



Supporting Children Transitioning to Kindergarten

How quickly children adjust across settings increases their success, so supporting children in the transition to Kindergarten is important. Supporting children in the transition to Kindergarten looks like a collaborative approach and recognizes that children, families, early learning programs, schools, peers, and communities are all interconnected throughout the transition process. Familiarizing children with the Kindergarten setting is a crucial step in the transition process.

Site-Based Transition Practices

Site-based transition practices that support children transitioning from the early learning setting to the Kindergarten setting include the following:

- Create opportunities for children to visit Kindergarten classrooms and attend events with Kindergarten classes at nearby elementary schools. Visit and familiarize children with new settings such as classrooms, playgrounds, cafeterias, libraries, etc.
- Establish peer connections between children who will be entering Kindergarten and children who are currently enrolled in Kindergarten.
- Support families in interacting and reading with their children about Kindergarten.
- Encourage children's excitement about the transition to Kindergarten.

Classroom-Based and At-Home Transition Practices

The following are classroom-based and at-home transition practices that support children transitioning from the early learning setting to the Kindergarten setting during the final child care months:

- Model kindness, sharing, and working together and engage with children in ways that promote self-regulation
- Talk, read, sing, and tell stories with children, encouraging them to take the lead
- Provide children with problem-solving tasks, such as making up rules for a new game
- Help children develop and follow daily routines that promote independence
- Ask questions and encourage children to ask and answer questions with peers
- Practice lunch routines such as opening fork packs, cleaning their own space when done, and throwing away their own trash
- Practice proper hand washing and restroom manners
- Play games that involve movement and following directions
- Engage children in longer play with more focus and complexity

Transition Experiences Matter

Successful transition experiences are rooted in a program's ability to foster connections with children, families, and the community while providing support that directly relates to children's academic success.

Supportive and successful transition practices foster:

- Fewer learning problems/challenges
- Improved positive interactions with peers
- Fewer behavior challenges
- More positive approaches to learning
- Greater frustration tolerance