



FACT SHEET

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Making Changes in Routines

Many children with deafblindness frequently resist change in their routines and for very good reasons. They may be frightened, angry, or refuse to participate in the new activity when they don't know what is expected.

To assist the child in accepting and understanding what will happen next, you can tell the child about the changes in several ways.

1. You can **develop signals** which let them know what to expect. For example, you can have the child smell food being prepared and can touch the child's hand or mouth with a spoon to let them know mealtime is coming. Do this before physically transitioning to the table.
2. You can have the child **carry an object** with them as they move to the next activity. The object should represent that new activity. They will then have time to think about what they will be doing. See the Fact Sheet on [Object Communication](#) for further strategies.
3. Be sure to **introduce new care providers or teachers** to the child, so they know who is working or playing with them at all times. See the Fact Sheet on [How to Interact with Individuals who are Deafblind](#) for further information on introductions.
4. Be sure to **let the child know when they will be receiving medical treatment**. For example, say "The nurse will need to take some blood." while allowing the child to feel the band to be placed on their arm and a gentle poking on their arm or finger.

You cannot prepare the child for every change that might occur. Whenever possible give the child time to prepare for changes to help her feel comfortable and to develop trust.

Adapted from Sternberg-White, S., Chen D., Watts, J., 1992, Developing Social-Emotional Skills, INSITE, Utah State University, Logan, Utah