

# Supportive Transitions for Toddlers

## Moving to the Preschool Room

When moving children into different age groupings in the Center, we believe it is very important to preserve the relationships that have been established between the child/caregiver and the parent/caregiver as much as possible. Because the caregivers and children develop such a close bond, it can sometimes be difficult when the child moves on to the next developmental age group. However, the beauty of a small sized center is that the children and parents get to meet all of the other children and caregivers throughout the course of a normal day. Therefore, when it comes time to move on to the next age group, many new relationships have already been formed.

It is important to know that children learn best when they feel safe and can trust the adults who care for them (NAEYC 2008). Building a trusting relationship between a child and his/her caregiver can take time. However, caregivers and families can help young children by responding sensitively to them during transitions. Planning ahead can reduce the negative impact of transitions.

### **Procedures**

At Kinder House, our caregivers help to prepare children and families for Preschool Room Transition in a variety of ways:

1. Staff in the Toddler Room will complete the Ages and Stages Developmental Checklist at 30 months (2.5 years) to determine the child's level of development. If the outcome of the checklist is satisfactory - there aren't any concerns, and the child is potty trained (child is in final stages – not wearing diapers/pull-ups for the majority of the day) the child will be eligible for transition to the Preschool Room.
2. At this time, the Director and Staff will schedule a conference with the family to determine how the family feels about the upcoming changes. The Preschool Room Teacher will have the opportunity to spend some time with the Parents and Child. Parents will be encouraged to share information, either verbally or by completing a brief questionnaire developed by the Teacher. Parents will also be encouraged to visit the room as well.
3. During a scheduled Staff Meeting, the Toddler Room Teacher will share important information from the child's file (allergies/fears), child's portfolio, favorite activities, and caregiving strategies that seemed to work best for the child.
4. Both Teachers will plan for the child to make a series of visits to the Preschool Room. The first visit should be short, and subsequent visits can be a bit longer. The child may continue in "Transition" until he/she is comfortable to remain in the room on a full-time basis. During this time, the child's name will appear on both attendance sheets. Both Staff are responsible for ensuring the child is signed in/out when the child enters/exits the perspective playroom.