

Transition Basic Steps

Begin with the end in mind!

Transition preparation

- Begin in early spring or even the fall before the child transitions into a new setting
- Identify key school staff and their role or involvement in the transition process
- Develop an overall plan that includes family involvement
- List necessary resources and materials
- Prepare receiving teacher
- Prepare the student and his/her family

Ways to help the receiving teacher

- Schedule time to discuss the student's strengths, interests and needs
- Allow the teacher time to visit with the student's current classroom
- Provide the teacher with a current IEP
- Provide the teacher with the student's behavior support plan

Ways to help the student

- Let the student visit the new classroom
- Let the sending and receiving teachers work with the student
- Develop a social story
- Place a favorite toy or book in the new classroom
- Identify a peer buddy in the receiving classroom

Ways to help the family

- Consider having family members observe a kindergarten class in the fall the year before their child will start kindergarten. The first few weeks of kindergarten look very different from the smoothly running classroom that may exist by spring. Families may be more reassured about their child's abilities when they see what is expected at the beginning of kindergarten, rather than what is expected at the end.
- Be clear in communications about what to expect and what is expected (e.g. give details such as purpose(s) of each meeting, length of time the meeting will take, who will be present at the meeting, materials or information that the family may wish to bring, etc.)
- Provide names and contact information of other families who have already gone through transitioning their child into kindergarten and are willing to act as mentors to incoming families.
- Offer a variety of ways the family can participate in their child's transition preparation and educational program (adding details to the social story, sharing information about preferred items and activities, such as names of favorite songs, books, toys, snacks, etc.)
- Maintain clear and consistent communication with the family about how their child is adjusting to kindergarten. Use communication methods, such as daily notes, photos, phone calls, emails, etc. during the first few weeks.