

Transition Interview

I'd like to talk to you about children's transitions into kindergarten and your experiences with the kindergarten transition process.

1. First, think about children who may be at risk and children who have had successful transitions into kindergarten. When this transition goes smoothly, what factors are in place that make the process go well? *[For preschool teachers, just refer to children whom they have taught. Follow up with these questions if all issues are not addressed.]*
 - What characteristics of the child and the family help this process go well?
 - What characteristics of the preschool program help foster the transition into school?
 - What characteristics of the kindergarten program help this process move smoothly? Are there particular program characteristics that help?
 - Are there other contributing factors?
2. Are children's transitions into kindergarten a problem at your school? If so, in what ways?
3. What are the challenges in helping children make the transition to kindergarten in your school? Are there any particular barriers?
4. Are there other things that schools could do to help children become familiar with school?
5. Now, I'd like to ask you about your impressions of the transition process and your experiences. In what aspects of the process did you participate? For example, did you participate in transition activities for preschoolers entering kindergarten or other activities to enhance relationships for children and families as they entered kindergarten?
 - What went well?
 - What changes might you make?
6. Is there anything more you wish to share about children's transition into kindergarten?

Figure A1. An example of a Transition Interview. Transition coordinators use this form to interview school and community participants about the transition process.

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Transition Practices Brainstorming Guide						
Transition practice	Connections fostered	Priority	Who	When	Barriers and solutions	Linkages and notes

Figure A2. An example of a Transition Practices Brainstorming Guide.
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Transition Timeline Worksheet					
Month	Date to be initiated	Activity	Who's in charge	Special needs	Carryover?

Figure A3. An example of a Transition Timeline Worksheet.
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Checklist for Community Transition Steering Committees

Brainstorm

- Address all types of connections.
- Seek input from family members, school staff members, and communities members who will be affected by the success of our transition program.
- Identify and resolve barriers.

Allocate resources

- Give teachers the flexibility and compensation to fulfill their transition role.
- Hire substitutes, arrange class coverage, or stagger the start of school for kindergartners so that teachers can do home visits.
- Consider providing child care for parents attending school functions.
- Solicit feedback from teachers about what their needs are during transition.

Create realistic timelines

- Revise the timelines according to anticipated barriers.
- Use in-service meetings to orient teachers and parents to the program's goals.

Involve parents

- Alert parents of meetings in advance and schedule meetings so that most parents can attend.
- Reach out to parents so that they feel welcome.
- Ask parents about the issues that concern them.
- Solicit feedback from parents about their needs are during transition.

Identify evaluation procedures

- Choose evaluation measures.
- Clarify a timeline for collecting feedback.
- Identify who is responsible for collecting feedback.
- Seek feedback from all involved in the transition process.

Checklist for Transition Coordinators

Family connections

- Make contact in first 2 weeks
- Assess family needs and link up with services
- Encourage parents to foster peer connections
- Send home newsletters
- Schedule regular meetings
- Encourage parents to foster peer contact
- Help organize back-to-school nights and transition orientations
- Encourage home-learning activities

Peer connections

- Help teachers establish peer connections at school
- Introduce each child to the kindergarten teacher
- Help kindergarten generate class lists that pair friendly peers

School connections

- Foster inter-school discussions about programs and classroom practices
- Encourage events cosponsored by the preschool and the kindergarten
- Initiate meetings between preschool and kindergarten teachers about children

Community connections

- Help clarify community needs and expectations regarding schools and transition
- Meet regularly with the transition team

Figure A4. An example of a Checklist for Community Transition Steering Committees.

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Figure A5. An example of a Checklist for Transition Coordinators.

Checklist for Preschool Teachers

Family connections

- Make contact in first 2 weeks
- Encourage participation
- Participate in regular meetings with parents
- Attend back-to-school nights and transition orientations
- Provide home-learning activities

Peer connections

- Promote peer connections at school
- Encourage parents to promote peer connections outside of school

School connections

- Invite kindergarten staff to visit preschool
- Discuss expectations for transition with kindergarten teachers
- Discuss particular children with kindergarten staff
- Practice kindergarten rituals
- Make contact with former students

Community connections

- Stay apprised on the transition team's goals and plans
- Participate in meetings about transition

Checklist for Kindergarten Teachers

Family connections

- Make contact in first 2 weeks
- Encourage participation
- Participate in regular meetings with parents
- Attend back-to-school nights and transition orientations

Peer connections

- Promote peer connections at school
- Encourage parents to promote peer connections outside of school

School connections

- Invite preschoolers to visit
- Discuss expectations for transition with preschool teachers
- Discuss particular children with preschool staff
- Incorporate preschool rituals
- Visit the preschool classroom
- Encourage contact with the preschool teacher

Community connections

- Stay apprised of the transition team's goals and plans
- Participate in meetings about transition

Checklist for Principals

Family connections

- Encourage participation
- Participate in regular meetings with parents
- Schedule and coordinate transition activities

Peer connections

- Support teachers in promoting peer connections at school
- Encourage parents to promote peer connections outside of school

School connections

- Support collaboration between programs
- Discuss expectations for transition with kindergarten and preschool teachers
- Discuss particular children with kindergarten and preschool staff

Community connections

- Help shape the transition goals and plans
- Work with the school district to create transition-supportive policy
- Think creatively about resource allocation to support teachers
- Seek community agencies' support of transition goals and activities
- Participate in meetings about transition

Figure A6. A sample Checklist for Preschool Teachers. **Figure A7.** A sample Checklist for Kindergarten Teachers. **Figure A8.** A sample Checklist for Principals.

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Kindergarten Transition Contact Log

Directions: This form is for documenting contacts with elementary school personnel or family members of children experiencing kindergarten transition. Indicate the date, the person with whom you had contact, the setting, the topics discussed, and your general impressions of the meeting.

Date	Name/initials	Person with whom you had contact	Type/Setting	Topics discussed	General impressions

Figure A9. An example of a Kindergarten Transition Contact Log.
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Instructions for Kindergarten Transition Menu Checklist

Please complete the menu checklist at the end of each week to document transition activities. For every child listed, check the box or boxes that correspond with activities you have used to promote connections. Check as many boxes as apply for each activity. (The Transition Activities Menu in *Successful Kindergarten Transition: Your Guide to Connecting Children, Families, and Schools* describes the types of activities in detail.)

Also, please describe your impressions of the transition activities you are implementing, including the nature of each specific activity, your thoughts on its effectiveness, what contributed to its success, and what may have impeded its implementation. You may document this information on the back of the checklist or keep a separate running log.

FAMILY–SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

- ◆ Meetings about transition issues
 - Meeting at preschool with the kindergarten teachers and/or parents of kindergartners
 - Meeting at the elementary school before the onset of kindergarten
- ◆ A family, the preschool teacher, and the kindergarten teacher meeting to share information about a child
- ◆ Meetings to orient parents to programs after school starts

CHILD–SCHOOL CONTACT

- ◆ Contact between preschool and kindergarten
 - A preschooler's connection with the kindergarten teacher
 - A preschooler's connection with the elementary school for special school functions
 - A preschooler's practice of kindergarten activities
 - Kindergarten activities incorporated from preschool
 - The preschool teacher's visits to former students in their kindergarten class

PRESCHOOL PEER CONTACT

- Peer connections outside of school
- Peer connections with nonclassmate peers who will be in the same kindergarten class
- Group-based peer connections (activity-based social skills groups)
- Peer connections within the class are assumed and do not need to be checked

KINDERGARTEN PEER CONTACT

- ◆ Preschool peer connections with kindergarten peers
 - Kindergartners visit preschool
 - Preschoolers visit kindergarten class
 - Summer school inclusion of rising kindergartners

COMMUNITY CONTACT

- ◆ Contact with other schools
- ◆ Inter-school collaboration about programs and classroom practices
 - School policy coordination
 - Classroom practices discussion
- ◆ Inter-school connection concerning a specific child
- ◆ Contact with agencies
- ◆ Connections with community agencies

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY

Describe the transition activity being noted. Also, describe practices you have used that are not included elsewhere. Include connection-building activities you are aware of but have not directly initiated. For example, mention reports of peers playing with one another outside of school or families connecting with one another. Your impressions of the effectiveness of activities can also be highlighted.

Figure A10. Instructions for using the sample Kindergarten Transition Menu Checklist.

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