

April 2009

Transition Alert

Improving the transition process for young children, their families and the professionals who work with them through an examination of factors that promote successful transitions between infant/toddler programs, preschool programs, and public school programs for young children with disabilities and their families.

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Review of Transition Research

Researchers at NECTC have conducted a review of existing refereed research on early childhood transition, especially noting findings related to young children with disabilities and their families. The review covered articles published in refereed journals between January 1990 and March 2006. The systematic search led to 50 articles, 33 of which focused on children in transition and 18 of which focused on families of young children moving between early childhood services, such as between infant-toddler programs and preschool, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten, or kindergarten and early elementary services. One study fit into both child and family categories. Of the 50 studies reviewed:

- Fifteen (30%; seven child and eight family) focused on young children with disabilities and their families. Of those 15, 11(73%) were completed before 2002.
- Nine studies were experimental or quasi-experimental in design, 14 were correlational, and 28 were descriptive.

The paucity of studies located and the fact that the majority of studies were descriptive, rather than experimental, meant few specific transition practices could be validated sufficiently to satisfy current criteria. In the full Technical Report, participants and key findings of the studies are noted, promising practices indicated, and future directions for researchers are suggested.

Major findings that relate to children in transition and that are supported by a moderate/large extent of evidence (What Works Clearinghouse, 2008) include the following:

- High quality child care and developmentally appropriate classrooms for young children are associated with better academic outcomes, work habits, and social adjustment after the transition to the next setting.
- Various ecological factors (e.g., socio-economic status, family psychosocial factors) are associated with long-term academic achievement and positive social outcomes for children after their transition into school.
- A close positive teacher-child relationship during and after transition is associated with better cognitive outcomes for children.
- Teachers and principals/directors view social skills as being more important for children's school readiness than academic skills.
- A match between sending and receiving environments and teaching skills which are related to the requirements of the next environment result in more successful adjustment and positive outcomes after transition for young children.

Four strategies are reported as promising, but were supported to a lesser degree by less empirical evidence. Major findings that relate to families of children in transition and are supported by a moderate/large extent of evidence (What Works Clearinghouse, 2008) include the following:

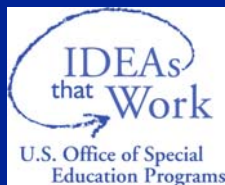
- Transition is a complex process, not a static event. Positive relationships and transition-support activities can ease the stress of transition for families.
- Parental sense of self-efficacy is associated with greater school-related parent involvement and improved academic outcomes for children.

An additional finding that met a moderate extent of evidence was:

- Needs of families must be met before families are able to help their children with disabilities transition between programs or systems.

In addition to general findings, 13 promising practices were identified.

The full technical report is available on the NECTC website (http://www.hdi.uky.edu/Libraries/NECTC_Papers_and_Reports/Technical_Report_5.sflb.ashx).



NECTC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Cooperative Agreement # H324V020003.

Also Available from NECTC

Many new documents are available on the website pertaining to the transitions of young children with disabilities.

Transition Alerts

At-a-glance information on new resources and materials related to transition.

Research Briefs

Short papers that provide a summary of research findings and conceptual work.

Research Spotlights

Short papers on research methods and tools used to gather data during NECTC studies.

Papers/Reports

Technical reports and papers presenting findings from NECTC studies.

Presentations

PowerPoint and Poster presentations conducted by NECTC researchers at national conferences and meetings.

Additional Resources

IDEA 2004: One-stop shop for information on IDEA 2004 and implications for transition.

Project Information

Brochures and information on the activities of NECTC, including timelines, study goals and timelines, and contact information for NECTC researchers and staff.

Measures and Instruments

Copies of measures and instruments used for NECTC studies.

On-Line Database

An on-line, searchable database of transition resources and materials. Bookmark this Site:

For more specific information on the activities of the center, go to <http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/nectc/> or contact the project office at 859-257-2081 or toll free at 866-742-4015.