be inclusive of children's various modalities. The key is really just to be consistent. Also with transitions, when motivating children to the next transitions, sometimes it's nice to use a special activity, or a special material, really to get them engaged.

In this photograph we see that this teacher is motivating children to line up to go home by blowing bubbles. Blowing bubbles reinforces and keeps the children that are already there and ready, engaged, but also serves to motivate the other children to hurry up and participate in

the transition as well. We'd love to hear from you, what ideas of special materials, or activities, do you have to support transitions? Enter those into the Q&A.

Gail: I love all those ideas. Somebody reminded us that with that DIY sand timer that we could use sand. Absolutely, in that video it uses sugar, and we know that we don't usually use food resources for things like that. But if you did not have any other things, that might be something that you do have available to you. But definitely use sand if you have it. Thanks for that reminder.

Virginia: Absolutely. Well, now let's watch a video of teacher Aubrey sharing some helpful tips on preparing children for transitions.

[Video begins]Aubrey: The important thing when you're starting planning transitions for your students is to make sure that the transitions are fast, and they're fun, and they're functional. If you find that children are sitting around and waiting during a transition, you can be thinking about how you can engage them during that time. That might mean setting up an activity that they can do while they wait or having a song that they all engage in at the same time. That will make it so that there aren't children kind of wandering around or getting into some other activity during that time.

Incorporating multiple modes of participation is also important during a transition. If you're signaling that it's time to switch over to the next activity, you can use body movements, visual cues, and sounds as indicators that we're moving into the next part of the day. That can help students to get familiar with what the routine is faster, and also feel like they're more in control of it because they're participating in that signal. The last thing would be make sure that children know what's coming next. We're not just saying, "It's time to clean up," we're saying, "We're cleaning up the carpet so that we can read books on the carpet now."

[Video ends]

Gail: Teacher Aubrey has such great tips. I love that. What did she say? Fast, fun, and functional. That's perfect. Think about your transition tips that way. We kind of said this, but I just want to reiterate this because this is one of my favorite tips around supporting transitions, which seems counterintuitive. But that is to begin when just a few children are ready, the next activity. I think you kind of said that, Virginia, but it's such a great tip because if you are starting circle time, as an example in this little slide here, and the first children come over because you've rung the bell and said, "It's circle time!" and children come over, sometimes what we do as teachers, is we want to wait, and wait, and wait until every child is there. Because it's a whole group time. We want everyone there. These children don't get anything. They're just kind of left to their own devices to entertain themselves, while the teacher is like trying to call the other children there.

Instead, I would start with these children and do something super exciting that not only keeps them engaged, reinforces them for coming right away, but it motivates other children to come along too. The teacher might blow bubbles, like you said, they might sing a special song. I think it's because I live in Seattle, but you used to get a little water bottle and we'd squirt water and we'd be like, "It's raining, get out your umbrella!" Children would like think that was so much fun and run over to get sprayed by the water. Who knew? But it could be whatever it is. Maybe

it's a special puppet that makes an appearance and the children love to talk to the llama. They come over and they get to interact with the llama because they came over to circle time first. Then once all the children are there you can start that routine that we talked about.

But that's just one of my very favorite tips is starting, just a few children are ready, and also planning like when children go to a small group activity, what is it that they can get started with right away that doesn't require the teacher to start it, because we all know that we're going to have to help support a child, provide individual attention to get over to the small group table, so can they start with Play-Doh, can they start with a coloring activity? Can there just be something that they can start right away? That is one of my favorite tips there to start.

Saameh: Something that I really like to do during transitions is either like a snapping, or a clapping, speaking of rhythm, you can tell I'm kind of a music person. But maybe, snap, snap or clap, clap, and children can follow along. Then the other children are kind of motivated to want to join in the fun.

Gail: I love that.

Saameh: That's something that I found very successful with preschool-aged children.

Gail: You can kind of change it up and it's novel.

Saameh: Yeah. Some people are practicing their snapping.

Virginia: Exactly.

Gail: I love that. That's such a great one. Now, some children might want to know where they're going next. Sometimes we can do that not only by telling them what is going to happen next, like Teacher Aubrey told us about, but we might also want to show them a picture of where they're going next. These are some of our favorite transition cue cards. They are available in the Viewer's Guide too. I know that we had a similar strategy. We would print these out, cut them out, laminate them so they lasted, put them on a belt ring. We just always had them. Here's where we're going next. We could show children, you could hang them around the classroom, just make them available. But they're really helpful and sometimes children that need a little extra support could carry it to the next activity.

Saameh: Any excuse to laminate, is what I like to say. I love laminating. Very satisfying.

Gail: It makes things last. It's really great.

Virginia: Well, now let's watch a video of Teacher Jenny sharing some ideas to help transition, to move forward smoothly. As you watch, we'd love to hear your thoughts, comments, questions. Feel free to enter those into the Q&A as you watch.

Gail: Q&A is busy. We love it. So many ideas are coming in.

Virginia: It's so great.

[Video begins]

Jenny: Thinking about transitions and supporting kids in transitions, I think the biggest thing I think about is making sure everyone has something to do. Whether that's you've got a song going that kids are singing, there's an activity and kids have jobs that they're doing to help

move a transition forward, so things like they are putting their own cot sheets on when you're transitioning from the circle into naptime, or to get ready for naptime. Somebody is opening and holding the door when you're lining up to go outside, or there's someone who's taking on different roles, helping with the schedule, moving the clip on the schedule if you track your schedule during the day. Having kids have something to do during those transitions.

Then for adults, I think the biggest thing in our classroom that helped with transitions is having one adult that is managing the transition, and the next activity is getting started. The other adult is already starting the activity. It helps kids be excited to get done what they need to get done to transition, and make sure that there's no wait time. If you're transitioning from being in free-choice centers, into circle, there's a warning that the transition is coming, then you'd tell kids it's time to transition. You go through whatever your rules are for the transition, it's time to clean up, and walk to the rug. Your other co-teacher is already at the rug and starting the first song, or first activity of circle, so that no one is waiting, and everybody is encouraged and excited to come over and join.

[Video ends]

Gail: Thank you for your reflections, insights, and questions. Such great questions. As many of us have experienced, sometimes transitions can be a bit tricky when there's only one educator in the room, and we've all been there. Let's hear it from Teacher Jenny how transitions can be supported during those instances.

[Video begins]

Jenny: I think that making sure then that where you are sending kids to next, they've really gotten a lot of clear instruction about what they're supposed to do, and that there's something for them to do there. For example, maybe you're transitioning from outside and coming inside into the classroom to pack up for the end of the day. Maybe there's a clear direction that there's a basket where you have journals, and colored pencils, and books, and those are the really limited options for what kids can do when they come in from that specific transition. That kind of serves that same purpose as having another teacher there starting the activity, but it's something really clear that children know what to do when they come inside. Giving those reminders each time when you're coming inside about, "Remember, we're coming inside. What does that mean we can do?" Encouraging kids to help remind each other what they're supposed to do when they get there.

[Video ends]

Virginia: When children are having a difficulty with the transition, providing a choice as to how to complete that transition can be very helpful. It gives the child some agency, and a sense of control that can both calm, and motivate the child to complete the transition. Some examples of choices might be, "Do you want to sit on the green mat or the blue mat?" "Would you like to use a scoop or tongs?" And "Do you want to put the blocks away or the farm animals?" Studies have shown that children usually pick the latter, or the second option, making it two options that both work for you.

Gail: I love that. It's always my go-to. Give a choice.

Saameh: Absolutely.

Gail: It's so great. We've talked a lot about transitions. That was a big tip that we had. We just want you to know that in the Viewer's Guide, there's a Transition Planning Form. If this is like your 20th year of teaching, or your first year of teaching, if you haven't already written down, like what the transitions are, what the expectation is for what the children do, and what the expectation is for what the adults do to support the transition, it's just a really a great idea. It clarifies it in your mind, first of all, because you go through and you think like, OK this is this, this is this. It is so great when there's a new staff member that you can share it with. Maybe there's a family member volunteering in the program. You can share that with them as well. It just, it really helps get the whole teaching team on the same page. Definitely do that if you haven't had a change, I would highly suggest it.

Virginia: Moving on to tip number six. That is rules. We've already covered predictable schedule, routines, supportive transitions. Each of these is essential for creating a calm and happy rhythm in your setting. Rules are helpful to encourage positive interactions between children, the educator, and the learning materials in your environment. Experienced educators, just like yourself, now that rules, although rules don't necessarily help you have your environment run smoothly because those are your routines, rules do help convey the important ways that we learn together in a group safely.

Here are the rules about rules. Generally, keep your rules simple and have them positively stated and that they frame safety in the well-being of community members and the materials. It's also a great idea to involve children in developing the rules. This way it helps them have an ownership and really kind of stick to it because they're the ones that came up with it. Try keeping the focus on the self, others, and the classroom ready for learning. Teach the rules proactively and post the rules where children can see them.

It's important to communicate the rules to family so that they know what the expectations are for their children in your learning environment. Then reinforce the rules at a higher rate at the beginning of the year, and maybe a lower rate at the end of the year because the kids are already getting it, they know them.

Virginia: Let's see, and the next thing we have some examples. Here are some example visuals to support the rules. On the left we see an example of behavior expectations, like walking feet and quiet mouths. On the right, there are examples of behavior. On the right, there's a picture of school rules that are categorized by us, each other, and our things. Make sure to check out your Viewer's Guide for more visuals for rules. Then here is another great example that I just love. These rules say, "Be safe, be friendly, and be a learner."

Gail: I love that.

Saameh: Love it.

Virginia: Pretty much covers ...

Saameh: Covers it all.

Virginia: All of it. We can clearly see that the children and the adults came up with these rules together on these posters. Co-creating rules with children is such a great way to take into account their ideas, which helps build a sense of community, and belonging. Let us know, what are some rules that you have or will have for your setting? Enter those in the Q&A. As you're watching those, we're also going to watch a video of an experienced teacher discuss how they approach establishing rules and expectations.[Video begins]

Fanny: We involve the kids in establishing the rules generally by having them help generate some of those more details. A lot of times they give really cool responses that are right on target. When we talk about what does it mean to be a good friend, a lot of kids will volunteer, "Oh that means sharing toys." "That means being nice to them." "That means saying nice things." They feel that ownership too. Sometimes groups of children emphasize different things. Some groups might emphasize taking turns with materials. While another group might focus on compliments, saying nice things to each other. That's totally fine. Both of them demonstrate the expected behavior of being a good friend.

[Video ends]

Gail: Love Teacher Fanny and her tips so much. We've been hearing from so many great teachers, as well as our Teacher Time viewers that are out there putting their ideas in as well. We would love it if you have photos of things, like your schedule, transition cue cards, any of that stuff that you feel like you can have permission to post and share on MyPeers, let's do it. Let's be this learning community. Because I had never seen the rule be a learner before, but now I wish I would have known that one for a very long time.

All right, tip number five. We're halfway there. We're counting down from ten. We're at five. But tip number five is Staffing Charts and Zoning, to help you organize staff by using these tools we're going to tell you about if you don't already use these. If you do use these, please tell us about it in the Q&A because we want to know how you use them in your program.

But basically, what you can see on this picture here is that somebody has taken their learning environment, their classroom, and divided it into three different zones. This if they have three different adults. Maybe there's a teacher, a teacher assistant, and a volunteer in the classroom, or maybe their early childhood special education itinerant teacher is joining that day and so they have a third in there, or the speech language pathologist is joining, and they have them in the classroom supporting children. However, you might have three adults in your classroom, this one might be before you. Of course, if you only have two it would look a little bit different. If it's one there's also a different way that you could do that.

But the idea with zoning is that you divide the classroom into different zones. You assign different adults to those zones. Then as an adult in that zone I make sure that I practice zoning. I make sure that the environment looks inviting and exciting for children. When children enter that area, I'm watching them, I'm helping to engage them. When that child, or children, leave that area and go into another zone, I'm also kind of giving the next adult in that area a little bit of head up. That way we can keep our eyes on all the children and make sure that they are engaged and learning and having fun.

Now, the other thing that you can do is a staffing chart. This is one of my favorite strategies to use in a setting. Again, here we have kind of the high-end version here where there's three staff people in a classroom. We know that's not the case for a lot of people. You'll find tips and tricks for doing that with fewer adults in the classroom in the Viewer's Guide.

What you do here is you write down the left-hand side, you can see on that slide, the activities or the transitions of the day – arrival, breakfast, transition to outside, outside, transition back to classroom, circle time. Whatever your schedule is and whatever transitions you have children make, you put that down the left-hand side. Then across the top, however many adults you have in the classroom, you would say staff person A, staff person B, if you're lucky to have a staff person C, a staff person C. You would say what are the adults responsible for during that time. During arrival, staff person A is going to make sure that they're at the door, they're greeting the families, they're greeting the children. Staff person B is over by the cubbies helping children put their backpacks away. Staff person C is already getting the tables ready for breakfast, ready to receive the children.

You can imagine there's a really great flow. All the adults know where they need to be. All the children and families are being attended to. Then at breakfast time, rather than saying, "You sit there. No, you sit there. No, you sit there. No, no, I'll sit over here. " Instead of spending our time doing that, I know I'm at the red table. That means I go to the red table, I support the children at the red table, I engage with the children at the red table, etcetera. Then I also know that I'm the one that's going to signal the transitions. I've got my bubbles ready. I'm ready to do that. Then staff person B knows they're going to clean up the breakfast tables. Staff person C knows they're helping with transitions.

You can read the rest of that chart on your own. But this is just such a great way to help classrooms run smoothly. You could also imagine that if you're the lead teacher, and you're teaching assistant is out, or your co-teacher is out, where you're going to need to kind of get support and maybe the director comes into support for a little bit, or the manager comes in and you can say, "Could you play the role of staff person B today?" They can look because these are posted, and they can look and see.

The other thing I would say is that in my classroom we would rotate these. The other thing that's great about this is that I would always say if you are in charge of Zone 1, Zone 2, Zone 3, you also at the end of the day, you are responsible for cleaning up Zone 1 and making sure that Zone 1 was ready for the next day. All the paints were refilled, and refreshed, and the dramatic play area had the clothes taken out of the refrigerator and put into the armoire, whatever it was that you had. Anyways, it's just a great way to kind help people organize themselves.

Saameh: I really love this scale because, as we know in the classroom, so many unexpected things happen. This is a way of things we do have control over we can, I always say the beautiful chaos can happen when we have some structure. I think that's really ...

Gail: Oh my gosh, Saameh is dropping so many things on us that we're ...

Saameh: A little bit of poetry for you all.

Virginia: I just love it.

Gail: But the structure allows that kind of beautiful chaos and fun, engaged learning. If we don't have that structure, it's really hard to follow a child's lead in a project because we're dealing with all kinds of other things.

Saameh: Absolutely.

Gail: I love that. Then here we just have kind of tips for zoning. If I'm zoning in an area, I make sure that I position myself where I can see all the children. That way I can scan, which is the other part, and then practice talking to the other teachers and saying, "You know, here come Jordan. I think he's really headed to that sand and water table, Virginia." I know you're going to be ready to support. That's the way that we would do the zoning. Now we're going to hear from Teacher Whitney talk about the benefits of zoning.

[Video begins]

Whitney: A zoning plan is plan for supervision of children. Basically, you would divide the space, or the activities depending on what your layout looks like into certain areas. Then you would assign staff people to those areas. In our classroom, we decided to do a zoning plan because we have a very large space. We have lots of little nooks and crannies that can be difficult for supervision. It just made sense for us to develop a plan that addressed all of those.

The other part of it is that we wanted to make sure that we were rotating staff, and that staff were getting to see all areas of the classroom, and all children. It can be really easy to fall into patterns just like children do in regards to our behavior in the classroom. Having the zoning assignments gave everyone a little bit more purpose. Not only are they seeing other parts of the room, they're getting experience with supervising other parts of the room, they're also taking ownership of that area a little bit more because they realize, oh I am here in Zone 2. I am responsible for all of these things. It empowers everybody a little bit.

[Video ends]

Gail: Love that Teacher Whitney.

Saameh: Great tips, Teacher Whitney. Tip number four is to figure out a routine to ensure the environment is ready for child engagement before children arrive. I really love how all of these tips kind of work together and overlap. That's the point. These tips can support each other to support our well-oiled machine, as you put it. This means having materials prepared and easy to access, the paints refreshed, the dramatic play area looking ready for fun, and a science center ready for experiments as we can see in this photo here.

As we think about in advance of children arriving, we can also ensure that any modifications or adaptations a child needs are ready, and this is a really important one, that are included already in the activity. For example, if small group time will involve scissors, the pair of adaptive scissors for a child with a fine motor delay is available and ready. This allows the child to engage right way with their peers without any kind of pause. This can increase the child's engagement from the get go. The care and prep of learning areas or zones can be entered into the staff chart, that Gail was just talking about, which is linked in your Viewer's Guide as well.

Another way to help prepare the environment for engagement is to provide some visual reminders of expected behaviors, which you can also find in your Viewer's Guide. A wealth of

resources. Here we have some examples of visuals for rules and routines. You can see on the photo on the left, there are visuals of the steps for getting ready to go outside, really simple chronological order. In the top right photo, there are visuals for ideas of what children can do while they're waiting. Children can sing A, B, C's, count. That would be a great place to bring out that counting chart that Gail was talking about earlier, again laminated. Another excuse to laminate something. Sing, "Wheels on the Bus," there are so many great ideas there. The last photo is a picture of a first then visual support. First, a picture of a child playing with blocks, then a picture of a shelf where the blocks are put away. Supporting a child in knowing that when we're done with this, this is where you can put it away.

Now, let's see some examples of visual support for play. On the left, there is a visual of a mealtime place setting in the dramatic play area. In the middle picture, we see there's a picture of a building providing ideas, and inspirations, really a provocation for building in the block area. What can you build? This is an idea. That can lead to so many other things. The last photo shows the number of children that can play in the toys and games area at a time. The child can actually physically take their stick and add their name to the area when joining. It's a great way because if that area is already full, there's an indication, a teacher doesn't need to get involved and come in and say, "Hey!" The child, again, that agency of saying, "Hey, I know this area is full and I'm going to make another choice now." Really supporting that independence as well.

Gail: I love that. The more things that the environment can do, frees the teacher up to be able to individualize and support. I just love that so much.

Virginia: Using the environment as a third teacher almost, really helping you, kind of, with those environmental supports.

Gail: That is very key, and it takes prevention to do that, right, like thinking ahead in advance. I know we've talked a lot about supporting transitions, but visual supports can also be used to support transitions. Let's also say that visual supports might not help every child. Multiple modalities really are more inclusive. We might have visual supports, we might also use auditory cues, we might use a gentle physical guidance to help support a child with a transition. But here's one way that visual supports could be used, and that is quite simply spaces on the floor. I think we've had our fill of visual supports in this time of COVID. We've seen social distancing, lots of visual reminders of how to do transitions and be near each other safely. Here's the same thing.

Children know where they can stand, they have their own space there, and knowing where I stand can reduce some anxiety. I don't have to push, and shove, and get into your space, and get into your bubble. I would tell children that everybody has a little bubble, and that's their bubble. I did have one child that used to always jump in and say, "I'm in Virginia's bubble." But these kind of visual spaces can really help a child to understand where bubbles are and where bubbles aren't. But it just provides just more information about expectant behavior, and that always is helpful. We are going to watch some teachers talk about how they use visual supports to support young children. Keep those comments coming in Q&A too.

[Video begins]

Teacher 1: A lot of our visuals are signs. We have signs put up, like I can just hold a sign up and they'll see a kid sitting crisscross-applesauce and they know exactly what to do.

Teacher 2: We have large group visuals. The bigger poster size visuals, the whole paper-size visuals. Then we have some visuals for individuals in our classroom. The smaller one. For example, we may have a schedule for some students, individual schedules, so they'll have their own schedules showing them, OK, now we're going to small group. There will be a picture of four kids in a small group. Now we're going to large group. They'll see sitting in a circle.

Teacher 1: It's a sign to remind them of the rules without actually having to state them, so they can stop of a minute and think, "Hm, what does this mean?" Then they can show us that they know what that rule is without us actually having to repeat it. It gives them time to think and follow through.

Teacher 2: When we do our group transitions, we do lots of visuals. We would have a large chart visual showing them what they expectation is, what we want them to do. This is what it should look like. Then we have those individual visuals for some students. We would give the instructions to the entire class, and then we would reiterate those instructions for certain individuals during that time.

Teacher 1: Our tip is for support for borders. Because some of our kids like to flip around. We would like for them to have room to move and flip, or whatever, without actually hurting another kid. It gives them space and room, and not them make them feel as confined.

Teacher 2: They love to move. More of them are attentive when they're moving. Giving them their own individual space to move in is it helps them a lot in helping them focus during group activities.

[Video ends]

Virginia: All right, such great tips. I love that providing a border and space for children to flip, and move, and just do what they need to do. Now we're going to move on to tip number three. You are experienced educators that already know this, but tip number three is to get to know the children and families even before the program begins. We can do this by having open houses, curriculum nights, classroom visits, which again, you already probably do. You can also do an "All about me" survey. There's one in your Viewer's Guide. We can have home visits. Really incorporate children's interest from day one. These pre-visits and knowledge of children's interests and concerns can really help ease separation anxiety for children and families.

Now, let's hear from Dr. Kathleen Meeker about the importance of getting to know children from the very beginning, children and families from the very beginning.

[Video begins]

Dr. Kathleen Meeker: Families are a key member of the team and they're a key member of the team from the very beginning. I think the best advice to educators is to work really hard on investing in relationships with families from the very beginning, from the first time you meet a family, and the first day a child comes to your program, or your homecare provider, and the first time they come to your home, spend the time getting to know that family, getting to know

the family's expectations for you, and their expectations for their child, how they interact with their child, how their child responds, what their child likes, what their child doesn't like at home. Kind of what they like to do with their child. As you get to know some of those things, you get a feel for them family, you get a feel for the child, and it helps you be more responsive to the child when they're in your care. It helps build the relationship with the family that's built on the positive from the very beginning.

[Video ends]

Saameh: So important to have that kind of foundation already set going into the year. Tip number two is to be thinking in advance about how you will encourage children's learning behavior. Think about your go to ways of encouraging children – a smile, a thumbs up, a high-five. Also, plan to remind yourself to encourage every child in the program. Sometimes left to our own devices we might unintentionally provide a lot of positive attention to some children in our class, and less to others. I mean, I think unintentional is the keyword, because we never obviously want to do that. It's just, it's a human behavior and we do need to be highly intentional so that we can avoid doing that.

To avoid our implicit biases getting in the way of good practice, we can create a chart, or a quick reflection at the end of the day to consider if every child's experience was positive. Do you have – we would love to hear, do you have ways to remind yourself to encourage each child and to pay more attention to the positive? We'd love to hear about it in the Q&A.

Virginia: Thanks, Saameh. It's important, really to think about the different types of behavior and how we might also respond. Think now about typically challenging behaviors that you experience, and think about what you want to see instead. For example, walking instead of running. Now write down that positive opposite and think of how you might provide that behavior specific encouragement. For example, Jackson is using his walking feet. You could even post this around the room and share it with classroom volunteers, because sometimes when you're in the mix of things, it's easy to forget, but if you have it posted visually, just quick on your wall, it's a great quick reminder.

Then also, you can think of fun ways that you can encourage appropriate learning behaviors. In addition to verbal encouragements, such as "Thank you for taking care of our classroom." And high-fives. We can add – we can provide more visuals like add a puff ball to the puff jar when you share a warm fuzzy feeling or a gumball to the gumball machine.

Then you can have a special celebration with families when the children have completed the task. Let us know what fun ways you have, or have you seen as classroom enforcers. Enter these into the Q&A and we'll be sure to share them out with other people as well. And Gail ...

Gail: Well, I might have just dropped my mic, apologies if you can't hear me so well. Sorry about that. I did. I brought ... I couldn't help myself. I brought one of my favorites. This is a – I don't know if people can see it – this our little friendship bracelet jar. These are just those potholder loops that you can get, craft loops that you can get a ton of in a bag, and we would challenge ourselves as teaching teams. We'd all take a handful and put them in our pockets, especially during outside time when we tended maybe less to attend to those positive opposites like you said, and we'd be like, "Stop running. Stop going down the slide the other way," whatever.

We'd challenge ourselves to find children doing the right thing and we would give them a little friendship loop. Then they could wear these around. Then when they came in from outside, they'd just drop them in the jar. When the jar got to be full, we had a fun, special celebration with their families as well. Kind of a fun thing. I just had to bring it because I love that.

Saameh: I love that. Such a good idea.

Gail: I love that I do a positive opposites. What do I want to see instead, and that's what I'm going to attend to. We should know that when we attend to what we want to see instead, we're going to see more of that, which is great.

Saameh: So true. We're manifesting it, really.

Gail: We absolutely are. OK, oh my gosh we did it. We're to the number one tip of our ten tips, our countdown. Thank you for hanging with us for our special longer addition. But our number one tip has got to be to take care of yourself as an educator, as a home visitor, whatever role it is that you have, working with children and families is hard work because it is heart work. It takes so much out of you. We want to make sure that you are restoring and nurturing yourself.

Now, this is in quotes, and I have to say that this is something I've said myself, maybe you have said this yourself as well. But I know that the difference between my more effective teaching moments and my less affective, or my ineffective moments, weren't because I all of sudden forgot what evidence-based practices were, or forgot about having a particular schedule, it really was because I wasn't feeling well myself that day.

Maybe I had a fight and didn't have strategies to regulate my emotions before I came into the classroom, maybe I didn't get a goodnight's sleep, maybe I didn't eat great, I skipped breakfast. All of these things we know that it's really hard to help support other children, other humans, when we're not feeling well ourselves, when we're not feeling super nourished.

We always want to end our Teacher Time by making sure that we give you some stress buster tips that you can use. That is because we know it is a human tendency what we call the "negativity bias." It's actually how we've survived all these thousands of years is actually with this negativity bias. That means that bad things, bad experiences stick like Velcro, and the good that happen just slip away like Teflon. We know though that if we hold onto the bad things our lives are shorter, we don't feel physically well, we don't have as positive of relationships. That's probably why also don't feel very well. It's really hard to do our work supporting children and families when we're not feeling well ourselves. But because this is the bias that's built into us, we need to work extra hard to get those good things to stick and to stick with us.

Our tip today is one you've probably heard before, but I think it never hurts to remind ourselves is about the power of gratitude. Gratitude is incredibly well researched, which people may or may not know. There's been entire books written on the research behind having gratitude and expressing gratitude. We know that people feel physically better when people tend to feel healthier, happier, more positive about the relationships they have. We actually know they heal faster from being sick when they have experience gratitude. That is our tip today is no matter where you are, no matter what's going on, can you find one thing to be grateful for and express that and bring that to your mind. That is our tip for you.

Virginia: Thank you so much, Gail. It really is. It's a great way to start the day, end the day, in the middle of the day. A routine of gratitude is a personal practice but is also when that you can include in our work with children really. We can develop gratitude circles, and class journals. That's a great way, again, to start or end your day.

Gail: My gosh, I love that. Like a gratitude circle at the end of the day. Children just going around and saying what they're grateful for.

Saameh: Absolutely. Such a great idea and so important as well. Last, but certainly not least, we want to take a moment of sincere gratitude and appreciation to thank all of you for all that you do. And the important role you play in the lives and the futures of Head Start children and families. We hope these tips have been helpful. Now, we are ready to take some questions. Let's see. Enter your questions into the Q&A box.

Gail: Yes, we're looking – if you see us looking at our computers, we're reading your questions now. If you have any questions, please enter those. If we don't get to them, you will definitely see them posted over in MyPeers. We know we have great Q&A support too. Maybe all of your questions have been answered. If you have some feedback to give us, we'd love to get some feedback. How did you experience these ten tips? How did you experience our live background? Anything, it's full game for you.

Let's see here. I see some questions are coming in. Oh, great. Where would we find ... good, I know the answer to this one, Laurie. I'm so glad you asked. You can get this episode and archived episodes on DTL PUSHPLAY. It's a really great little resource for you. We have a slide with that URL in it. So sorry, the same time.

Saameh: We're both on top of it.

Gail: That's right. There you go. That's the PUSHPLAY. You can find this. You can listen to it. You can share it with your peers.

Virginia: There's a great question here, Gail, from a participant, "How do we support children who don't want to follow the rules?" That's a great question.

Gail: Well, that is a really great question. I think it might be that they aren't sure how to follow the rules. It might not be that they intentionally don't want to. But it might be that they're not sure how. It might be that they have learned to get some time and attention from other by breaking the rules. I think you want to be thoughtful, again here's where prevention helps. What are the rules stated positively, involve children and engage them in helping to – and in fact, I might – the child that is feeling like they don't want to follow the rules, I might actually take a picture of them following the rules and have them be kind of literally the poster child for following that rule. I can say, "Oh, look making sure to use our walking feet, like Jacob in this picture. Jacob is using the walking feet." As an example. Then really, really, really being intentional about catching the child when they are following that rule. If they maybe aren't, I'm paying attention to the children that are following the rules, maybe a gentle reminder. But what else would you say about that one? That's a great question.

Saameh: Yes. Go ahead.

Virginia: Well, I was just looking at this jar and I was like, what a fun way to maybe whatever it is, the child might be having difficulty, but if there's a bracelet you can earn, or just commenting from their own when they do follow the rules, or maybe their really good friend, or peer in the room is following the rules, and just encouraging them that way.

Saameh: I think something we touched upon on was really supporting the learning community, really being a community in that we are having the children support us, we're supporting the children, and kind of supporting us in creating the rules, as a community. There's buy in there when everybody's voices are in the roles and have class norms is another way to put it maybe. Something that we used to call it was the agreement or peace agreement. I remember that.

Gail: Oh, I love that.

Saameh: Each child would put their handprint as like a signature around it and that sort of – each child is kind of taking ownership of the rules as well. That might be a helpful way.

Gail: I just swallowed something the wrong way. I know you're sitting close to me. I just swallowed something the wrong way. I love that. The peace agreements. Because it makes me think that the children might also help each other follow the rules when you do it that way.

Saameh: Absolutely.

Gail: Yeah. Any other questions that are coming in? Getting some thank yous, we love that.

Virginia: Some timely. Saying, thank you so much. This is perfect timing. We love to hear that.

Gail: Yes, thank you. Thank you. Thanks for being here with this. Acknowledging good behavior, is not so good behavior still important to find yourself, yes. Constantly kind of acknowledging, reinforcing, supporting that behavior. How do you help a child share? This is such a good question too.

A great time for me to tell you that we are going to be focusing on social and emotional skills on preventing challenge and behavior throughout our entire year of Teacher Time. If you don't get some answers right now, you also please tune in throughout the year because we'll go deep on these.

But I think the one about teaching a child to share is, there's so many strategies. One is that we can have a lot of the same thing in a classroom, so that children maybe start out developmentally not having to share, but they could have something that's very similar. The next thing might be that we are in role play. What does it look like to share? Really reinforce, like "Wow, you're being such a great friend for sharing!" We can do things where a child who is really good at sharing is paired up with a child who might need some more support by doing some buddy days. Where it's buddy playday and you play with a buddy. I'm going to intentionally pair up maybe a child that is not – you're both good at sharing, but let's say Virginia has a hard time and Saameh is like my social sharing star, and I pair them up together so that they can model and learn from each other. Some strategies there. Do you have other great strategies for helping support children with sharing?

Saameh: When I hear that, the first thing I hear about are sand timers. We talked about sand timers.

Gail: Yes.

Saameh: But I mean, I've seen them work like a charm. Because having that physical thing of, "When this runs out then it's my turn," is just so supportive. Again, the teacher is out of the picture. The children are working on it together and they have this third-party sand timer that's supporting them in this. I've seen it work really like a charm. I'm a huge fan of those.

Virginia: Absolutely. You just made me think about, Saameh, too, that chart that Gail, you, were showing with the computers, you could do something like that. When my turn is done, you can have it. I will give you the toy, or the card, or whatever it is. That visual support is just so, so helpful.

Saameh: So helpful.

Gail: Debra Brown in our Q&A is saying something as simple as a high-five each time they share with each other, exactly.

Virginia: Yeah.

Gail: You've got it, Debra. Like catching them and reinforcing it, and even if it was just for a moment they share like, "Wow, that's great sharing!" I just I love that. Or even just like, "Great job." High-fiving them. That is so good.

Let's see here. We have some people are concerned about rewards not working the long run. One of my favorite sayings is, "Never give a naked sticker." The idea behind that – seems kind of silly, but the idea behind that is that the reward, or this kind of tangible reward might be something that I use initially because I'm asking a child to do something that's really hard for them. That they might not feel internally motivated to do just yet, or intrinsically motivated. Maybe it takes a sticker of their favorite character or something that gets them excited at first. But I never give a naked sticker. Meaning that I'm also providing some social explanation, or reinforcement for that, like saying, like, "You know what? When you shared ... " and I might be giving that sticker, "But when you shared, I saw Saameh's face really brighten up and smile. That really made Saameh feel happy. How did that make you feel?" I'm also bringing out some intrinsically motivating pieces. Yes, rewards given without any kind of social support around them or explanation might not work in the long run, but parrot and it might.

Saameh: I really loved how you named it, Gail. Naming it so children understand why they're getting a reward. That's a natural consequence. Then you're doing things that are positive and helpful, positive and helpful things happen.

Gail: Very good. Positive and helpful. Positive and helpful things happen. I love that. Somebody says it's not the reward, it's the moment. I absolutely agree. Being both is great.

Wait, we're getting such great conversations and we're hoping that these conversations continue over in MyPeers. We will see you there with additional questions and answers. If you've got pictures you can share of things that you've done in classrooms, or seen in classrooms, again, not probably with children in them, but like we've done so much about the environment. If you can send some pictures about your environment in MyPeers. If you could submit some pictures of your visuals. If you want those featured on the next Teacher Time let us know, because we will make sure to bring those into the next Teacher Time. This is our time

together. It's a circle time for teachers. It's time for us to share ideas, and tips, and tricks. Thank you so much. Thank you to my two incredible cohosts.

Virginia: Thank you.

Gail: This was a ton of fun.

Saameh: Thank you.

Gail: Thank you to our producers, Ryan and Dougal right there in the back, our Q&A support. They have flying fingers I can see. I can't believe how quickly they can respond. We are excited for our next Teacher Time. Remember, we alternate those. Sometimes it's infants and toddlers, sometimes it's preschool. Tune in to the one that works best for you or for all of them. We'd love to see you there. OK.

Virginia: Thank you.

Gail: Signing off. Bye, everyone. Have a great day