

BEST PRACTICES FOR SUCCESSFUL KINDERGARTEN TRANSITIONS



United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley supports successful kindergarten transitions and best practices that align with the six conditions of the Community School model, in particular, family engagement and quality early childhood education strategies.

United Way Role

Technical assistance to support the implementation of approved best practices, grant writing and resource development, and research and evaluation assistance.

Why Do Successful Kindergarten Transitions Matter?

A smooth transition to kindergarten is an essential part of a child's early academic experience. This guide has the field-tested methods schools need to make this happen. Ideal for preschool and kindergarten teachers, administrators and family support specialists, *Successful Kindergarten Transition* introduces a model that has been adopted in diverse schools and communities. This practical book helps professionals:

- Develop a solid Transition Plan for their school
- Implement the Plan
- Stay motivated and Inspired

For more information, please read *Successful Kindergarten Transition: Your Guide to Connecting Children, Families, & Schools* by Dr. Robert C. Pianta and Marcia Kraft-Sayre.

Framework

In the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) transition toolkit, schools will find systematic strategies and common understanding of terms and approaches among stakeholders to increase the success of transition practices. A well-planned, collaborative transition model builds trust and relationships among children, families, teachers and the school community.

OCDEL toolkit includes:

- **Management of Transition Practices:** Emphasizes necessary systematic and structural components for the implementation of best transition practices.
- **School in Community:** Connect programs and services which touch the lives of children and family to provide a seamless system of early education. Linkages between school and these multiple partners provide access to resources and information that can enhance the outcomes of the transition process.



- **Child-to-School:** Practices to help make transition an exciting event with a high level of comfort. These practices help foster positive attitudes toward school and learning, foster positive teacher-child relationships, and help children develop and maintain positive relationships with peers.
- **Family-to-School:** 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.
- **School-to-School:** When sending and receiving teachers use similar strategies; children adjust more easily to school. It is essential that both early learning teachers and elementary school staff work together to overcome the barriers to smooth transition for children and families.

For more information, please visit www.pakeys.org/pages/get.aspx?page=TransitionToolkit.

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Model

Family Connection of Easton is a local kindergarten transition model, which has implemented a myriad of highly successful kindergarten readiness strategies, including development and implementation of a transition plan. Aligned with *Successful Kindergarten Transition* by Dr. Pianta and Kraft-Sayre, strategies include:

- Developing a team responsible for the implementation of kindergarten transition.
- Promoting early registration to families.
- Offering family engagement activities that foster positive attitudes toward school and learning and help families act as partners in their children's learning.
- Building positive relationships with early learning centers.

For more information, please visit www.familyconnectionofeaston.org/Home.html.

Program: Ready Freddy is a program that works to bring together all necessary stakeholders for a quality kindergarten transition. Based out of Pittsburgh Public Schools, the *Reddy Freddy* program works on transition efforts including kindergarten enrollment and attendance. Program includes:

- Event planning guide
- Activity calendar
- Materials for parent and school engagement

For more information, please visit www.readyfreddy.org/.

Program: KinderCamp¹ is a 20-day (4–5 week/summer) targeted intervention program that helps children and their families with limited resources prepare for the transition into kindergarten. The program helps children gain school readiness skills in the areas of literacy, cognitive and social-emotional development while supporting the successful transition of the entire family. Framework guide includes:

- Program design and curriculum
- Sample budget and funding sources
- Guide to collecting and analyzing data

Results: Significant gains in beginning sounds (39% up to 54%), letter sounds (19% to 31%), name writing (33% to 45%), and students possessed greater social-emotional skills when compared to other students at the start of the school year.

Strategy: Berk's County: ReadyRosie is a daily 2-minute video in English and Spanish that is delivered to the computer or mobile device of parents or caregivers with children ages 0–6 years. This unique program models early learning strategies in a way that is easy to understand and reaches parents and caregivers wherever they are. ReadyRosie is currently being piloted in selected school districts.

1 KinderCamp is sourced from United Way of Northern Arizona

