

EDITORIAL

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In this sixth volume of the *International Journal of Transitions in Childhood*, two papers report on children's experiences of transition as they move from familiar to new environments within a setting, and between settings: one giving voice to the perspective of adults and the other to the perspective of children. Both papers identify the contribution of individual and contextual characteristics to children's transitions. A notable feature of this journal is the inclusion of practitioner articles to demonstrate the application of research and theory in practice, and in the current volume, the development and implementation of a tool in Ireland for transferring information about children as they move from preschool to primary school is reported. Each paper makes a valuable contribution to understandings and practice around children's transitions.

Christine O'Farrelly and Eilis Hennessy report an investigation in Ireland into the perspectives of early childhood care and education (ECEC) managers on the transitions children make between age groups within long day ECEC settings. Through analyses of interview data and in considering the challenges for children, the authors found that the moves involve considerable demands on children and their emotional and behavioural well-being as they negotiate different micro-communities. A range of factors that supported or 'got in the way of' smooth transitions were identified by the managers. The authors conclude that rather than a single theoretical approach to supporting children's transitions, an eclectic theoretical approach is applied to account for the socio-cultural dimensions of children's experiences. The complexity of transitions is summarised in a very helpful diagram in the paper.

The beliefs, expectations and experiences of three children in Sweden were investigated by Helena Ackesjö as they made a series of 'border crossings' from preschool, to the preschool class (the non-compulsory school year prior to Grade 1), to Grade 1. Drawing on rich narrative examples, the paper describes how children construct and mark borders between the familiar as well as the new, and how the construction of borders and identities are intertwined. Ackesjö found that children distanced themselves from the familiar as they 'regrouped their relationships and communities to adapt to the new'. As with the paper by O'Farrelly and Hennessy, this paper illustrates that transitions can be difficult, and adaption is related to personal and contextual factors including how children interpret the new environment.

The practitioner article by Mary O'Kane and Nóirín Hayes documents the processes involved in developing and implementing the Child Snapshot – a tool for transferring written information about each child from preschool to school settings in Ireland. The paper also reports evaluations of the development process and of the tool itself. While focusing on improving outcomes for children in disadvantaged communities, the use of the tool has application to the community as whole.

Together these papers remind us of the highlight the complexity of transitions and the systems in which they are embedded, and the importance of collaborative and mutual relationships between all those involved in children's transition to school.