

# Christine's Chronicles: A Successful Transition

**Christine describes how her son Luke successfully transitioned into a classroom setting this year.**



Christine and Luke

So Luke made it through the transition into his new classroom this year. I was apprehensive, as with any transition, but this one in particular because of his new device. We had a lot of new people to train on the device – a new teacher, his old speech therapist back from maternity leave, and a new OT. And then of course the usual transition concerns of the new classroom, new classmates, and new routines.

We started off transition with a meeting with the new teacher, the speech therapist, and me. They had offered to do a home visit, but I didn't push for that. The speech therapist had done a home visit earlier that year, and the teacher had actually come to my Inclusion Institute presentation a few months before and saw quite a bit of video of Luke and me at home. I knew their time was precious and wanted us to spend the time talking rather than making the drive out to my house.

Luke had some classroom visits during the summer as well. And the new teacher made an effort to get to know him before the new year started. The first day in the new classroom came. Luke cried that morning at drop-off, but I left the room and watched through the 2-way mirror as the co-teacher (who was one of his teachers last year) stepped right over and engaged him in a favorite play routine. The tears quickly stopped and Luke had a great rest of the day. And Luke had a great next day, and a great rest of the week. The co-teacher and the therapists who knew him well from last year in fact couldn't quite believe the difference in him. Every day I would come in at pick-up and hear another story about how he participated in an activity that he wouldn't have done last year or at least not as enthusiastically.

When a transition goes well, I suppose you can't really pinpoint the reason – good planning, great teachers, a few less children in the classroom, it's still 3 and 4 year olds, but now Luke is one of the older ones – most likely all of the above. And as far as the device goes, we finally had a training session a few weeks after the class had started, and I've been following up with a new little cheat sheet every week for the teachers and therapists to use in the classroom. Everyone has a great attitude about learning it, and figuring out how to say something on the fly, even if Luke has walked away to another activity. And guess what? It's only been a month but I'm already seeing a difference in Luke's language.

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