

The transition into formal schooling can be one of the most significant events a young child experiences. Excitement, shock, fear, happiness, anxiety, surprise and a sense of being overwhelmed are a few of the emotions children and families might feel. The transition to formal schooling is a one-time event that takes careful advance preparation and planning in order to be a successful milestone for the child. It is a dynamic process that is ongoing. It involves moving from one situation to another. All children will experience this change differently. Thoughtful and deliberate attention to this process by those who are directly involved can make this a positive experience for a young child and his/her family.



“School readiness is not just a cognitive thing, it is a physical thing and it is an emotional thing.”

Rob Reiner

References

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Supporting Children’s Entry into Formal School



Why worry about implementing positive transition practices?

Gains children have made in quality early education settings are sustained when school districts participate in positive transition practices. (Howes, C., et al., 2007)

Families who are involved in transitioning their child into formal schooling tend to remain involved throughout their child's school career. Family involvement has been shown to improve school success. (Barnett, M. A., 2009; Ferguson, C. & Wood, L., 2005)

Positive teacher-child interactions developed through positive transition practices have been linked to positive student outcomes. (LoCasale-Crouch, J., et al., 2008)

When expectations and teaching practices are aligned between early education settings and formal school settings children experience less stress, learning and development trajectories do not plateau as children adjust to a new setting and teachers and families can share common goals for student growth. (Ahtola, A. et al., in press, LoCasale-Crouch, J., et al., 2008)

Next Steps for implementing positive transition practices.

- 1) Assign one individual within your school or district who will be responsible for implementing positive transition practices.
- 2) Reach out to other schools or districts within your county who have begun to implement positive transition practices.
- 3) Reach out to early education programs that service your school or district.
- 4) Reach out to Local Education and Resource Network in your community who is responsible for assisting schools and districts in establishing and implementing positive transition practices .
- 5) Create a plan of action. The Best Practice Rubric provides helpful information for creating plans of action. The Best Practice Rubric can be accessed at the TACEL Professional Learning Community.
- 6) Use your school's PTO to reach out to families who will be transitioning into your school or district.



Resources

[TACEL Professional Learning Community](#)

To join, register at www.pdesas.org, access "Teacher tools": my communities, and search "TACEL

<http://www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=TransitionToolkit>

This resource created by The Office of Child Development and Early Learning provides information on enhancing transition practices. The kit includes step-by-step guidelines for creating a Transition team and for creating and implementing plans of action.

www.sedl.org

SEDL is a private, nonprofit education research, development, and dissemination (RD&D) corporation based in Austin, Texas. Improving teaching and learning has been at the heart of SEDL's work for more than 40 years. One of SEDL's ongoing projects is to bring families, schools and communities together to support student achievement.

www.nectac.org

The National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center supported by the US Department of Education.

<http://center.serve.org/TT/>

The SERVE website contains resources that relate to school readiness. This site includes "The Terrific Transitions" toolkit which provides information and resources for both teachers and families.