



DEALING WITH CHANGE

Most of us, and especially children, prefer some level of 'sameness' in our lives.

Change - How do you help your child to cope with it?

Most of us, and especially children, prefer some level of 'sameness' in our lives. However, we live in a constantly changing world. Consequently as responsible parents it is important to prepare our children to cope with change. Change is inevitable but it is also important for growth.

Change might include:

- o A friend moving
- o New teacher or new friends
- o Moving house
- o Separation or divorce of parents
- o Joining school after holiday break
- o A new baby in the family
- o A parent taking a new job or losing a job
- o Adopting a different routine or schedule

Sometimes we cannot shelter our children from these changes, so how then can we help them cope?

- **Give them warning:** Like adults, no child responds well to a sudden change. If you can talk through changes early, it will give them ample opportunity to absorb the information and process the change. However some changes can be unexpected, but this teaches your child to also practice skills in adapting themselves to a new and unpredictable situations.
- **Be prepared to answer their questions :** You can create an environment for your child in which they feel safe to ask you about changes that they are facing. This will help them process change and receive answers from those they most trust, their primary caregivers.
- **Keep to routines as much as possible :** You can try not to change everything at once because children respond really well to structure and this helps them feel secure. For example, if your family is moving house, it is ideal to keep daily routine as consistent as possible.
- **Let them grieve:** When any of us experience a change such as a new job, new house or any kind of change in life, we leave something behind us. Let your children talk about what they miss and avoid pointing out all the positive things about the new change – instead, let them express their sadness or mourn.
- **Be prepared for struggle** – Many children do not adjust to changes immediately, there might be tears and emotional meltdowns followed by some parental guilt. You can expect that it can take time for some children to cope with changes.

Although change can be anxiety-provoking, parent support can go a long way in helping and preparing your child to build tolerance and resilience when changes occur.

If you would like to know what we do at THAC to support our Year 6 students with their transition to Senior School, watch this space.

Lydia Ghaly

Psychologist - Junior School
