

Understanding Transition to School



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Transition Learning and Development Statements Deciding WHAT is important and useful

By understanding what transition and adjustment to school involves for children and what influences a positive adjustment

The transition to school involves strong emotional arousal and a new identity or status as the child experiences a shift in self from preschool child to school child, and the associated behaviours or demands of this new role.



The immense variety in children's development and experiences makes each child's transition to school unique.

Adjustment to school depends on the child possessing a range of skills and behaviours that help them adapt to the new environment.

- social skills - cooperation, assertion, self-control
- behaviour - hyperactivity, externalising, internalising
- academic skills - literacy, numeracy, parent involvement

Factors that influence children's adjustment to school

relative age

older children are slightly more academically competent than younger children

gender

boys generally have more difficulty adjusting to school in terms of social skills and problem behaviours

transition activities

transition programs with many opportunities for children and parents to familiarise themselves with the school environment and its expectations

familiar playmate in the same class

when children know other children and establish friendships they adjust more easily to school

Factors that influence children's adjustment to school

attendance at preschool services

children who attend 3-year-old and/or 4 year-old preschool have less difficulty adjusting to school - social, behaviour, academic

prior to school care

more extensive non-parental childcare has a negative influence on children's adjustment to school

language/s spoken at home

children who do not speak English at home have more difficulty adjusting to school, than children who speak English alone or in combination with another language.

outside-school-hours-care

children who attend before school hours care in the early weeks of schooling have more difficulty adjusting to school

Children's views

Finding and making new friends

Knowing and remembering the school rules

Knowing school and classroom procedures

Academic knowledge and learning related to literacy (writing, knowledge of alphabet and phonics, reading), maths and numeracy, drawing or doing art, and knowing how to learn or work



Supporting children's adjustment to school

Using the Transition Learning and Development Statements



Information about Children

strengths

interests

dispositions

ways of learning

what they know

challenges

what seems to help children

general experiences - at home, outside home, ECCE

what they think about starting school

how they will adjust to school



What information could be provided in relation to the 5 broad learning outcomes of the Framework?

identity

community

wellbeing

learning

communication



Information that could be provided in relation to the 5 broad learning outcomes of the Framework

identity- attachment, esteem, interdependence, self-regulation, empathy, respect, need for prompts/praise

community- cooperate, negotiate, fairness, concern, assist others,

well-being- confident, cope with frustration, physical skills, health, eating, happy, coping with the unexpected, responsiveness to new things, follow reasonable instructions

learning- curious, persist, think, collaborate, question, logic, remember, initiate, attend

communication- language, listen to others, symbols, patterns, tools, literacy, maths, create, arts, technology, talk about own experiences/share ideas

What else will be useful?



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To what extent are your statements 'positive' and useful?

Sarah shows awareness and empathy for the feelings of others

David is easily distracted in whole group sessions
David concentrates well in small groups

Yen Po sometimes has difficulty separating from his mother

Yen Po sometimes needs support separating from his mother

Yen Po sometimes needs support separating from his mother - for example by being given a classroom task such as feeding the fish



More information?

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/earlylearning/>

<http://extranet.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/LED/tec>



Transition to School

Transition programs should be based on a philosophy that children's adjustment to school is easier when children are familiar with the new situation, parents are informed about the new school, and teachers have information about children's development and previous experiences, and school experiences can be adapted to minimise changes and discontinuities (Margetts, 2002, p113).

Transition programs should create links between, and actively involve children, parents, families, teachers, early childhood services, school and the local community (Margetts, 2004).



MARGETTS, K. (2002) Transition to school - Complexity and diversity, *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 2(12), 103-114
MARGETTS, K. (2007) Understanding and supporting children: shaping transition practices. In H. Fabian & A. W. Dunlop (eds), *Informing Transitions: Bridging Research, Policy and Practice*. (Chapter 8, pp 107-119). Open University Press: London.

