

## Speaker Notes

Title of Presentation: Challenges of Changing Schools

**Page 1 – NOTE: You may want to start with an ice breaker such as one of the ones listed below before you start the presentation. Or, you may use one of your own.**

**ICE BREAKER:** Have Group members introduce themselves using their name and a word that starts with the same letter as their name to describe them, for example, "I'm Marvelous Mary". The leader can begin the process (to model) and end the process (to remember everyone's name). Have everyone go around the circle and state your name and the names of those who have gone before them.

**ICE BREAKER: CIRCLE ROLL OR TOSS**

For circle roll, have the children sit in a circle. Call a child's name and roll the ball to that child. Then that child calls out another child's name and rolls the ball to them. For circle toss, have the children stand in a circle. Follow the same procedure as above, but have them toss a small, light weight ball or a bean bag back and forth.

**ICE BREAKER:** Have each child tell something about themselves that is true and one thing that is not true and have the others guess which of the facts is true. Example: "My uncle is a doctor, and my favorite color is blue." "I have red pajamas, and I love snakes."

**Page 2 – none.**

**Page 3 – none.**

**Page 4 –** Ask the kids if there are any other concerns they've had about changing schools and if they've changed schools before, how they may have handled the changes in the past?

**Page 5 –** Sometimes our biggest fear can be fear of the unknown. We wonder and worry about what will happen or what a new situation will be like. The truth is that a lot of what we worry about never really happens. Things usually work out for us one way or another. We can do a lot to help things work out for the best. Today we will be learning different things you can do to help with changing schools.

**Page 6 – Talk about the points listed on slide, and then ask children if they can think of any other positives.**

- **You get to make a fresh start:** Even if you had problems at your old school, you get to leave them behind and get a new start.
- **You get to make new friends:** It's nice to stay in touch with old friends, but it's also nice to make new friends too, and it can be exciting to meet and become friends with new kids.
- **You can get involved in new activities:** Your old school may not have had a soccer team or a band. The new school may have lots of new activities you've never had an opportunity to be involved with before.

\*\* Can you think of other positive things?

**Page 7 – NOTE: Ask the participants if they can think of any other tips that might help.**

- **Keep in touch with friends from your old school:** Keeping in touch with old friends can help make the change easier. It's good to have a friend supporting you while you are making the change. Write letters, email, text or call each other. Send cassettes or videos. If possible arrange for a sleep-over or spend a weekend with each other.
- **Talk to your parents:** your parents can sometimes come up with ideas to help that you never even thought about. Besides, it nice to know that you have someone on your side that you can depend on.
- **Call your new school, or ask your parents to call and set up a time to tour the school before your first day:** This way you'll know what the school looks like and how to get around to the cafeteria, the gym and your classrooms. It will be one less "unknown" for you.

- **Go to your school's website and find out as much as you can:** Once again, this will help with the "unknowns"

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- **Smile and be friendly to everyone you meet:** People are much more likely to want to get to know you if you seem like a nice and friendly person.
- **Join clubs or other groups inside and outside of school:** this is a great way to get to know other kids and for them to get to know you. Types of clubs could include boy or girl scouts, chess club, theatre club or group, foreign language clubs such as French, Spanish or German.
- **Participate in sports:** soccer, basketball, tennis, volleyball, etc.
- **Take group classes:** music, art, dance, etc.
- **Spend time at a park or playground:** you can take a pet with you – this sometimes gets other kids interested in coming over and asking you about your pet.
- **Remember, it takes time to make new friends:** close friendships usually don't happen overnight. It takes time to get to know someone.

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- **Be a good listener:** Everyone wants to feel like they've been listened to. It shows you are interested in them and in what they have to say.
- **Be positive when talking to others:** Most people don't like to be around people who complain all the time. Keep a positive attitude when meeting new people.
- **Ask people about themselves:** Asking people about themselves is a good way to get to know them and it shows you're a good listener. You can ask questions like, "who's your favorite band?" "How long have you been at this school?" "What book are you reading?"
- **Accept people as they are:** You can still like people you disagree with. You can't expect that you will think alike and agree on everything, but you can still be friends.
- **Be helpful to others:** It feels nice when someone offers to help you with something. For example: If someone drops their books, you could offer to help pick them up or you could offer to help someone study for an exam.
- **Give complements:** One easy way to start a conversation is to say something nice about to someone. Everyone feels good when they get a complement. Think about how it feels when you get a complement. You could say something like, "I really like your shirt," or "that was a great shot on the basket ball court today in gym class."
- **Decide to take charge:** If you decide that you are going to take steps to make things a little easier and less scary, you can start to feel a little more in control. Feeling in control of things usually helps us feel better. For example: if you are worried that no will sit with you at lunch, make a decision that you will speak to someone in one of your classes, tell them you are new and ask them if you can sit with them. Odds are that they will be happy to have you join them.

**Page 10 –** Some kids get a little nervous when meeting new people. It's OK if you do. You'd be surprised how many other kids feel the same way. These are a few tips that can help. Most of all, don't worry about being nervous – worrying about it too much can make you more nervous. Just accept that you are nervous and tell yourself that it's OK. Then try some of the tips we've talked about.

**NOTE: You may want to introduce a relaxation exercise that they can use in situations where they might be nervous.**

**Page 11 – Be a friend:** there is a saying that goes, "To have friends, you must first be a friend." So, act like a friend to others by following some of the tips listed on these slides. Be helpful, give complements, be a good listener.

**Introduction Exercise: At this point, you may want to ask the children to go introduce themselves to someone in the room that they don't know using some of the tools they have been learning. Ask them**

to also ask the other person what they like to do. Then lead a discussion about their experience and have the children introduce each other to the group and mention one thing the person said they like to do.

**Page 12 - Don't get stressed out if the other kids are ahead of you in their studies and ask for help if you find yourself behind at the new school:**

Not all schools work at the same pace or study the exact same subjects. Your teacher will understand if you and your parents talk to him/her. Your teacher will also appreciate your taking action before your grades are affected. If you find yourself needing extra help with homework and keeping up your grades, both your parents or teachers can assist you. There are also tutors available – sometimes through the school. Check with parents and teachers if you think you need some extra help.

**Join or form a study group:** Getting support from other kids can help. Joining or forming a study group can really help you feel supported, and stay focused on your studies.

**Create a schedule for doing your homework:** It's easy to get over-scheduled with school, extracurricular and family activities. Try to set aside a time each day for homework. Keeping it at the same time each day will get you in a routine. When you have a daily routine, you are more likely to stick with it.

**Page 13** – none.

**Page 14** – none.

**Page 15** – none.

**Page 16** – none.

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