



Transition Guidelines and Planning

1. Introduction

Transitions can be difficult for any child, but may be particularly challenging for children with exceptional needs. A transition plan that allows for advanced notice should be developed to support the child through the change process. Beginning the process early allows adequate time for gathering and sharing information to promote a smooth and positive transition from one environment to another.

2. Definition of the Transition Process

- a. The transition process is an ongoing process of preparing for and adapting to change.
- b. It may involve changes to relationships, roles, expectations, environments and/or routines.
- c. Transition planning helps to ensure required supports and programming are in place in the new environment.

3. Guiding Principles for Successful Transitions

- a. Ensure basic needs are met.
- b. Provide required support and resources to the child in their new environment.
- c. Maintain and encourage positive relationships and a sense of community.
- d. Build collaborative partnerships with all stakeholders.
- e. Prepare for the transition and help the child prepare for change.

4. What are the important transition points for which transition planning is required?

- a. Transition planning includes planning for the following transition points:
 - i. Entry into regulated child care service
 - ii. Transition between one age grouping to another within the child care setting
 - iii. Transition to another child care service
 - iv. Entry into the K-12 school system
 - v. When a child turns 13 and moves out of child care.

5. Who is responsible for transition planning for children with exceptionalities?

Effective transition planning involves a multi-disciplinary approach. The team may include parents/guardians, early childhood educators, inclusion consultants and other professionals such as early intervention specialists, school teachers, and health care involved with the family, who can support a successful and inclusive transition from one environment to another.

6. When does transition planning occur?

- a.** Transition planning occurs on an ongoing basis, however general guidelines to consider include:
 - i.** Six to eight weeks prior to entry into regulated child care or moving to another child care program (family child care home or centre-based)
 - ii.** One to three months prior to moving to another age group, within a regulated child care.
 - iii.** One year prior to entry into the K-12 school system (earlier for children who require physical changes to the new environment or have significant requirements).
 - iv.** One year prior to a child's 13th birthday to plan for transitioning out of child care or transitioning into a different type of care.

7. What does transition planning involve?

- a.** Transition planning is an ongoing, systematic process.
- b.** Transition planning is an expectation of the program planning process for children with exceptionalities.
- c.** Transition planning involves:
 - i.** A collaborative effort
 - ii.** Early and Systematic planning and
 - iii.** Planning that is comprehensive in scope.
- d.** The process will help to:
 - i.** Collect pertinent information regarding strengths, needs, interests, dislikes
 - ii.** Identify other professionals involved and develop a schedule for orientation visits.
 - iii.** Identify what supports, resources and/or programming if any, are needed to support a child entering into the new environment.

8. How is transition planning documented?

- a.** Transitional plans and activities must be documented in the child's Individual Program Plan (IPP). The regional Inclusion Consultant may, with parental consent, provide assistance to the child care service in developing a transition plan to facilitate a smooth transition into the new environment.