

Family-to-School (Sending)

As families begin to prepare for the transition into formal schooling they feel a range of emotions. There may be pride that their child is entering school and will be facing new challenges. There also may be concern about how their child will cope with the change. They may be apprehensive about their child growing up and having less control over the experiences of the day. They hope that the transition to formal schooling will be a smooth and happy one.

Studies show that successful programs actively involve parents in their programs. The family's influence is fundamental in the early years. Studies show that when families are actively engaged in the transition process their involvement tends to continue throughout their child's school career (Barnett, M. A., 2009, Ferguson, C. & Wood, L., 2005). Family involvement has been linked to positive student outcomes. This section emphasizes practices to involve and engage families in the transition process, fostering positive attitudes toward school and learning and helping families act as partners in their children's learning.

	Best Practice Emerging	Best Practice Progressing	Best Practice Achieved
Orientation to School	Early care representative/ teachers provide general written information to families about the formal school including information on registration.	Early care representative/ teachers collaborate with partnering schools to provide written or digital opportunities to learn about school personnel and routines prior to the start of school.	Early care representative/ teachers collaborate with partnering schools to provide face-to-face opportunities to learn about school personnel and routines prior to the start of school.
Current Practice:			
What's working:			
What can be improved?			
Ideas for next steps:			

Family Networking	Early Care program encourages family-to-family connections between families with transitioning children.	Early Care program creates a process for connecting families with children transitioning to the same formal school.	Early Care Program partners with formal school/PTO/community organization to create and implement a Family Mentoring Program in which previous families of kindergarteners provide outreach to families of transitioning children.
Current Practice:			
What's working:			
What can be improved?			
Ideas for next steps:			
Partnerships	Early care representative/ teachers provide written information to assist all families in preparing their child or children for school. E.g. distribution of readiness calendars and other materials.	Early care representative/ teachers collect and use outcomes data to identify children who may be "at risk" for a difficult transition and has a system in place to share this information with families.	Early Learning community collects and uses outcomes data to identify children who may be "at risk" for a difficult transition and intentionally partners with families to support the child BEFORE the transition occurs.
Current Practice:			
What's working:			

What can be improved?

Ideas for next steps:

Companion resources can be found at www.pakeys.org, or at www.pdesas.org