Transition to Kindergarten: Building Connections for Success
Transitions Across the Lifespan

Transition = **Change** = Hard

What creates successful adjustment?

Information  Relationships  Continuity/Consistency

*Children need our help to do this*
First Day of Kindergarten

Youtube videos – either children or parents are crying
First Day of School

(No transition practices)

I DON'T WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL! I HATE SCHOOL! I'D RATHER DO ANYTHING THAN GO TO SCHOOL!

(Positive transition practices)

GOSH, I COULDN'T WAIT FOR TODAY! SOON WE'LL BE MAKING NEW FRIENDS, LEARNING ALL SORTS OF IMPORTANT THINGS, AND...
Early Experiences
Matter
“Transition Practices” start long before the first day of school
Healthy Children are Ready to Learn
Being ‘prepared’ does not happen automatically.
If we set goals we will know where we are headed,
and we will know when we get there.
Transition Goals

- **Child goal**: To foster children’s familiarity with the classroom setting and people within it.

- **Family goal**: To foster family collaboration and involvement with the school.

- **Community goal**: To facilitate the transition process within the community.

- **School goal**: To provide children with stable high quality classroom experiences across time.
Transition Experiences Families Found Useful

## Transition Activity

- Had child visit a kindergarten classroom
- Met with a kindergarten teacher
- Met with the principal
- Took a tour of the school
- Talked with preschool staff about kindergarten
- Visited the kindergarten classroom
- Talked with parents of child’s new classmates
- Participated in elementary school-wide activities
- Attended a workshop for parents
- Met with child’s anticipated kindergarten teacher
- Attended an orientation to kindergarten

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% of families who found the experience helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had child visit a kindergarten classroom</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with a kindergarten teacher</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met with the principal</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took a tour of the school</td>
<td>100%</td>
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<td>Attended a workshop for parents</td>
<td>98%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Met with child’s anticipated kindergarten teacher</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended an orientation to kindergarten</td>
<td>96%</td>
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</table>

Pianta et al., 1999
Kindergarten Transition Practices are Associated with Academic Skills and Family Involvement in their Child’s Education

- Early Childhood Longitudinal Study
  - 17,212 children, 992 schools

Even more benefits for children from low-income families

(Schulting, Malone & Dodge, 2005)
Children, Families and Elementary Schools Benefit from Connections

- Children more socially ready
  - Helps them participate more academically
- Families more connected to school
  - Improved long-term student outcomes
- Teachers more prepared to support kids/families
  - Better relationships that lead to enhanced child outcomes
- Financially smart - Low investment, high yield
What Can You Do?

Some districts and their partners are known for strong transition practices, but there are always ways to make things even stronger.

We have some planning time today to help document small steps that can lead to even better child and family success.
What Will You do to Help Improve Transitions to Kindergarten?

- Planning sheet
- Take a moment to record some thoughts.
- Who will you share it with when you get back to work?
### Transition Planning Reflection Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transition Strengths: Currently going well</th>
<th>Needs Attention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>We need to write some transition plan goals.</td>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meet with school teams, by May 2014</td>
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</table>
Make Connections

- At lunch try to sit with people who work in your area who you can partner with in the future.
- Join each others’ transition teams.
Clear Alignment of State “Standards”
NYS Early Learning Guidelines show a developmental progression of typical child development, they are not a set of standards. They outline how children develop through each domain from birth to 5 years.

NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core show a set of skills for children to know and be able to do at the end of the 4 year old preschool year.

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework provide a description of the building blocks that national Head Start research finds most important for a child’s school and long-term success.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New York State Early Learning Guidelines (Birth to 5 Years)</th>
<th>New York State Education Department Prekindergarten Learning Standards (4 Years)</th>
<th>Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework (3 to 5 Years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approaches to Learning</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language, Communication and Literacy</td>
<td>Communication, Language, and Literacy</td>
<td>Language Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Emotional Development</td>
<td>Social Emotional Development</td>
<td>Literacy Knowledge and Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognition and General Knowledge</td>
<td>Cognition and Knowledge of the World</td>
<td>Social &amp; Emotional Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Wellbeing, Health and Motor Development</td>
<td>Physical Development and Health</td>
<td>Mathematics Knowledge &amp; Skills</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Science Knowledge and Skills</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Creative Arts Expression</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Logic &amp; Reasoning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social Studies Knowledge &amp; Skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Physical Development &amp; Health</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>English Language Development</td>
</tr>
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*English Language Learning is embedded throughout all domains*
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<th>Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework</th>
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<th>NYS Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Number Concepts &amp; Quantities</strong>: the understanding that numbers represent quantities and have ordinal properties.</td>
<td><strong>Number and Sense Operations</strong>: Children demonstrate knowledge of numbers and counting</td>
<td><strong>Counting and Cardinality</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number Relationships &amp; Operations</strong>: the use of numbers to describe relationships and solve problems.</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Know Number Names and the Count Sequence.</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Geometry &amp; Spatial Sense</strong>: the understanding of shapes, their properties,</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Count to 20.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Represent a number of objects with a written numeral 0–5 (with 0 representing a count or no objects).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Count to Tell the Number of Objects</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Understand the relationship between numbers and quantities to 10; connect counting to cardinality.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) When counting objects, say the number names in the standard order, pairing each object with one and only one number name and each number name with one and only one object.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) Understand that the last number name said tells the number of objects counted. The number of objects is the same regardless of their arrangement or the order in which they were counted.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c) Understand that each successive number name refers to a quantity that is one larger.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Count to answer “how many?” questions about as many as 10 things arranged in a line, a rectangular array, or a circle, or as many as 5 things in a scattered configuration; given a number from 1–10, count out that many objects.</td>
<td><strong>Compare Numbers</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Money is Tight

“School districts can’t afford some of the transition activities they used to offer. “

• Virtual bus ride
• Virtual meet the teachers and classroom tour with YouTube link
• Invite incoming kindergarteners to school-wide events the year before (spring fling, to play on the playground, education fair, book fair, other school activities already planned)
Promising Practices

Kindergarten recruitment efforts

- Door to door – involve parents in effort
- Neighborhood festivals
- TV ads
- Radio
- Local papers
- Church bulletins
- Hospitals
- Laundromats/ Grocery Stores/ Hair Salons
- WIC offices
- “Go where the parents are”
Dad: Did you know it is time to register your 5 year old for Kindergarten? #
Recruitment Door Hanger

Sorry we missed you.

Register for Kindergarten
Call 555-1234
A free gift is waiting for you.

Are you 5 yet?
Is your child turning 5 before December 1? Call 555-555 to register for Kindergarten, visit school and so much more!
In a prekindergarten classroom the children spend the last 2 weeks in June practicing:

- Lining up like Kindergarteners
- Using cafeteria trays at lunch time
- Packing their own backpack to go home
- Using a take home folder each day
Promising Practices

- **Transition Teams** at each school/center/zone
  - Meet regularly with local providers, parents
- **Parent Feedback Surveys** – how are we doing?
- **Year-Round Activities**
  - Children attend events at the school
  - “Readiness” activities at public library over the summer
Free Summer Reading Programs
The Berenstain Bears
Go to School
Stan & Jan Berenstain
Mama Bear noticed. “As a matter of fact,” she said, “Sister and I are going to meet her new teacher tomorrow.”

This year Sister would be starting kindergarten. And she wasn’t quite sure how she felt about it.
“What will school be like, Mama?” she asked at bedtime.

“You’ll find out tomorrow,” said Mama as she tucked Sister in and kissed her good night.
Handybear Gus was up on a ladder, fixing the roof.

“Hello!” said Mama. “This is Sister Bear. She starts kindergarten next week.”

“We’ll be glad to have her,” said Gus. “Miss Honeybear is the kindergarten teacher. You’ll find her inside.”
“Hello there!” said Miss Honeybear in a loud, jolly voice. “Come right in and look around!”

Sister thought Miss Honeybear’s voice was a little scary. But she let Miss Honeybear take her hand and lead her into the kindergarten room.
“What do you do in kindergarten?” Sister asked as they sat down for lunch.

“We read stories, sing songs, learn our ABCs, paint pictures, play games, make things out of clay, build with blocks—we do lots of things!” said Miss Honeybear.

Those were all things Sister liked. And she had never seen such big or such fine blocks. There was even a barrel of clay.

School might be fun, after all, by the time she and Mama started...
But when the big morning came, Sister began to worry again.

“Mama!” she said. “What if I don’t like school? What if I just don’t like it?”

Just then the big yellow school bus pulled up to the tree.

“Stop worrying!” said Mama. “School is fun. You’ll like it. Let’s get going or we’ll be late!”

He grabbed her hand and led the way.
Every so often the bus stopped and more bears climbed on.
Most of them were excited like Brother. But some of the smaller ones were quiet like Sister.

The little bear who sat next to Sister began to look worried, so she smiled at him and held his hand.
Positive transition practices

No transition practices
After the story, Sister tried painting. She painted a picture...

helped build a block city...

ate a clay doughnut...

and looked at the books.

She ate all of her honey at snack time:

and at recess.
When she climbed off the bus with Brother at the end of the day, Sister was the excited one.

"Mama! Papa! Look what I did in school today!" she said, holding up her painting.
We each play a role in ensuring children are ‘ready’ for kindergarten and kindergarten is ready for each child.
Transition Toolkit

New York State Education Department
How Was You Day?

- Did you make any new connections?
- Did you pick up some new ideas for your transition plans or committees to work on?
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<td>Action Plan:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>By when?</td>
</tr>
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New York State Head Start Collaboration Office 2013
Ready

Not only with a new backpack, ready on the inside too!

The First Day of Kindergarten
Some Slides by

Jennifer LoCasale-Crouch, Ph.D.
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