



Who
is ready for
kindergarten?

Effective Transitions
to Enhance School
Readiness

- Welcome and connect to content and how you can use it
- Recent research & renewed focus: Why we are concerned about Kindergarten transition experiences?
- Conceptualizing effective transition and partnership building
- Sharing ideas of how you are building successful transition experiences

What was your
first day of school
like?





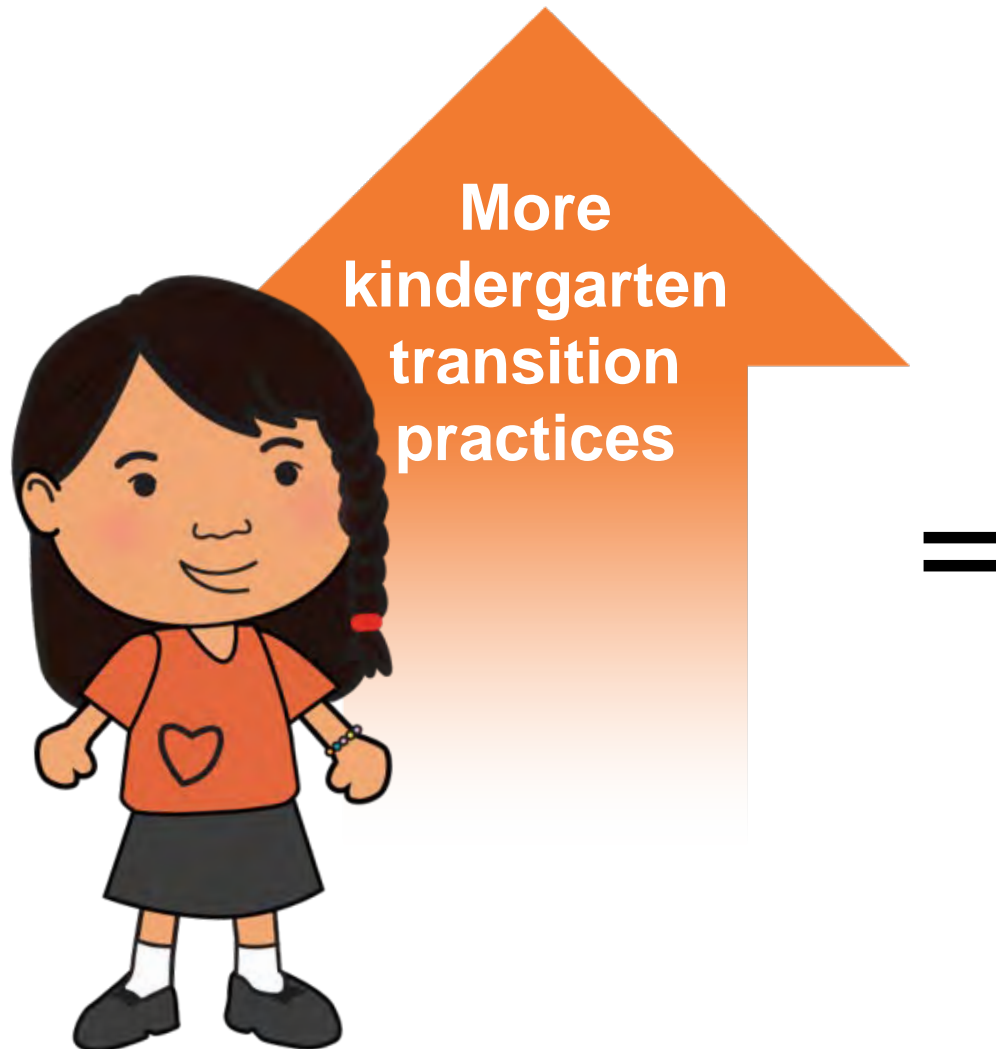
Why we are
concerned about
early transition
experiences

Kindergarten teacher-child relationships predict:

Academic and behavior outcomes through eighth grade, particularly for children with behavior problems in kindergarten.



Transition Activities and Positive Outcomes



At the beginning of kindergarten:

- Greater frustration tolerance
- Better social skills
- Fewer conduct problems
- Fewer learning problems
- More positive approaches to learning

Social Emotional Development in Kindergarten



Social-emotional skills in kindergarten are related to key young adult outcomes:

- Education,
- Employment,
- Criminal activity,
- Substance use, and
- Mental health.

Jones, Greenberg & Crowley, 2015

Transition Practices and School Success

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study

17,212 children, 992 schools

Kindergarten
Transition
Practices



=

Spring
Kindergarten
Academic
Skills



Schulting, Malone, & Dodge, 2005



Kindergarten achievement scores are highly correlated with:

- Earnings at age 27,
- College attendance,
- Home ownership, and
- Retirement savings

Raj Chetty, John N. Friedman, Nathaniel Hilger, Emmanuel Saez, Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach, and Danny Yagan

NBER Working Paper No. 16381 September 2010

It's never too early to support family engagement and transitions to Kindergarten

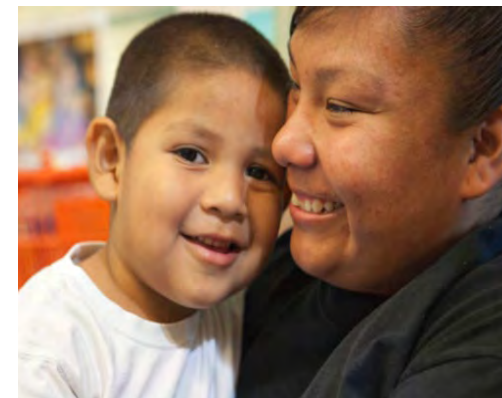
Begin at Birth: Stimulating play interactions between mothers or fathers and their toddlers has been shown to predict children's fifth-grade math and reading abilities.

Support Home-School Connections: Adults who partner to support young children help them develop the skills related to later school success—early language, literacy, attention, and self-regulation.

Create Family Friendly Environments: When ECE programs and schools actively engage families and support family participation in transitions, families show increased involvement during the kindergarten year.

Support Family Wellbeing: ECE programs that engage community partners to offer comprehensive family supports have a better chance of promoting family well being and improving children's readiness for kindergarten.

Engage Parents as Leaders: When families have a real role in decision-making, they know they can make a difference, and their leadership grows.



(Cook, Roggman, & Boyce, 2011; Ayoub, Vallotton, & Mastergeorge, 2011; Schulting et al., 2005; Rouse & Fantuzzo, 2009; Langford & Weisbourd, 1997)

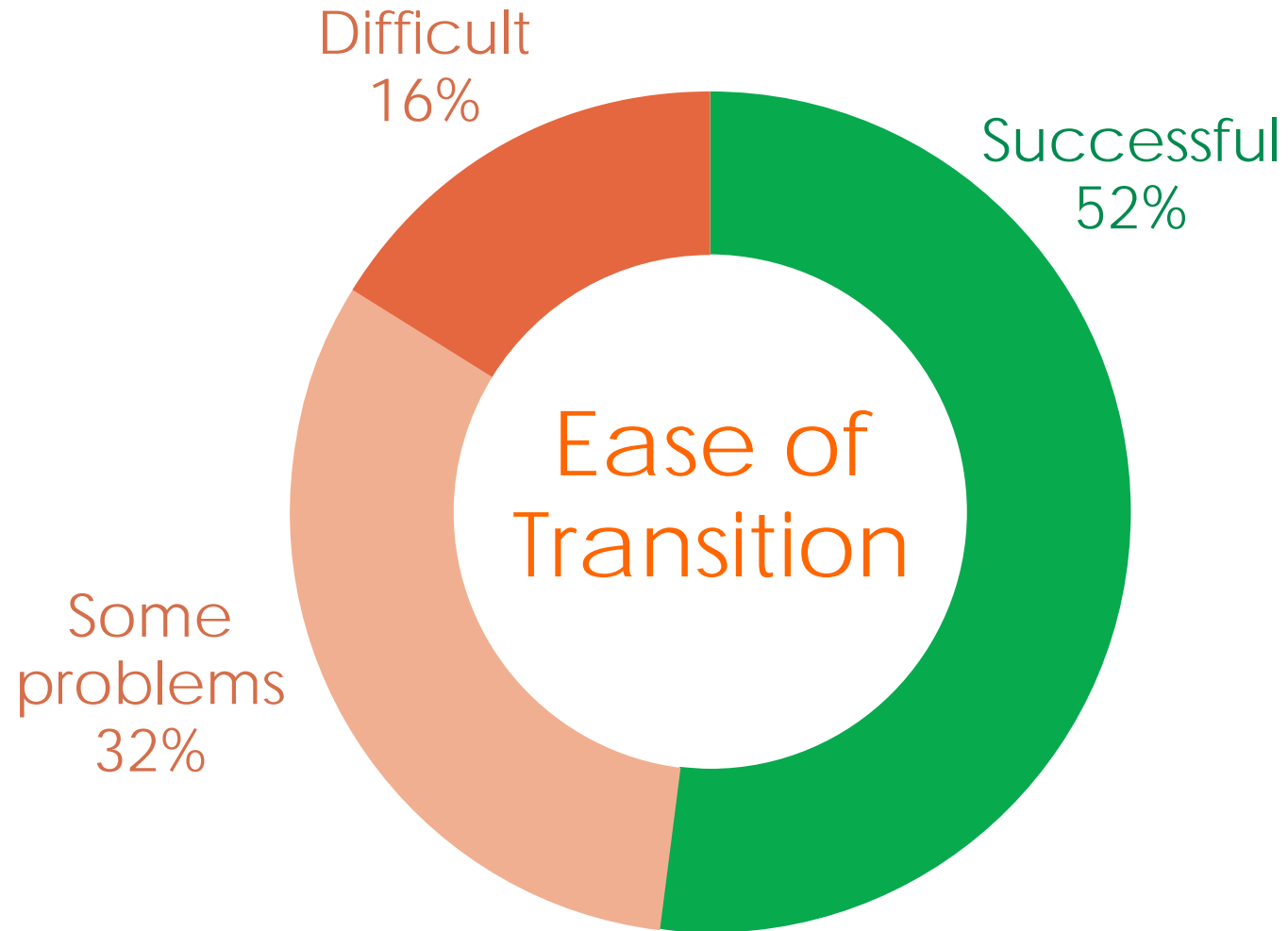
Kindergarten family involvement is associated with:

- More cooperative, self-controlled, and socially engaged children.
- Lower rates of high school dropout, increased on-time high school completion, and higher grade completed.
- Higher achievement in language and math, and higher ratings on peer interactions.

Hamre and Pianta, 2001 and Jerome, et al., 2009



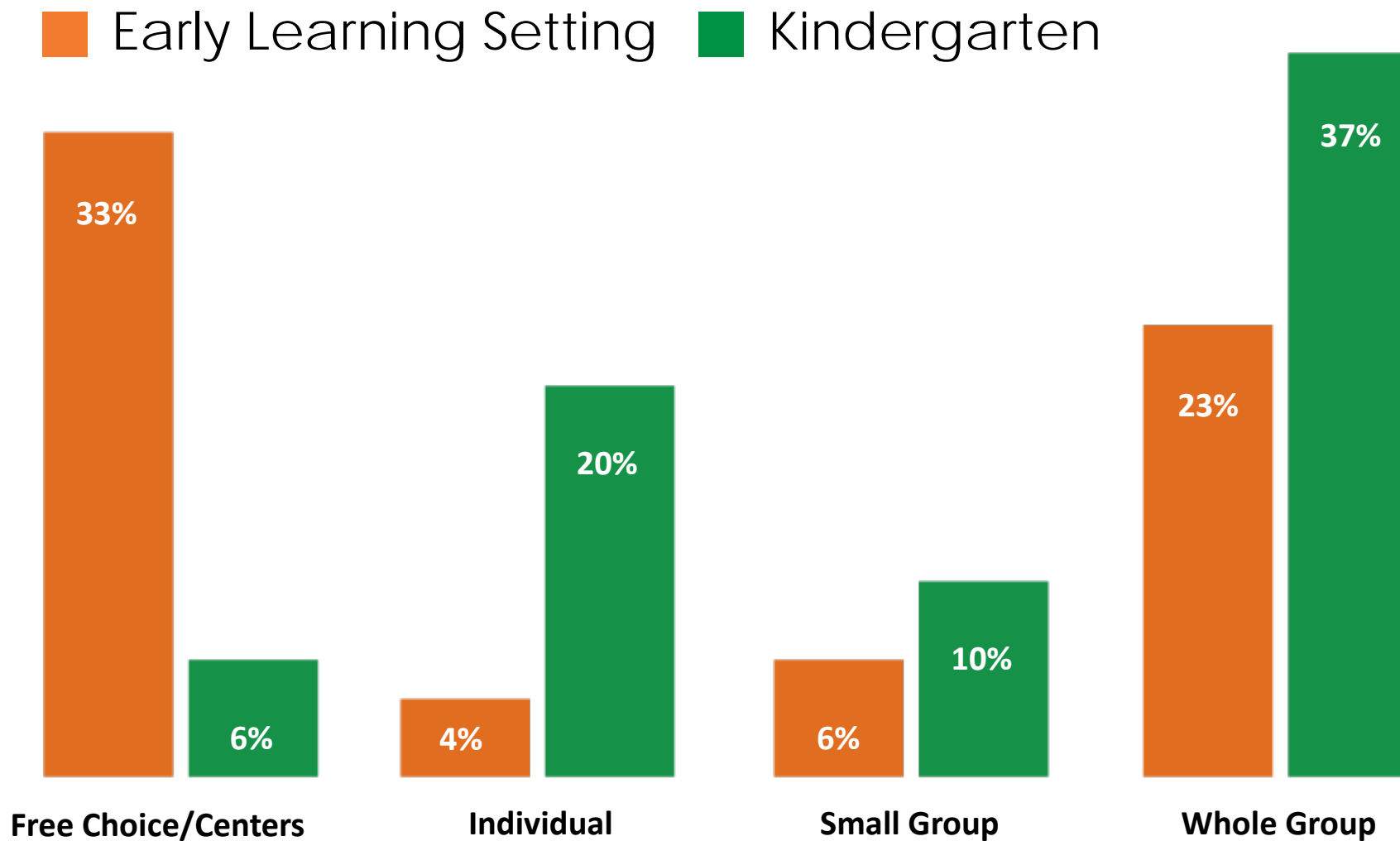
Kindergarten Transitions





The Nature of
Kindergarten
Transition

Preschool vs. Kindergarten



LaParo et al., 2009



[Transitions: From the Children's Perspective](#)

Kindergarten Changes



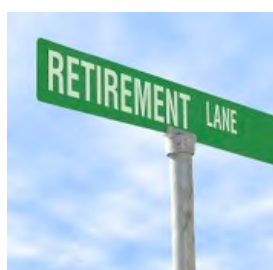
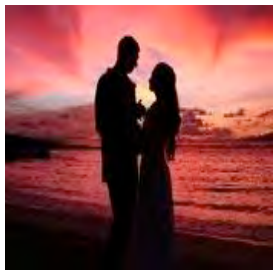
- Changes in academic demands and curricula
- Complexity of social environment
- Less time with teacher(s)
- Fewer direct family connections with the learning setting

Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 2003



Conceptualizing
Effective
Transition

Transitions Across the Lifespan



What creates successful adjustment?

- Information
- Relationships
- Alignment

Transition = Change = Hard

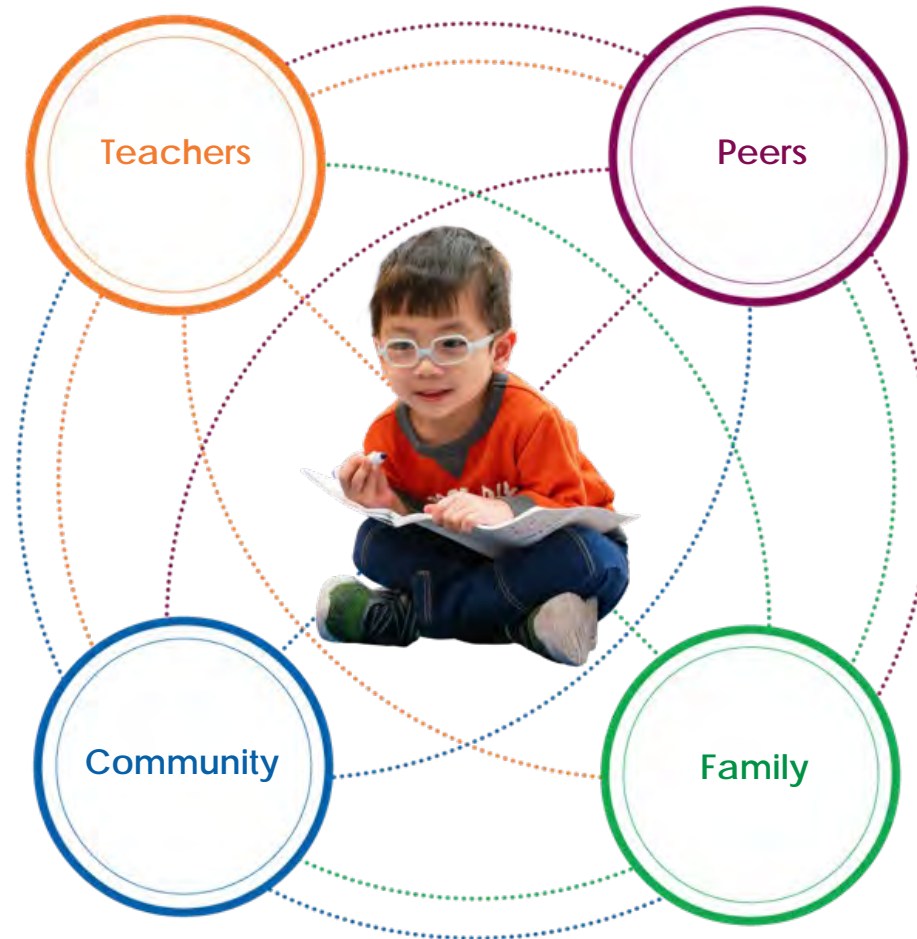
Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 2003

Children need our help to manage these changes.

Inadequate View



When Connections Are The Focus



Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000

Early Experiences ———→ **Kindergarten**

The changing dynamics of these relationships during transitions influence child outcomes.



A dark blue bulletin board with several items pinned to it. At the top left, there is a stack of light blue sticky notes and a single light blue sticky note. To the right of these is a white card with a yellow tab and a red tab. Below these items are two columns of name cards. The left column consists of four red rectangular cards with the names "Diego", "Isaac", "Precious", and "Caleb" written in white. The right column consists of four yellow rectangular cards with the names "Valeria", "Jesse", "Lance", and "Jennifer" written in black. To the right of the yellow cards, there are partially visible yellow cards with the names "Jasmin", "Angel", "Ne", and "Jasmine". At the bottom of the board, there are two more yellow cards with the names "Damian" and "Alexander" written on them. The board is decorated with colorful, wavy borders on the left and right sides.

Transition
Connections

Child–School

To foster children’s familiarity with the classroom setting and people

Family–School

To foster family collaboration and engagement with the school

Program–School

To provide children with stable, high quality classroom experiences

Community–School

To facilitate the transition process within the community



- Positive learning experiences that are developmentally appropriate, high quality, and increase in complexity over time
- Read books about kindergarten
- Visit kindergarten classrooms
- Invite a kindergarten teacher to visit the early learning setting
- Create social stories about going to kindergarten
- Talk about and practice kindergarten routines (line up, bathroom breaks, lunchtime, etc.)

Consistency is Key

Consistency in instructional practice across Head Start and kindergarten settings is associated with children's academic and social-emotional skills development during kindergarten



Mashburn & Yelverton, 2019

- Kindergarten enrollment events
- Jointly hosted curriculum nights
- Summer activity calendar
- Connect families to other families going to the same school
- Head Start parent ambassadors
- Systematic surveys and check-ins to find out how the transition is going and what families found to be helpful





How do you modify transition practices for:

- Children who are dual language learners?
- Children with disabilities?
- Children who are experiencing homelessness or who have experienced other trauma?

- Joint PD for teachers and leaders
- Align curriculum, assessment information
- Visit each other schools/programs
- Data sharing agreements and feedback loops
- Universal enrollment forms
- Principal visit days – Head Start 101





- Kindergarten registration announcements
- Public programs such as libraries, parks, and community centers hosting kindergarten-themed events
- Kindergarten registration support
- Community organizations offering free or low-cost:
 - Meals
 - School supplies
 - Haircuts
 - Physical examinations
 - Language and translation services

A Smooth Transition



When children are a part of a quality transition process, they have an easier time and enjoy:

- Improved academic achievement
- More positive social and emotional competencies and fewer behavioral problems
- Rapidly developing skills

Caspe Lopez & Chattrabhuti, Harvard Family Research Project, March 2015



Leaders Supporting the Transition to Kindergarten

[Leaders Supporting the Transition to Kindergarten](#)

Building Bridges for Children and Families

Information

Relationships

Alignment

Successful
Adjustment



Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 2003

Summary

- **Effective transitions support:**
 - children's social and emotional and academic success
 - family engagement
- **Effective transitions rely on:**
 - Information
 - Relationships
 - Alignment
- **Effective transitions include four key connections:**
 - Child-School
 - Family-School
 - Program-School
 - Community-School





Thank
You