



COMBINED CARE: DEVELOPING YOUR WELCOME PLAN

To ease transitions as short-term children arrive and depart, you may choose to work with CNC Staff to develop a welcoming plan for new and visiting children.

Suggestions:

- Staff can accompany the short-term child and parent directly to the CNC program room and introduce them to the caregivers.
- It is helpful if the registration staff has a copy of the daily routine so s/he can tell the short-term child and parent what to expect when they arrive. This is especially important if a child is visiting during outdoor play activity or physical activity in a separate space.
- You may choose to assign one staff as primary caregiver for short-term children. This caregiver should be chosen based on qualities and skills identified Job Descriptions (in Staffing and Supervision Supporting Resources).
- To welcome a new or short-term child into the program, caregivers might choose to use a 'welcome' song or special activity that is repeated each time a new child arrives.
- You may choose to use a buddy or mentoring type approach that involves pairing the new or short-term child with a well-adjusted child in long-term care. This can be especially helpful if the "buddies" speak the same language.
- Make sure to consider the expected amount of time in care when planning for visiting children. This always requires a certain amount of flexibility to base programming on the child's individual needs and comfort level.

Note: If you choose not to assign a primary caregiver, be sure to have an alternate plan for making sure the short-term child's needs are met and his/her needs don't become secondary to the larger/long-term group.



Welcoming a ST child into Combined Care:

When welcoming a new child into long-term care, it can be helpful to encourage a “warming in” process that allows the child and family members to get to know the teachers and the program gradually, and allows teachers to learn about the child and family members by observing them together.

For short-term children, who simply don’t have the opportunity to transition into care gradually, the “warming in” process has to take place much more quickly and the expected outcome must be different.

TYPE OF CARE	LONG TERM CARE	SHORT TERM CARE
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition into care • Child participates fully • Activities are responsive, educational, and meaningful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the child as comfortable as possible • Distract and entertain the child while parent is participating in a CIC-funded service

A certain amount of planning and preparation is needed to support the successful welcoming and integration of short-term children into combined CNC. All children have different personalities, temperaments and past experiences that will affect how they respond to care. This makes CNC Staff who are good at observing and “reading” children an extremely important part of your team! They will be able to meet short-term children, observe closely and do a quick assessment to determine how to best support the child.

Consider the following three scenarios that describe short-term children and how they might be supported and integrated:

Scenario 1:

Tamir seems to be a sociable, outgoing child. He speaks with the CNC Staff easily and she can see him watching, with interest, what the other children are doing. The caregiver decides to buddy him up with another child who speaks the same language. Tamir quickly and fully engages with the other children and the activity they are doing; joining the group suits his personality. He tells his mom he wants to come back again to play with his new friends.

In this scenario, integration is successful because the CNC Staff took special notice of Tamir’s





personality and he was given an opportunity to ease into the program in a social way that suited him, and engaged with the other children right from the start.

Scenario 2:

Sabrina seems to be a little bit apprehensive when she enters the CNC program. Although she doesn't cry and is not asking for her mother, she is staying close to the front of the room. The CNC Staff thinks Sabrina might need some quiet activity to help ease her into the program for the day. This not only gives Sabrina an activity for her to do, it also gives her time to quietly observe the other children and their activities. The CNC Staff monitors Sabrina in her quiet activity, and after the other children finish their snack, she notices Sabrina tidying her independent activity and join in with another group of girls in parallel play. With support from the CNC Staff and an introduction to the other girls, Sabrina soon joins in and plays with them.

In this scenario, integration is successful because even though Sabrina was really glad to see her mom when she arrived, she did in fact join in and play with the other children and was well entertained and distracted during her time in care.

Scenario 3:

Immediately after being dropped off while her mom attends a one-hour appointment with a Settlement Worker, Li begins to sob and is both upset and disruptive to the other children in the program. The CNC Staff engages Li with an independent activity but continues to play with her for the entire one hour. During this time, Li stopped crying. When her mother returned to pick her up, Li was able to take the activity she was working on at home as a 'take away'.

In this scenario, integration is successful because Li was both distracted and engaged. Although she didn't participate with the other children in group activities, she did engage in quiet play time without crying, and was able to take her activity home with her and a positive memory of her time in care.

These scenarios show some children may seem ready to jump right in and join in with the group while others may feel overwhelmed by the other children and the activities in progress. It is extremely important to take into consideration the individual needs and comfort level of the visiting child.

Best Practice

Have ongoing activities available throughout the session that make it easy for short-term children to join in. This is a good practice for all children regardless of whether they are attending on an ongoing basis, or short-term because it means the children in your care can choose their activity without having to follow a strict schedule.