


National Center on
Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

Enhancing Parent-Child Relationships During Virtual Learning and Transitions

March 25, 2021
3-4:30 p.m. ET



1

Lobby Ice Breaker

- Describe a personal or professional transition that you have had to make.
- Were there barriers to overcome?
- What contributed to a successful experience?

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2



3

Meet Your Facilitators

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4



Please Use the Left Side Bar to Ask Questions, Submit Comments, or Download Handouts.



Ask your questions and submit your comments here.

Download handouts from Event Resources.

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5

5

Learning Objectives

- 1
Discuss best practices in supporting positive parent-child relationships
- 2
Use digital tools in supporting positive parent-child relationships
- 3
Learn about virtual strategies for families to support their children's learning in the home and during transitions
- 4
Help families plan for the transition to hybrid or in-person learning

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6

6





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Being in the Moment—
Are We Ready?

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Change is external.
Transition is internal.

—William Bridges

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7

7



High Quality,
Responsive
Transitions

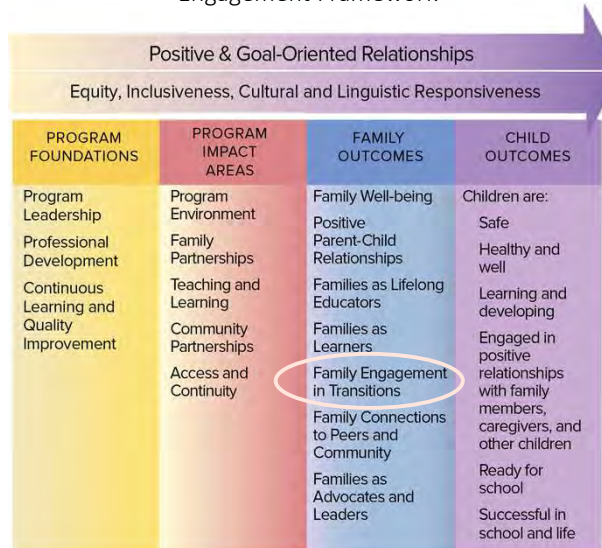
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Family Engagement in Transitions

- Families encourage and advocate for their child’s learning and development as they transition to new learning environments within and between, Early Head Start, Head Start, early childhood services, early elementary grades, and beyond.

Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework



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Transitions Can Be Joyful or Uncertain

- Transitions can be a time of great excitement and joy.
- Transitions may be a time of uncertainty.
- Transitions can highlight losses and separation.
- Collaboration and communication among everyone involved is the most important part of achieving successful and seamless transitions.

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All Transitions Involve Change

- Every transition presents opportunities and challenges.
- Each family is unique and will experience transitions in different ways.
- Early childhood professionals can partner with individual families to determine what supports and strategies will be most effective before, during, and after their child's transition.

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11

11

What Works

Effective transitions that make a difference:

- Are initiated early (prior to kindergarten)
- Are tailored to the cultural, linguistic, and learning needs of individual children and families
- Include activities that staff, families, and community members can use to create supports and foster familiarity across early childhood settings and kindergarten

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12

12



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**Transitions
Across the
Lifespan**

What creates successful adjustment?

- Relationships
- Information
- Alignment

Transition = Change = Hard

Children and their families need our help to manage these changes.

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13

13

Three Key Practices

What creates successful adjustment?

- Relationships
- Information
- Alignment



Successful Adjustment

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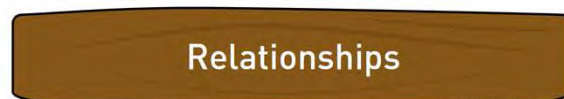
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14



Responsive Transitions—Relationships

- Family strengths.
- Partnering with receiving setting (including elementary schools)
- Positive relationships among staff and administrators



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15

15

Responsive Transitions—Information

- Communicating in home languages
- Sharing data
- Preparing children and families for what to expect



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16

16



Responsive Transitions—Alignment

- Joint virtual professional development
- Transition activities
- Aligning curricula and assessments

Alignment

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17

17

Four Ways Programs
and Schools
Encourage Family
Engagement:
*Create Continuity in
the Transition to
Kindergarten*

Create

- Create family-friendly and welcoming environments.

Promote

- Promote home-school connections to foster parent engagement in learning and classroom experiences.

Engage

- Engage Parents as Leaders.

Support

- Support Family Well-Being by effectively delivering comprehensive services.

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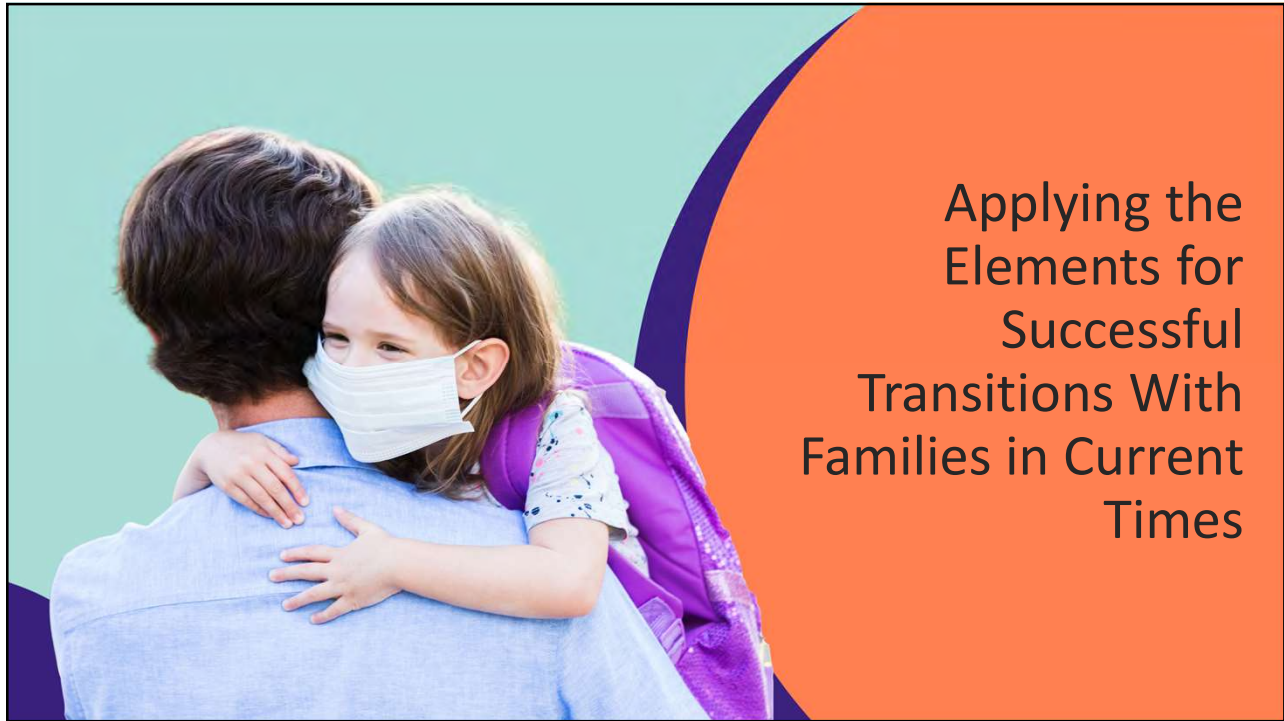
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18



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19

Factors to Consider in COVID-19 Times

- Families and children often have a very different response to the same transition.
- Families' past experiences may affect current transitions.
- Families' transition experiences may be influenced by their culture, languages, and backgrounds.
- Settings may differ and create new demands on the child and family.

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20

20



Introduction Documents

Spanish

Here are some ideas to help support my child when she is frustrated, angry, or sad.
Estas son algunas ideas para apoyar a mi niño cuando esté frustrado, enfadado o triste.

Here are some ideas how to keep my child healthy and safe at school. (For example, are there certain foods and/or activities that your child should avoid because of allergies or other physical concerns?)
Estas son algunas ideas sobre cómo mantener a mi niño saludable y seguro en la escuela. (Por ejemplo, ¿hay ciertos alimentos y/o actividades que su niño debe evitar debido a alergias u otros problemas físicos?)

Teacher's Corner:
Comentarios/Notas del maestro(a)

WakIDS Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills
Introducing Me!
¡Presentándome!

Write Child's Name
Anote el nombre del niño

Please attach a photo or ask your child to draw a picture of him or herself with the family.
Por favor, adjunte una fotografía o pida que su niño haga un dibujo de sí mismo con la familia.

The best way to reach my family is / *La mejor manera de contactar a mi familia es*

The best time to reach my family is / *La mejor hora para contactar a mi familia es*
 ___ morning / de la mañana ___ afternoon / de la tarde
 ___ evening / de la noche ___ weekend / fin de semana

This is the best phone/email to reach us
Este es el número telefónico/correo electrónico más adecuado para encontrarnos

Adapted from:
1. Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, Birth through Third Grade, Department of Early Learning, 2012.
2. Getting to Know My Child: A Guide for My Child's Kindergarten Teacher, National Center for Learning Disabilities.
3. Introducing Me! adapted by University of Washington, Center for Quality Early Learning (CQEL) and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). Last revised May 2013.
Adaptación de:
1. Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, Birth through Third Grade, Departamento de Aprendizaje Temprano, 2012 (Department of Early Learning, 2012).
2. Getting to Know My Child: A Guide for My Child's Kindergarten Teacher, Centro Nacional de discapacidades del Aprendizaje (National Center for Learning Disabilities).
3. Introducing Me! Adaptación por el Centro de Aprendizaje Temprano (University of Washington, Center for Quality Early Learning (CQEL) de la Universidad de Washington y la Oficina del Superintendente de Instrucción Pública (OSPI) de Superintendencia of Public Instruction (OSPI). Última revisión: mayo de 2013.
For more information about WakIDS, contact: WakIDS@u.washington.edu | (360) 725-6163
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21

21

Factors to Consider in COVID-19 Times (continued)

- Increased stress
- Limited resources
- Changing priorities
- Concern about children's skill regression
- Need for support to engage children in learning



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22

22



Transition to Head Start Making the Move Together: Transitions During Uncertain Times

Returning to Head Start center-based classrooms after a public health crisis or emergency may raise questions for you and your family. Think about these tips as you prepare to make the transition from home to your Head Start program for reopening.

Three weeks before the program begins:

- Continue to practice everyday actions to reduce the spread of germs, such as washing your hands and using a tissue when you need to cough or sneeze (or coughing or sneezing into your elbow).
- You can read books or share stories with your child to help them manage their feelings and emotions, such as their fear of going back to school, worries about staying healthy, or confusion about what they hear or see on the news.
- Practice wearing a mask with your child. Talk to them about how they help keep germs to ourselves.
- Make a plan for who in your family can pick up and drop off your child. Connect with your Head Start program to find out how procedures look the same or different.
- Stay in contact with your Head Start teacher and family services worker to remain up to date with program happenings and information that may impact your child's return experience.
- Ask your child what they are looking forward to doing at the Head Start program. Ask if they are excited about playing outdoors, story time, block building, or other activities.
- Talk to your child about things that might look different in the classroom (e.g., if teachers and children wear masks or clear face shields).
- Check with your child's doctor about specific safety precautions if there is a special healthcare need, such as asthma or sensory issues.

Two weeks before the program begins, contact program staff to ask questions about changes, including:

- Will there be screening requirements for entry into the building, such as taking everyone's temperature? Will the program take your child's temperature each day or will you need to do this before arrival?
- How will meals be served? Who will provide the food?
- How will program staff look different? Will there be more or different staff? Will staff be wearing masks? Will staff have on protective equipment that will be described for your child before they attend? Will you need to supply a cloth face covering for your child or will coverings be provided?
- Will the classroom setup and materials look different? Will your child have their own supplies? Will cleaning routines be different?

Page 1

Strategies Families May Consider in Covid-19 Times

Timeliness of the preparation is important in fostering Positive Parent-Child Relationships during transition.

- At three weeks
- At two weeks
- At one week

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23

23

Three Weeks Before

- Continue to practice everyday actions to reduce the spread of germs, such as washing your hands and using a tissue (or coughing or sneezing into your elbow).
- Read books or share stories with your child to help them manage their feelings and emotions, such as their fear of going to school, meeting a new teacher, or making new friends.
- Ask your child what they are looking forward to doing in their new school. Ask if they are excited about playing outdoors, playing with friends, reading stories, and other activities.
- Check with your child's doctor about specific safety precautions if there is a special healthcare need.

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24

24



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Two Weeks Before

Contact the program or public school to ask questions about changes:

- Will there be screening requirements for entry into the building, such as taking everyone's temperature?
- How will meals be served? Who will provide the food?
- What are the hours of operation? Will there be fewer children present at a time? Will your child attend for fewer days?
- What are drop-off and pick-up expectations? Will your child have to wear a mask? Will family members be allowed in the building?
- What do you do if your child or someone in your family is sick?

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25

25



One Week Before

- Talk with your child about returning to a classroom. Is your child excited, fearful, happy, or anxious?
- Continue to practice wearing a mask with your child.
- Talk with your child about clothes and supplies for the first day.
- Continue reading with your child.
- Review the family schedule. Who will take your child to the program? Who will pick up your child?
- If you haven't already, begin working toward an early bedtime.

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26

26



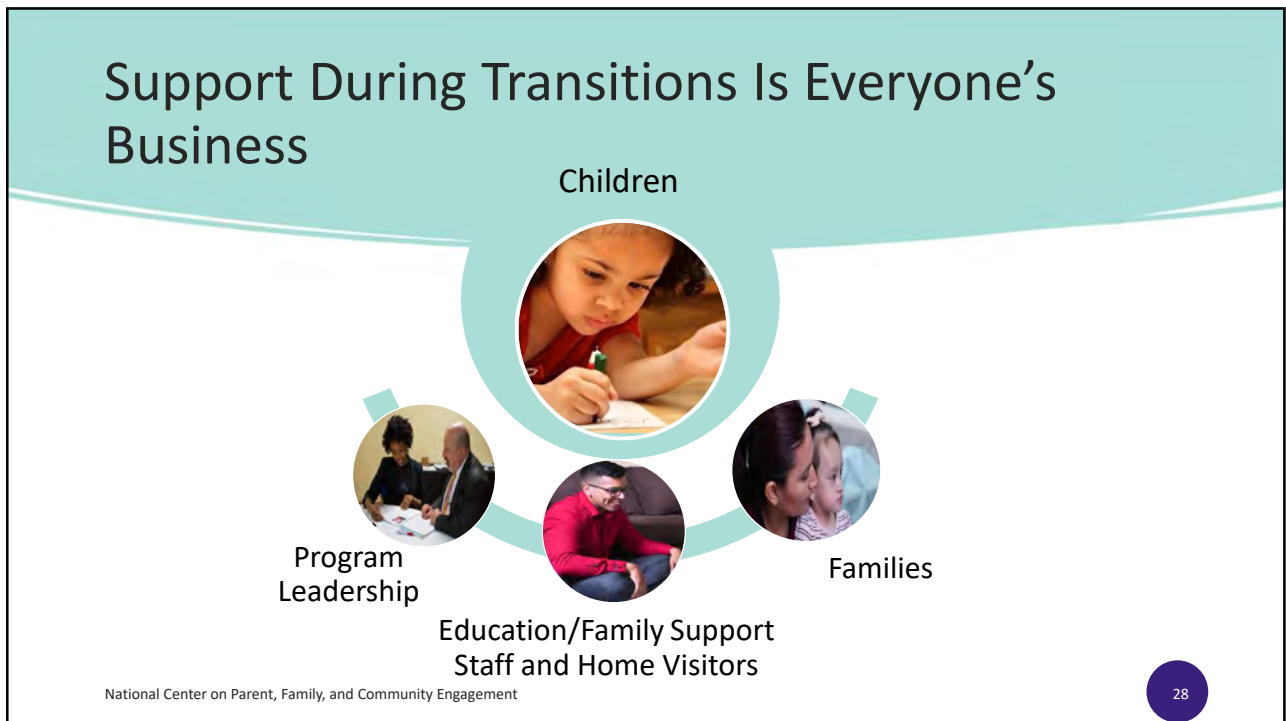
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Supporting Transitions: A Collaborative Approach

27



28



A Collaborative Approach to Smooth Transitions

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29

29

Component One: Learn

- Ask open-ended questions
- Listen to understand:
 - Experiences
 - Concerns
 - Hopes

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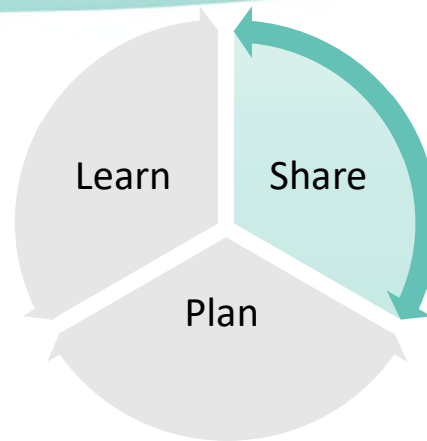
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Component Two: Share

- Based on what I learned, what information do they need?
- What are the best ways to share the information?



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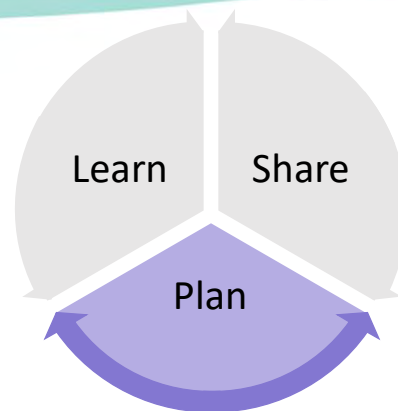
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31

Component Three: Plan

How will we

- Support staff so they can support children and families through the transition?
- Plan together
 - What specific supports will we provide?
 - How will we communicate regularly?

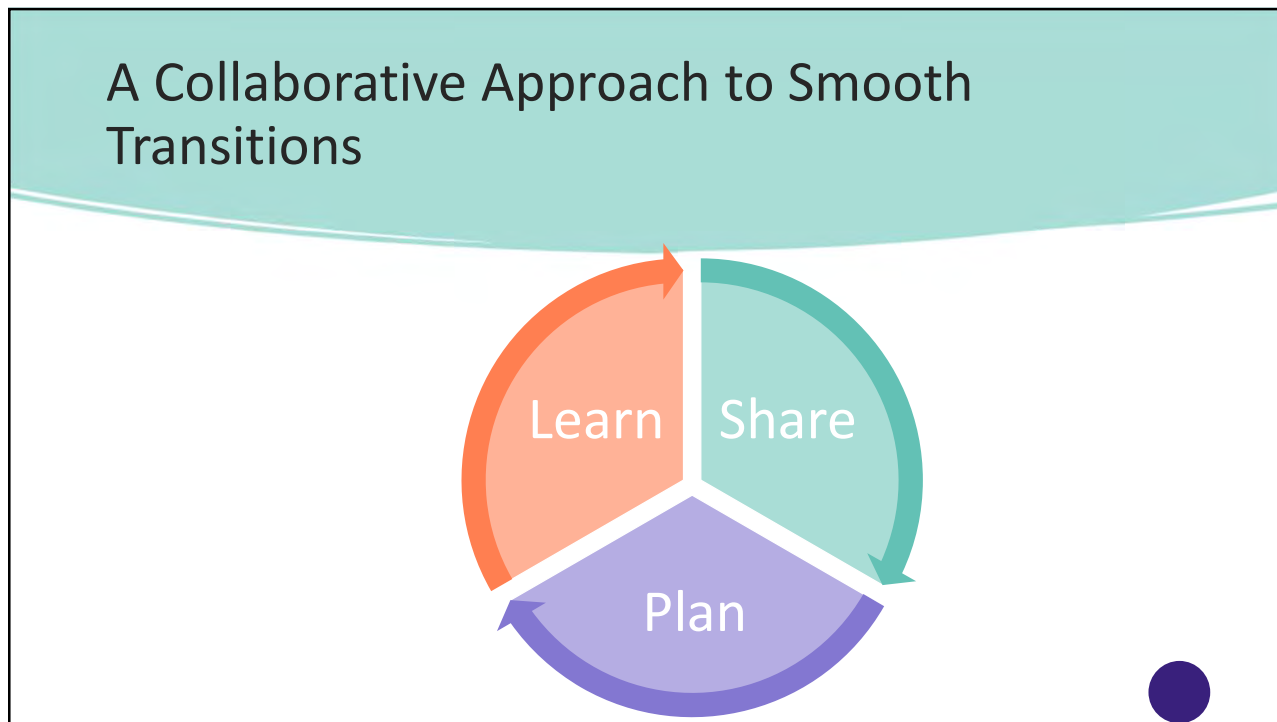


32



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33



34



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Family Connection Practices: A Simulation



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- Explore this simulation to practice applying strengths-based attitudes and relationship-based practices.
- Discover what is needed in relationship-building between a Head Start coordinator and a receiving school special education team leader.

Transition to Kindergarten: Partnering with Families

Transition to Kindergarten: Partnering with Families For Head Start Programs and Schools

Smooth kindergarten transitions have a direct impact on children's social, emotional, and academic outcomes in kindergarten and the years to follow. Families, Head Start programs, receiving elementary school, and community organizations can collaborate to create continuity across systems and promote smoother transitions. Effective family engagement encourages parents to continue their roles as leaders and advocates and fosters child and family well-being.

Programs and receiving schools can engage families by focusing on these four approaches to create continuity for families and children as they transition to kindergarten:

- **Create family-friendly and welcoming environments.** Programs and schools can look for ways to create inclusive settings that address children and families' interests, strengths, and needs. Supporting families' participation early and throughout the transition can encourage parent engagement during the kindergarten year and beyond.
- **Promote home/school connections to foster parent engagement in learning and classroom experiences.** Adults who partner to support young children help them develop the skills related to later school success—early language, literacy, cognitive, problem-solving, attention, and self-regulation. Families, Head Start programs, and schools can find ways to reinforce learning and curricular goals at home. These practices set a foundation for ongoing family engagement in children's learning.
- **Engage parents as leaders and advocates.** Programs, schools, and parent leaders can promote opportunities for parent leadership and decision making on the transition process and in the future with the receiving school. Engaging parents in decision-making roles and sharing data can support parents' roles as advocates for their children. Schools can highlight opportunities in parent-led networks and school site councils, or similar groups, during the transition to kindergarten.
- **Support family well-being through coordinated delivery of comprehensive services.** Programs and schools can engage community partners to offer comprehensive family services to support family well-being. Schools can build on these partnerships and continue to connect parents to community services. Family well-being is a predictor of school readiness. Family well-being also contributes to successful transitions to kindergarten.

Page 1

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- Programs and receiving schools can engage families by focusing on four approaches to create continuity for families and children as they transition to kindergarten.



Early Childhood Transitions: Supporting Children and Families— For Early Childhood Professionals

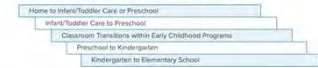
Early Childhood Transitions: Supporting Children and Families

For Early Childhood Professionals



Transitions to a new care and learning setting impact the entire family. For both children and families, transitions between settings can lead to great excitement and joy. Families can look forward to new possibilities, new friends, and a potential change in a child's caregiver or teacher. Transitions can also bring on uncertainty and concerns. Children may experience loss of familiar people and predictable routines. Families may have mixed reactions to their child getting older and wonder if they are ready for the next stage. Early childhood professionals can offer support and guidance to help families feel secure and ready to make the move to a new setting. Strong relationships between professionals and families will likely help the transition experience.

Examples of Transitions in Early Childhood Settings



All transitions involve changes for children and families, and every transition presents opportunities and challenges. Each family is unique and will experience transitions in their own way. Early childhood professionals can partner with individual families to determine what supports and strategies will be most effective and reassuring before, during, and after their child's transition.

Adapted from: *Connections: Family Engagement Systems, Strategies to Practice: 2 with Equivalence and Continuity*.
Support for Educators

This information was developed and made freely available by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, and Office of Child Care, in the National Center of Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. To request any of our research resources, visit www.nce.org.

Page 1

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37

37

Educator Practices for Successful Transitions to Kindergarten



Educator Practices for Successful Transitions to Kindergarten

The move from an early learning program to kindergarten is a major transition for young children and their families. Research shows that a smooth and successful transition to kindergarten is strongly linked to children's academic and social success in the school years to follow. The more transition practices are implemented, the better the transition process goes. This list offers research-based activities, organized by four Points of Connection, for educators to implement in the days, weeks, and months leading up to and following the start of kindergarten.

Point of Connection	Transition Activities
Child-School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in a spring or summer kindergarten orientation for children and their families. • Organize visits to kindergarten classrooms, and visits from kindergarten teachers. • Bring children to attend events at the receiving elementary school. • Have children practice kindergarten routines—such as lining up, putting on backpacks, or carrying lunch on a tray—in the early learning setting. • Incorporate familiar activities or routines from the early learning setting into the kindergarten year. • Encourage kindergarten support staff to visit future students in their early learning settings. • Help make connections between children and families who will attend the same receiving elementary school. • Establish a "buddy system" between children who will be entering kindergarten and students who are currently in kindergarten. • Provide children with books and interactive materials about kindergarten in the months leading up to the transition, including materials that children can take home to share with their families. • Encourage families to have discussions and read with their child about kindergarten. • Stay in contact with children and families formerly enrolled in Head Start. Visit them in their elementary school setting, and encourage them to visit the Head Start program.

Page 1

- Research shows that a smooth and successful transition to kindergarten is strongly linked to children's academic and social success in the school years to follow.
- The more transition practices are implemented, the better the transition process goes.

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38

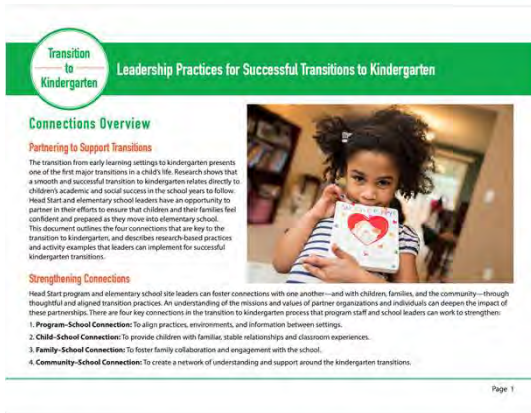
38



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Leadership Practices for Successful Transitions to Kindergarten



- Explore this packet to find several research-based practices Head Start and elementary school leaders can implement to support the transition to kindergarten.
- Find examples of activities that support those practices.

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39

39

PFCE Deepening Practice Community

- Continue deepening your PFCE knowledge and skills by joining the MyPeers PFCE Deepening Practice learning community.
- Engage with colleagues around the country in an online community hosted on the MyPeers platform.

myP MyPeers



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40

40



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Have More Questions?

- Stay and chat with us!
- The speakers will stay on the line an additional 15 minutes to continue the dialogue.



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41

41

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1-866-763-6481

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42



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