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ABSTRACT

Successful early childhood program transitions involve the coordination and continuation of developmental and comprehensive services from birth through age eight. This guide is designed to facilitate the successful transition of children and their families into and out of Early Head Start and Head Start programs and assists in planning for daily transitions to home or child care settings. Section 1 of the guide, "Skill-Based Training," contains four Head Start staff training modules that liken transition planning to traveling on a railroad system. Module 1, "Getting on Track with Transition Planning," provides a framework for effective planning, with activities to set goals based on assessments of current practices, identify key partners, and create a team. Module 2, "Bringing Families on Board for Planning," allows staff to work as a team to improve outcomes for transitioning children and families, with activities to facilitate obtaining and sharing information to develop individualized transition plans. Module 3, "Making Connections with Other Programs," involves assessing and strengthening the relationships among sending and receiving programs. Module 4, "Accessing Services through Community Linkages," encourages staff and parents to identify services gaps, with activities to create an interagency planning team and develop strategies for gaining and sustaining the support of staff and parents. Each module contains workshop and coaching activities, outcomes, key concepts, background information, preparation notes, ideas for applying skills and resources, and handouts. Section 2 of the guide, "Informational Resources," includes summaries on transition planning, comprehensive services, and effective transition practices; program profiles describing promising practices; tools to help in organizing planning; and an annotated list of 24 resources. (Author/KB)

HEAD START®

Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community

Planning for Transitions

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau

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Contents

Skill-Based Training Section

Module 1: Getting on Track with Transition Planning

Contents

Module 2: Bringing Families on Board for Planning

Module 3: Making Connections with Other Programs

Module 4: Accessing Services through Community Linkages

Informational Resources Section

Transition Planning

...A Continuous Process

As you begin to explore this guide, consider this train of thought: children and families connect with many stations in their first few years of life. Ideally, the journey between home, child care, and other services should be full of rewarding experiences. However, families sometimes find it difficult to reach their destinations.

Programs and children are best prepared for each other when transition plans are created and implemented with families, Head Start staff, and their counterparts in other early childhood programs. As they travel along the planning track, these key partners create systems for communicating with each other and for coordinating their efforts. This team effort helps children and families move forward and make progress throughout early childhood.

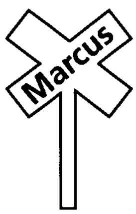
This guide will help you begin the transition planning process by gathering and sharing information about transition practices with families and staff from other programs and organizations. When these partners agree to come on board the planning team, the training activities presented in this guide will help your team find out where you are and where you want to go. Once you have identified goals, you can use many tools, including those contained in this guide, to help you plan and implement action steps that lead toward effective transitions.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards require programs to incorporate transition planning into the overall program plan. The first step your management team can take to meet this requirement is to involve staff in training and coaching sessions from *Planning for Transitions*. By engaging in the **Skill-Based Training** activities and referring to the **Informational Resources** section of this guide, your staff and families will develop a broader understanding of their role in transition planning and identify strategies that can be implemented programwide. They will know how to determine if the program is on track and how to establish new routes when connections have not yet been made.

Planning for early childhood transitions is an investment with short-term and long-term benefits. Feedback from Head Start parents and community partners can help you identify these benefits. The following illustrations reveal the impact that transition planning can have on children, families, programs, and communities.

Preface

Parent Reflections on Transition Planning



Before Marcus began the Early Head Start program I knew there would be forms to fill out. Then the family service worker came to visit and explained that she wanted me to help the program staff make sure we were ready for Early Head Start and that they were ready for Marcus. At the first transition planning meeting, I was nervous, but I soon found out how wonderful it was to have a part in setting goals and deciding on action. The family service worker, the teacher, and I planned experiences that I could have with Marcus at home, strategies for the teacher to use, and a home visit with a parent volunteer.

When our team met again, it was heartwarming to hear the teacher talk about Marcus' progress. It made me feel good to know that what I did at home made a difference in the transition. Everyone agreed on new things we could do to iron out a few problems. When I volunteered in the program the next month, there was no doubt in my mind that our team had been successful—Marcus played happily, sat on the teacher's lap to hear a story, and waved goodbye to me when I left.

So many people helped make Maria's transition into Head Start as smooth as possible! Even so, I was worried about the transition to kindergarten. Now I realize many things are happening that will help Maria next year. For example, each Head Start child is matched with a kindergarten buddy. Every week, Maria tells me about her visit to her buddy's classroom and the fun things they do together.

I found out a lot more about transition planning when our Policy Council reviewed the Program Plan. The plan makes sure that staff are involved in individual, joint, and interagency planning teams. It calls for individualized transition planning for all children, not just for children with special needs.

Recently, staff and parents from Head Start, child care, the school district, and community service organizations all began working together to find ways to provide community services and support to families right in the schools. I just heard that additional funding has come through. The Family Resource Center will open at Maria's school next year when she goes to kindergarten.

I am glad to know that Maria's school will have Spanish-speaking staff and support groups for parents. More than that, I am happy to say that our community commitment to transition planning is making a difference in the lives of all our children and our families.

Overview

Purpose

The purpose of this technical guide, *Planning for Transitions*, is to facilitate the successful transition of children and their families into and out of Early Head Start and Head Start programs. Program staff will also find it helpful as they plan for children's daily transitions from Head Start to home or a child care setting. As a companion to *Effective Transition Practices: Facilitating Continuity*, this guide builds on the concept that successful transitions involve the coordination and continuation of developmental and comprehensive services from birth through age eight. *Planning for Transitions* provides some of the skills and tools staff need to work with families and staff from other programs and agencies to facilitate this continuum of quality services.

Outcomes

After completing this training, participants will meet the following guide outcomes:

- Assess current transition planning practices and enhance their efforts to provide high-quality, coordinated services throughout the year
- Involve families and key partners from the community in a sustainable process of transition planning
- Develop transition goals, action steps, timelines, and tracking systems to continuously monitor the implementation and review the progress of transition plans

Audience

This guide is written for Head Start directors, families, and staff from all program areas. The material can also be used to conduct joint training sessions with staff and parents from other early childhood programs and community service agencies.

Performance Standards

The Head Start Program Performance Standards integrate transition requirements throughout the three program areas—Early Childhood Development and Health Services; Family and Community Partnerships; and Program Design and Management. This guide provides examples of how the transition planning tasks performed by staff in each area can be coordinated in an overall program plan.

The Head Start Program Performance Standards require grantees to develop and implement a systematic and ongoing transition planning process. In addition to providing a framework for transition planning, this guide supports the implementation of these standards by providing various planning tools and making suggestions for their use. These tools assist staff with five stages of transition planning—assess current practices, set goals, define action steps, implement action steps, and review progress to refine the plan.

The program performance standards require staff to establish and maintain procedures that support children and families transitioning into and out of Early Head Start, Head Start, and other placements and programs. The guide assists transition planning teams with the development of effective transition practices and procedures including:

- Coordinating record transfers with families, schools, and agencies
- Supporting communication among parents, Head Start staff, and their counterparts in elementary schools and other early childhood programs to facilitate program continuity
- Convening meetings that involve parents, kindergarten or elementary school teachers, child care staff, and Head Start teachers
- Initiating joint transition-related training of school or other child care staff and Head Start staff

Organization

This technical guide, *Planning for Transitions*, is divided into two sections—**Skill-Based Training** and **Informational Resources**.

The **Skill-Based Training** section includes four training modules. These modules each contain important information about transition planning. Beginning with Module 1, the key concepts and skills build on each other throughout the guide. It is helpful to review previous modules before conducting training from Modules 2, 3, or 4. Throughout the Skill-Based Training section of the guide the trainer is referred to additional materials in the **Informational Resources** section. The additional materials can also be used independently to meet your program needs.

Skill-Based Training Section

Throughout the modules, transition planning is likened to traveling on a railroad system. The transition planning framework helps lay the track used to connect children, families, early childhood environments, and support services throughout the community.

> **Trainer/Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> The following information provides an overview of each module. To identify the activities that best meet your program needs, refer to the *Road Map to the Guide* on pages 6 through 11.

Module 1: *Getting on Track with Transition Planning* provides a framework for effective transition planning and helps staff understand the benefits of planning. The activities help participants to develop planning and to set goals based on an assessment of current practices. Participants will develop skills they need to identify key partners and create a team.

Module 2: *Bringing Families on Board for Planning* allows staff to use planning tools and work as a team to improve outcomes for the children and families entering and leaving their program. The activities enhance the staff's capacity to obtain and share the information they need to develop individualized transition plans.

Module 3: *Making Connections with Other Programs* helps parents and staff assess and strengthen the relationships among sending and receiving programs. Participants develop strategies for learning about other programs, agreeing on goals, and sharing responsibility for developing and implementing joint transition plans with their counterparts in other programs.

Module 4: *Accessing Services through Community Linkages* encourages staff and parents to identify gaps in services that can occur when children and families transition. The activities help participants to create an interagency planning team to address these gaps. Staff develop strategies for gaining and sustaining the support of community service providers, frontline staff, parents, and administrators.

Each module contains workshop activities (for groups of up to twenty-five people) and coaching activities (for one to three participants). To help trainers and coaches, each module includes specific elements:

- **Outcomes** clarify the skills that participants will develop.
- **Key Concepts** provide a summary of the main ideas.
- **Background Information** gives more detail about the key concepts including examples. It may be presented as a mini-lecture or through handouts when introducing the activities.
- **Activities** convey the key concepts and help participants achieve the module outcomes through various experiences. Each activity includes a purpose, materials list, key questions, and points that trainers and coaches can use to facilitate adult learning.
- **Trainer and Coach Preparation Notes** provide additional information to help trainers and coaches prepare the activities.

- **Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice** suggest additional activities to help staff apply the skills and resources learned to their job.

- **Handouts** provide information and resources for each activity.

> **Trainer/Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> At the end of each workshop and coaching activity in this document, participants reach a **Crossroads**. There they are asked to decide how they will extend the training using the information and resources provided. The trainer asks participants to organize their materials in a **Planning Folder** and record their ideas on their **Personal Planning Log**. This step is designed to encourage participants to identify the strategies that they can initiate in their jobs.
>
> To prepare for the **Crossroads**, distribute the **Transition Personal Planning Log** from page 5 and pocket folders to use as a **Planning Folder**. You may choose to attach a copy of the graphic from the **Preface** to the cover of each folder. Explain that these materials will be used with each activity.

Informational Resources Section

The **Informational Resources** section contains documents which can enhance the understanding of key concepts in the guide. Although this section is designed to accompany the workshop and coaching activities, it also provides quick reference materials for planners outside the training.

- **Digests** summarize fundamental information about transition planning and comprehensive linked services. The brief articles reflect current research and express a consensus of expert views on transition issues.

- **Program Profiles** provide descriptions of transition programs from within and outside Head Start. The examples reflect the diverse nature of programs throughout the country.

- **Hands-on Tools** provide staff with transition planning tools such as sample forms, worksheets, and guidelines for developing joint transition efforts.

- **Resources** list resource materials, including books, journal articles, videotapes, and other documents.

Transition

Personal Planning Log

Date	Destination *Task or goal to be accomplished*	Travel Companions *Team members who will be a part of the journey*	Arrival *Target date for completion*

Road Map to the Guide

The *Road Map to the Guide* is designed to assist trainers and coaches in locating appropriate activities. It contains matrix charts showing key questions about transition planning and corresponding activities that address those questions.

The *Trainer/Coach Action Sheet* is included on page 7 to help guide trainers through the process of identifying and planning activities based on staff questions. To use the *Action Sheet*, follow these steps:

- **Step 1:** Brainstorm questions about transition planning.
- **Step 2:** Locate which modules address similar *Key Questions* as identified in the first column of the *Road Map* charts.
- **Step 3:** Refer to the columns labeled *Skill-Based Training Activities* and *Other Activities* to identify potential activities.
- **Step 4:** Review the recommended activities to determine how they can be used or adapted to meet program needs.
- **Step 5:** Choose key partners to be involved in each training and develop a training schedule.

Transition Planning

Trainer/Coach Action Sheet					
Step 1	**Step 2**	**Step 3**	**Step 4**	**Step 5**	
What key questions do staff, parents, and community members have about transition?	Which modules address the questions?	Which training activities are recommended?	How can these activities be adapted for the program?	Which key partners can be involved in each training?	When can such a training be held?

Road Map to Module 1: Getting on Track with Transition Planning							
Key Questions	**Skill-Based Training Activities**						**Other Activities**
	1–1 Workshop	1–2 Workshop	1–3 Coaching	1–4 Coaching	1–5 Workshop	1–6 Coaching	
	Setting the Course	*Framing a Plan*	*Standard-izing Transition Planning*	*Getting on Track*	*Stepping Stones*	*Forming a Transition Team*	
Why is it important to plan for transition throughout the year?	X						2–2
How can we identify our community's transition issues?	X						3–3
What are staff from each area required to do for transition?			X				
What activities will help us create a funding plan?			X		X		2–4, 3–4
How can we set goals for transition planning?	X			X			3–4
How can we keep our planning on track?		X		X			2–3, 2–4
Are there any sample plans we can review?				X			3–4
How can we improve our current plan?		X	X	X			
What are some model transition practices?		X	X	X	X		3–1
Who should be on the planning team?					X	X	2–2, 2–3
How can we involve partners in planning?					X	X	2–2, 2–3

Road Map to Module 2: Bringing Families on Board for Planning						
Key Questions	**Skill-Based Training Activities**					**Other Activities**
	2–1 Workshop	2–2 Coaching	2–3 Coaching	2–4 Workshop	2–5 Workshop	
	Sharing Information	*Assessing Transition Priorities*	*Meeting with the Transition Team*	*Using Planning Tools*	*Fast Forward*	
What kind of information about children and families in transition needs to be shared?	X	X				**4–1**
What are some effective methods for sharing information with programs and families?	X					**3–3, 4–2**
How can we ensure that important information about the child and family is transferred to the next program?	X	X	X			**3–2, 4–4**
What kind of supports do children and families need during transition?		X				**1–1**
How can our transition plans address family needs and priorities?		X			X	**4–1**
How do we create an individualized transition plan for a child or family?		X	X	X		
How can we help families be a part of transition planning?		X	X			**4–2**
What should happen at an individualized transition planning meeting?		X	X			
How do we create a transition team?			X			**1–6**
How can we ensure that individualized transition plans are being implemented?			X		X	**3–5, 4–3, 4–4**

Road Map to Module 3: Making Connections with Other Programs

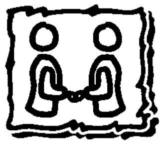
Key Questions	**Skill-Based Training Activities**					**Other Activities**
	3–1 Coaching	**3–2** Workshop	**3–3** Workshop	**3–4** Workshop	**3–5** Coaching	
	Program Linkages	*Beyond Jargon*	*Coordinating Efforts*	*Agreeing on Goals and Action*	*Benchmarking*	
How can we coordinate with many school districts and programs?	X		X	X		
How can we strengthen our existing connections in the community and develop new ones?	X	X				**1–3, 4–2**
How can we break down language barriers and communication problems between programs?		X				
What can we do at our first meeting with a community organization?		X	X			**1–1**
How can we learn more about other community agencies and their promising practices?			X		X	
When working with new partners, what is a good approach for goal setting and action plan development?	X		X	X		**2–2, 2–4**
Is there a communication tool that will help our program work with new partners?				X		**2–3**
How can we prepare for sudden transitions?	X			X		**1–1**
How can we overcome obstacles to coordinating planning?		X			X	**2–5, 4–4**
How can we apply strategies from other programs to our joint transition plans?	X				X	

Road Map to Module 4: Accessing Services through Community Linkages					
Key Questions	**Skill-Based Training Activities**				**Other Activities**
	4–1 Coaching *Accessing Services*	4–2 Workshop *Transition Resources*	4–3 Coaching *Reviewing the Map*	4–4 Workshop *Checking Back*	
How can we assess what services families in our community will need when they transition?	X				2–2, 2–3
How can we assess what services are available in the community?	X	X			2–3
How can we identify family needs and gaps in services?	X	X			
How can we become more familiar with the resource and referral systems of community agencies?	X	X			3–3, 3–5
How can we develop long-term goals and action steps to create continuity in services?		X			1–4, 3–4
How can we communicate our success to others and celebrate progress?			X		2–1
What are some examples of model joint transition practices?			X		3–1
How can we formalize support with our transition partners?			X		
How can we involve frontline workers in evaluating and refining our transition plan?			X	X	3–3
How can we develop a user-friendly tool for evaluating our progress?				X	2–5, 3–5
What are examples of useful feedback and follow-up data?			X	X	2–5

Introduction

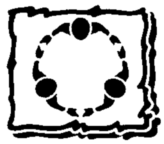
Definition of Icons

Coaching



A training strategy that fosters the development of skills through tailored instruction, demonstrations, practice, and feedback. The activities are written for a coach to work closely with one to three participants.

Workshop

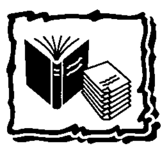


A facilitated group training strategy that fosters the development of skills through activities that build on learning through group interaction. These activities are written for up to twenty-five participants working in small or large groups with one or two trainers.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

These are additional activities assigned by the trainer immediately following the completion of the module to help participants review key information, practice skills, and examine their progress toward expected outcomes of the module.

Continuing Professional Development



These are follow-up activities for the program to support continued staff development in the regular use of the skills addressed in a particular training guide. The activities include:

(1) Opportunities for the participant to continue building on the skills learned in the training

(2) Ways to identify new skills and knowledge needed to expand and/or complement these skills through opportunities in such areas as higher education, credentialing, or community educational programs

At A Glance

Module	Activity	Time	Materials**
Module 1: Getting on Track with Transition Planning	Activity 1–1: Setting the Course (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 1: Focus on the Child* **Digest: Benefits of Transition Planning* Newsprint, markers
	Activity 1–2: Framing a Plan (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* **Digest: Planning for Transitions* **Program Profiles* Newsprint, markers
	Activity 1–3: Standardizing Transition Planning (C)	Two 30–60 minute sessions	*Handout 3: Integrating Transition Services* Head Start Program Performance Standards
	Activity 1–4: Getting on Track (C)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* *Handout 4: Refining Plans* *Handout 5: Laying the Track* **Hands-on Tools: Sample Transition Plans* **Digest: Planning for Transitions*
	Activity 1–5: Stepping Stones (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* *Handout 6: Where Are We?* *Handout 7: Building a Team* *Handout 8: Key Partners* Rope, newsprint, markers
	Activity 1–6: Forming a Transition Team (C)	Two 45–60 minute sessions	*Handout 1: Focus on the Child* *Handout 7: Building a Team* *Handout 8: Key Partners*

* = Refer to Informational Resources Section
W = Workshop Activities   C = Coaching Activities
** = All activities use the Planning Folder and the Personal Planning Log

Module	Activity	Time	Materials**
Module 2: Bringing Families on Board for Planning	Activity 2–1: Sharing Information (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 9: Situations* *Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs*
	Activity 2–2: Assessing Transition Priorities (C)	Two 30–60 minute sessions	*Handout 1: Focus on the Child* *Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs* *Handout 11: Transition Passport* **Hands-on Tools: Information Release* **Digest: Surviving the Late Spring Jitters*
	Activity 2–3: Meeting with the Transition Team (C)	Three 30–60 minute sessions	*Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* *Handout 11: Transition Passport* **Hands-on Tools: Sample Information Sharing Forms* **Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline* **Hands-on Tools: Making Sure Your Plan Succeeds*
	Activity 2–4: Using Planning Tools (W)	90–120 minutes	*Handout 12: Transition Scenarios* *Handout 13: Planning Tools* **Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline* Notebook paper
	Activity 2–5: Fast Forward (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 1: Focus on the Child* *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* *Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs* *Handout 14: Progress Report* Blindfold, masking tape, scissors

* = Refer to Informational Resources Section
W = Workshop Activities   C = Coaching Activities
** = All activities use the Planning Folder and the Personal Planning Log

Module	Activity	Time	Materials**
Module 3: Making Connections with Other Programs	Activity 3–1: Program Linkages (C)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 15: Joint Transition Practices* *Handout 16: Mapping Connections*
	Activity 3–2: Beyond Jargon (W)	90–120 minutes	*Handout 17: Clarifying Jargon* *Handout 18: Pocket Dictionary* Newsprint, markers
	Activity 3–3: Coordinating Efforts (W)	90–120 minutes	*Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* *Handout 19: Learning about Other Programs* Overhead projector or newsprint, markers Notepaper
	Activity 3–4: Agreeing on Goals and Action (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* **Program Profiles* **Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices* **Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline*
	Activity 3–5: Benchmarking (C)	Three 30–60 minute sessions	**Program Profiles* **Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: Benchmarking* **Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline*

* = Refer to Informational Resources Section
W = Workshop Activities   C = Coaching Activities
** = All activities use the Planning Folder and the Personal Planning Log

Module	Activity	Time	Materials**
Module 4: Accessing Services through Community Linkages	Activity 4–1: Accessing Services (C)	Three 30–60 minute sessions	*Handout 8: Key Partners* *Handout 20: Survey of Community Services* *Handout 21: Transition Services Request Form* **Digest: Planning for Comprehensive Services* Community Resource Directory
	Activity 4–2: Transition Resources (W)	Two 45–90 minute sessions	*Handout 20: Survey of Community Services* *Handout 21: Transition Services Request Form* *Handout 22: Referrals and Applications* **Digest: Planning for Comprehensive Services* Community Resource Directory
	Activity 4–3: Reviewing the Map (C)	Three 60–90 minute sessions	*Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* *Handout 23: Expanding Support* **Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: Formal Administrative Agreements* **Hands-on Tools: Sample Transition Plans* Assessment tools
	Activity 4–4: Checking Back (W)	60–90 minutes	*Handout 24: Reports from the Field*

* = Refer to Informational Resources Section
W = Workshop Activities   C = Coaching Activities
** = All activities use the Planning Folder and the Personal Planning Log

Skill-Based Training Modules

SKILL-BASED TRAINING SECTION

Getting on Track with Transition Planning

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Determine comprehensive goals for transition planning
- Use the transition planning framework to assess current planning efforts and implement effective practices
- Identify potential key partners and develop strategies for involving them in the planning process

Key Concepts

- Comprehensive transition goals address the strengths and needs of children, families, programs, and communities. Establishing goals helps participants define destination points and gives direction to transition planning.
- The transition planning framework consists of five stages which occur in a continuous cycle: assess current practices, set goals, define action steps, implement action steps, and review progress. The framework supports the implementation of effective transition practices.
- Planning teams that work together to identify the differences between their current and their desired transition practices can develop strategies to institutionalize effective practices and reach their goals.
- Many individuals contribute to the success of transition planning. These key partners may become involved as core planning team members or as implementors of the plan. They also provide occasional support as advisors to the team or advocates for change.

Background Information

When people are asked about transition planning for children, many think about a time in the spring when parents complete forms and children meet the new teacher. Spring registration or orientation is well established in many programs and schools. However, all too often it is the only transition practice in place.

The process of registering children and families does little to prepare them for the program or to prepare the program for them. Children may not be ready to leave their current setting; new teachers have little information about the interests and strengths of the family; and families are unsure of their new roles. Without transition planning and systems, it is difficult for staff to be aware of the individual experiences of children and families and to create continuity that supports their growth. With a transition plan, parents, staff, and other caregivers can establish systems that link the home, school, and community and provide a web of support for all children.

Meet Maria and Marcus

In this module, two children who are about to transition are introduced. Maria has been receiving home-based services for a year. These services have focused on enhancing Maria's ability to communicate, which has been slow to develop due to her frequent ear infections. Maria lives with her mother, grandparents, and an older brother, who is now in kindergarten and who also participated in a Head Start program. While Maria's mother works at night, Maria is cared for by her grandparents, who speak Spanish.

Marcus is a young toddler who has been cared for solely by his parents. Marcus has little experience around other adults or children. As a result, he is very reluctant to explore new things without his parents nearby.

Benefits for Children

While Maria and Marcus have had very different early childhood experiences, both could benefit from transition planning. For Maria, a home visitor can familiarize Maria's new teachers with Maria's health concerns. For Marcus, planning can facilitate the creation of communication lines that allow his parents and teachers to share their observations as Marcus begins his first experience outside of the home.

When transitions are planned, children of all ages have fewer difficulties adjusting and continuing ongoing developmental progress. Because of planning, they have been prepared for changes, they receive support that builds on their individual strengths and needs, and they enter programs that are sensitive to their culture, language, and experiences. Not only do the children benefit from this planning, but families, programs, and communities benefit as well.

Benefits for Families

By planning for transitions, programs also assist families in fulfilling their role as the child's primary caregiver and advocate. When families are involved in transition planning, parents and other family members understand how to share information and support the child in the new setting. As a result, families are more likely to receive services that address their particular needs. Families also assist program staff in building connections to their children's culture, language, and previous experiences, creating even more continuity.

Benefits for Programs

When program staff plan for transitions, they have fewer problems to address and more strategies to use for resolving issues that do arise when children enter or leave their programs. Because these programs already have systems in place and have developed relationships with other service providers, they are better prepared for both anticipated and sudden transitions. Through planning, staff can reduce the duplication of efforts that can occur within programs and create additional supports to meet family and child needs.

Benefits for Communities

Interagency planning teams consist of partners from various programs and organizations who come together to plan transitions. Through the planning process, the community benefits because the team identifies community resources and gaps in services; collaborates to create new systems to meet the needs of children and families; and engages policymakers and the broader public in addressing communitywide transition issues.

Building a Team

Transition planning requires the participation of many **key partners**: family members, program staff, and representatives from community agencies. A few members of this broad group of stakeholders make up a core planning team that leads planning efforts. Other key partners may contribute to planning in various roles. Some will support efforts by joining the team as **planners** in the early stages of development. Others may share previous experiences to serve as **advisors** to the team. Some key partners will be the **implementors** of the plan and share their observations with the team about how the plan is working. As transition procedures become established, some partners may act as **reviewers** in order to provide feedback about the process. Still other key partners will participate by becoming **advocates** for policy changes. When planners involve potential partners from all areas of their program and community, they are more likely to have the support necessary to achieve transition goals and facilitate continuity for each child in transition.

Transition Planning Framework

A tool that can help guide the core planning team and other partners as they begin their planning efforts is the **transition planning framework** (see *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* in Module 1). This framework can be used by staff from the previous setting (senders) and staff from the new setting (receivers) to coordinate planning efforts. There are five stages in the framework: assess current practices, set goals, define action steps, implement action steps, and review progress. The framework, which consists of a continuous cycle of planning, refining, and preparing for the next set of transitions, supports the development and implementation of effective transition practices throughout the year.

Effective Practices

Effective practices that planning teams can use to improve transitions for children and families include the following:

- Hold periodic joint training for early childhood and school staff
- Establish informal mechanisms for parents to share information
- Develop systems for records transfer between programs
- Involve parents in the process of record review and transfer
- Coordinate planning of major events, such as health fairs
- Create buddy systems for children and families in transition
- Provide opportunities for networking among program staff
- Share resources such as facilities, vehicles, and classroom supplies

By jointly developing effective practices, teams can reduce duplication of efforts. Teams can also help improve overall services to children and families. For example, children such as Maria and Marcus will adapt more quickly when all staff know that Maria speaks Spanish at home and that Marcus has not had much contact with adults besides his parents. Planning team members throughout the community will find they can better meet the needs of individual families and children by working together, rather than separately. They will see how the benefits of transition planning outweigh the difficulties of initiating joint planning efforts.

For more information about effective practices, consult *Effective Transition Practices: Facilitating Continuity*, the transition foundation guide in the **Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community** series.

Crossroads

At the end of each workshop and coaching activity in this document, participants reach a *Crossroads*. There they are asked to decide how they will extend the training experience using the activity's information and resources. The trainer asks participants to organize their materials in a *Planning Folder* and record their ideas on their *Personal Planning Log*. To prepare for the *Crossroads*, refer to Trainer/Coach Preparation Notes on page 4 of the **Introduction.**

Activity 1–1: Setting the Course

Purpose: In this activity, participants will gain an understanding of the factors affecting transition and the need to set clear directions for planning.

Materials:

Handout 1
Digest: Benefits of Transition Planning (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)
Newsprint, markers

Trainer Preparation Notes:

If you are working with a group of participants from many different programs, Step 3 can be used as an introductory activity. Have the participants introduce themselves and share a hope they have for a child or family in transition.

Defining Transition

1. Ask participants to describe all of the different kinds of transitions that children and families experience. Examples might include daily transitions between child care settings, transitions into Early Head Start, and transitions to kindergarten.

Think of a Child

2. Explain that as children move between settings, we have many hopes that address their emotional, physical, and intellectual development. Distribute *Handout 1: Focus on the Child.* Have participants think of a specific child or family. Ask them to record some of their hopes for that child's transition inside the drawing of the child. Then, ask participants to record around the outside of the child the supports that will have an impact on that child's transition—including families, programs, and service providers.

Transition Supports

3. Ask volunteers to share the information recorded on their handouts. First, have them describe their hopes for the child and family. Then, have them describe the supports the child will need in order for the hopes to be met. Record the various supports needed by each child on a sheet of newsprint.

Two Levels of Planning

4. Explain that in order to coordinate the many supports that affect children during transition, planning is needed. There are two levels of planning that are interrelated. To demonstrate, ask participants to think of the process of reserving a train or plane ticket. A large system coordinates all of the pieces necessary for many passengers' journeys. Then, each individual passenger receives a specific plan or itinerary to help him reach his destination. Point out that successful transition planning requires the same two-level structure. The overall system and links created among community partners support individual planning for each child.

Develop Goals

5. Following the travel theme, ask participants to think of transition planning as a journey. Note that the first thing that must be decided for any journey is the destination, or the goal. Divide participants into groups of five or six. Ask each group to discuss goals for:

- Individual children and families
- Their programs
- Agencies and organizations in their community

Reporting Session

6. Reconvene and have the groups report on their discussions. Create a master list of goals for each of the three planning areas. Ask participants to review *Handout 1: Focus on the Child* to ensure that the goals they have listed encompass all of the hopes they described for children in transition. Add to the list if necessary.

Benefits of Planning

7. Explain that planning is required in order to reach these goals and turn hopes into reality. Distribute *Digest: Benefits of Transition Planning* from the **Informational Resources** section and explain that planning has many benefits. Ask participants to think of other benefits of planning for their program.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants use their *Personal Planning Log* to record how they plan to share the benefits of transition and their transition goals with people not able to attend the workshop. Also suggest that the participants place the handouts from the workshop in their *Planning Folder* for future reference.

Activity 1–2: Framing a Plan

Purpose: In this activity, participants will be introduced to the five stages of the transition planning framework.

Materials:

Handout 2
Digest: Planning for Transitions (Informational Resources)
Program Profiles (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)
Newsprint, markers

Systematic Planning

1. Explain that planning for transitions is similar to planning for a journey. Discuss systematic planning methods that participants currently use in their programs.

Discuss a Journey

2. Before introducing the transition planning framework, have participants identify the steps they complete when planning a personal trip. List the steps on the left side of a sheet of newsprint.

Introduce the Framework

3. Distribute *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework.* Explain that the framework is an example of a systematic planning method. Give an overview of the planning stages and the steps listed on the handout. Share information from *Digest: Planning for Transitions* from the

Informational Resources section or distribute copies of the resource to participants. Then ask participants to identify how the framework stages relate to the steps identified in Step 2 and record their responses on the right side of the newsprint. Examples include:

- Gather information about past trips (Assess Current Practices)
- Determine a destination for the trip (Set Goals)
- Create a list of steps to accomplish (Define Action Steps)
- Embark on the journey (Implement Action Steps)
- Keep a travel journal to review in the future (Review Progress)

Discuss Planning Stages

4. Separate participants into five groups and assign each group a planning stage from the transition planning framework. Then, give each group one *Program Profile* and ask participants to:

   - Review and discuss each of the steps listed for their assigned planning stage

   - Discuss how each of the planning stage steps are represented in the *Program Profile*

Review Current Efforts

5. Reconvene the large group and have the small groups report on their discussions. Then ask participants:

   - How is the transition planning framework similar to your program's current systematic planning methods?

   - How could you incorporate the transition planning framework into your overall planning efforts?

   - Which of the five framework stages would you like to strengthen in your program's transition planning process?

Summarize

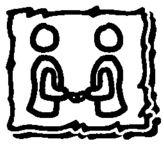
6. Briefly review *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* and highlight the steps of the five planning stages. Reinforce that the framework is a tool that can be used continuously to help planners know:

   - Where they are
   - Where they want to go
   - How they will get there

Crossroads

Suggest that participants use their *Personal Planning Log* to record one practice from the *Program Profiles* that they would like to apply to their current transition planning. Recommend that they keep the handouts from the activity in their *Planning Folder*.

Activity 1–3: Standardizing Transition Planning



Purpose: In this activity, staff members will review the Head Start Program Performance Standards and identify current and required transition practices for their program.

Materials:

Handout 3
Several copies of the Head Start Program Performance Standards
Planning Folder, Personal Planning Log (Introduction)

> **Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> In the Head Start Program Performance Standards, transition is referred to specifically in Section 1304.41 (c) Transition Services. However, it is also interwoven throughout the three program areas.
>
> Before the training, ask staff members to bring to the coaching session any program plans they have developed or applied.

Discuss Planning Outcomes

1. Ask staff members to describe their current transition planning efforts and examine any plans they brought to the training. Discuss how transition planning efforts fit into these plans and overall program planning. Review the results of the program's current transition planning for children, families, programs, and the community. Compare these results to the benefits listed in the **Background Information** section.

Review Transition Standards

2. Provide staff members with copies of the Head Start Program Performance Standards. For a general overview, refer to the information on transition services in Section 1304.41 (c) and discuss the standards listed. Ask staff members how the standards relate to the programming discussed in Step 1. For example, if programs schedule child and family visits to the elementary school, ask the staff members to identify the performance standard relating to this action step.

Integrating Transition

3. Explain that transition affects many aspects of the Head Start program, from health to parent involvement. For example, Section 1304.40 Family Partnerships requires programs to help families access community services and resources. By working with a sending program to assess what services a family has received in the past, Head Start programs can provide smoother and quicker connections between families and community resources. Other examples of transition-related standards include:

- Early Childhood Development and Health Services: Child Health and Developmental Services 1304.20 (a) *Determining child health status*
- Family and Community Partnerships: Family Partnerships 1304.40 (h) *Parent involvement in transition activities*
- Program Design and Management: Human Resources Management 1304.52 (k) (3) (ii) *Training and development*

Explore Performance Standards

4. Have staff members review the Head Start Program Performance Standards to identify other standards relating to transition. Distribute *Handout 3: Integrating Transition Services* and have staff members record their responses in the first column.

Investigate

5. Ask staff members to complete the handout column labeled *Current Program Efforts* after the coaching session, by conferring with parents and staff and checking program records. As staff members complete the handout, encourage them to invite others to join them in planning ways to implement transition performance standards in their program.

Develop Planning Ideas

6. At a follow-up session, review the completed information and examine how program plans currently address transition. Then, have staff members complete the third column on Handout 3, labeled *Transition Planning Ideas*.

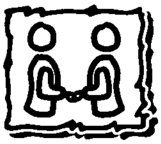
Share Information

7. Help staff brainstorm strategies for communicating the information recorded on *Handout 3: Integrating Transition Services* to other staff members, parents, and community members. Information about potential planning ideas can be shared with members of policy councils, community coalitions, or program management.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants use the *Personal Planning Log* to prioritize one transition performance standard that they will work to implement or strengthen in their program. Suggest that staff members place the handouts in their *Planning Folders* for future reference.

Activity 1–4: Getting on Track



Purpose: In this activity, staff members will review *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* and use it to develop strategies for refining current plans.

Materials:

Handouts 2, 4, and 5
Digest: Planning for Transitions (Informational Resources)
Hands-on Tools: Sample Transition Plans (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, Personal Planning Log (Introduction)

> **Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> Ask staff members to find out about existing transition plans in their programs. If the program has a written plan, have them bring copies to the meeting and skip Step 3. If the program does not have a written plan, work with staff members in Step 3 to identify elements of their planning process that may occur on an informal basis.

Introduce Planning Framework

1. Briefly discuss with staff members their program's systematic planning methods. Introduce *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* as a comprehensive planning approach that can be integrated with their current efforts. Share the information contained in *Digest: Planning for Transitions* from the **Informational Resources** section and emphasize that the framework is a planning tool that can assist transition planning teams in strengthening their planning process.

Review Sample Transition Plans

2. Provide staff members with the three *Hands-on Tools: Sample Transition Plans* from the **Informational Resources** section. Ask them to use *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* to identify the planning stages included in each plan. Explain that each plan addresses various aspects of planning and is written in a different style. Discuss the common elements and differences among the plans. Ask staff members which sample plan most closely meets the needs of their program.

Identify Current Efforts

3. If the staff members' program has no formal written transition plans in place, ask them to think of current informal practices. Distribute *Handout 4: Refining Plans* and ask participants to evaluate their informal efforts in terms of the transition planning framework. Begin by discussing the individual elements of their transition efforts. Then, relate these parts to the stages of the framework. Skip to Step 5.

Review Plans

4. Review the plans that staff members bring to the meeting. Give them a copy of *Handout 4: Refining Plans* and help them to identify the transition planning framework stages included in their plans. Discuss with staff member's the stages of the framework that could be strengthened in their plans to make transition practices more effective.

Set Goals

5. Ask staff members to focus on one stage of the framework that they would like to begin to improve. Distribute *Handout 5: Laying the Track.* Ask staff members to identify the short-term goals and action steps that will lead them from where they are now to where they want to be. Have them follow the directions on the handout to illustrate their plan.

Summarize Benefits

6. Close the session by summarizing the benefits of formalizing transition planning through the use of the transition planning framework. Also highlight the information from *Handout 4: Refining Plans.*

Crossroads

Suggest that staff members use the *Personal Planning Log* to record how they plan to introduce the transition planning framework to other staff members in their program. Also suggest that they place the activity's handouts in their *Planning Folder.*

Activity 1–5: Stepping Stones

Purpose: In this activity, participants will assess their current transition process and identify key partners who can help implement action steps to reach desired effective practices.

Materials:

Handouts 2, 6, 7, and 8
Planning Folder, Personal Planning Log (Introduction)
Rope, newsprint, markers

Introduce Effective Practices

1. Place six newsprint sheets around the room and write on each one a question from the Current Practice column on *Handout 6: Where Are We?* Have participants form six groups and assign them each one question to discuss. Continue as follows:

   - Give each group a few minutes to record their ideas.
   - Rotate the newsprint sheet to the next group.
   - Have each group add their ideas to the list.
   - Repeat until each group has reviewed all six practices.

Small Group Discussions

2. Reconvene the group and review the information recorded for each current practice. Then, distribute copies of *Handout 6: Where Are We?* As a group, discuss the questions in the Desired Practices column and have the participants use the handout to take notes.

Identify Partners

3. Explain to the participants that effective planning involves key partners in a transition planning team. Distribute *Handout 7: Building a Team*. Have participants write in the first column the names of community partners they want to involve in their core transition planning team. Next, ask participants to add to the list other people in the community who would support transition efforts in more secondary roles. Have them refer to Side 1 of *Handout 8: Key Partners* to see if there are any additional partners to include.

Identify Roles

4. In the second column of *Handout 7: Building a Team*, ask participants to write how each person can contribute to the planning team. Refer them to *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework*. Remind participants of the five stages their planning team must address. Potential roles for key players are also listed in the **Background Information** section under **Building a Team**.

Begin Demonstration

5. Recruit two volunteers to come to the front of the room. Ask the group to choose a practice from *Handout 6: Where Are We?* that they would like to improve. Then ask the group to assign the two volunteers roles from the list of potential planning team members.

Brainstorm Strategies

6. Using the group's suggestions, have one person stand at a point representing the current practice and the other at a point representing the desired practice. Give the person at the current practice point a rope. Then ask what strategies could be used to help bridge the gap between these practices.

Trainer Preparation Notes:

If participants have difficulty thinking of strategies, use examples from *Effective Transition Practices: Facilitating Continuity* from the **Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community** series.

Stepping Stones

7. Continue the demonstration as follows:

   - When the group agrees on a strategy, tell the staff member with the rope to throw one end to her partner.

   - If the rope does not reach, ask participants to name another strategy that might be a *stepping stone* to the desired practice. Have another volunteer stand between the first two volunteers to represent this new strategy. Repeat the exercise again until the new volunteer catches the rope and the first volunteer can move to the next stepping stone.

- Together, the two volunteers can now develop an appropriate strategy to toss the rope to the person at the desired point.

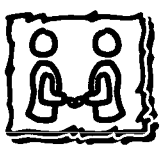
Summarize

8. Explain how the stepping stones represent appropriate action steps and short-term goals for planning and the more distant points represent long-term goals. Using these steps is essential for transition planning teams to improve their current practices and strengthen their relationships with partners.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants use their *Personal Planning Logs* to record several stepping stones or action steps that will help them reach an effective practice listed on *Handout 6: Where Are We?* Also have them list the partners who could help implement these steps. Suggest that participants place handouts in their *Planning Folder*.

Activity 1–6: Forming a Transition Team



Purpose: In this activity, staff members will initiate the development of a transition planning team.

Materials:

Handouts 1, 7, and 8
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)

Think of a Child

1. Distribute *Handout 1: Focus on the Child.* Have staff members think of a child in their program who may have some specific transition needs. On the handout, have participants depict through words or drawings some of their hopes for that child during transition.

Identify Key Partners

2. Review the roles that key partners may play on a transition planning team. Explain that key partners can participate in the planning process as members of a core planning team. Key partners may also contribute to planning by advising the team, implementing the plan, reviewing progress, or advocating for the team.

Identify Roles

3. Ask staff members to use the first column of *Handout 7: Building a Team* to list the people in their community who could assist in planning for the transition of the child they have described in Step 1. Then ask staff members to think of other children with various transition issues and identify the key players who might need to be involved in transition planning teams. Refer staff members to Side 1 of *Handout 8: Key Partners* for additional ideas. In the second column of *Handout 7: Building a Team*, ask staff members to list how they would like these key partners to be involved.

Arrange a Meeting

4. Have staff members select several key partners who may be willing to be a part of the core transition planning team. Using the second side of *Handout 8: Key Partners*, help the staff members plan a meeting to be held during the next coaching session. Explain that the purpose for this meeting will be to initiate a planning team.

Plan the Agenda

5. Work with the staff members to create an agenda for the meeting, which might include discussion of:

- Transition planning goals and directions
- The benefits of planning
- Elements of the transition planning framework
- The roles that the key partners could play

At the Meeting

6. At the next coaching session, allow the staff members to take the lead in the meeting. Introduce yourself as a trainer who is assisting the program with its transition planning. Explain that you will observe during the meeting and take some time at the end to help the participants review their progress.

Summarize

7. Review the results of the meeting. Ask meeting participants:

- Do you believe that you share a transition definition and vision?
- Do you understand the benefits of transition planning and the elements of the transition planning framework?
- If you are interested in becoming involved in the planning team, what do you think are some potential next steps?

Crossroads

Suggest that staff members use the *Personal Planning Log* to record one short-term goal and one long-term goal for maintaining the planning meeting momentum. Suggest that they place the handouts from the session in their *Planning Folder.* Also ask staff members to evaluate how the training is meeting their needs. Review the contents of the other three modules, and ask them which areas they would like to target next.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

The following activities can help participants review key information, practice skills, and assess their understanding of the module's concepts.

- Explain that many promising transition practices are being implemented around the country. Suggest that participants form an interdisciplinary team and research the promising practices that might be effective in their program or community. Provide the team with copies of the *Program Profiles* from the **Informational Resources** section and tell them to discuss practices from the profiles that they would like to implement in their community. Suggest that the team members follow through on their research by contacting representatives from one or more of the programs listed in the profiles or by contacting others in their community who have initiated promising practices. As team members find out more about how other programs initiated their efforts, they can identify goals for their programs and plan action steps to reach their goals.

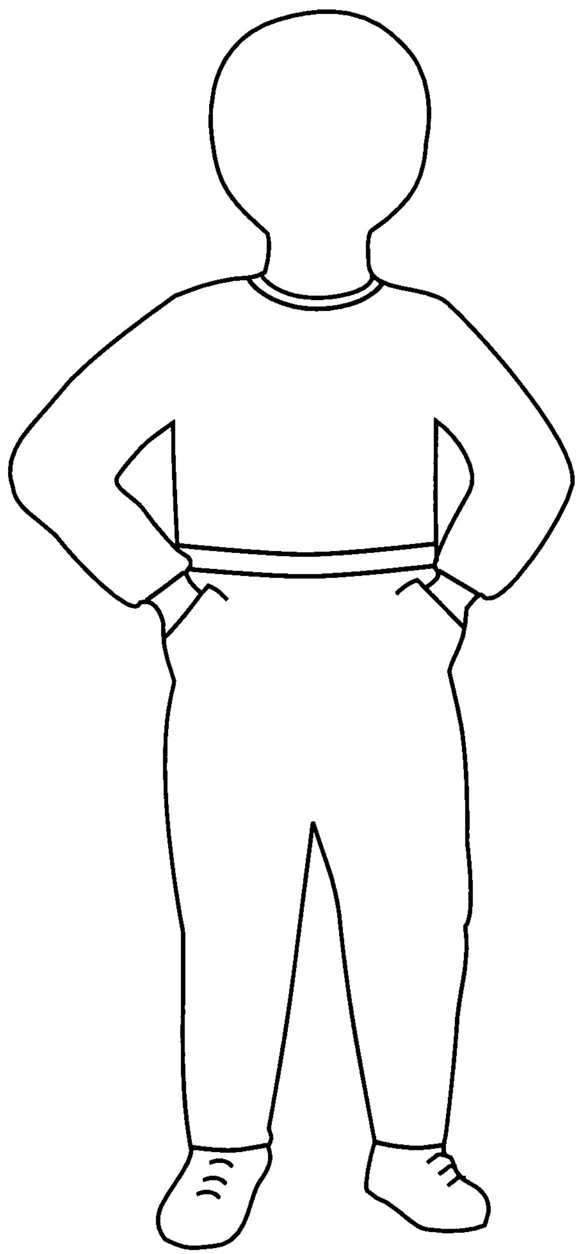
- Provide the team members with the *Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline* from the **Informational Resources** section so they can develop a transition plan that incorporates all the elements of the transition planning framework. Once the program plan has been developed, the team should lead an inservice training focusing on the overall benefits of transition planning and providing staff with the information, skills, and forms needed to implement and track the progress of the plan.

- Have staff perform a programwide assessment of transition practices using *Handout 6: Where Are We?* Once the information is compiled, staff members could be invited to participate in setting long-term and short-term transition goals and developing strategies for achieving the goals. A trained facilitator or experienced professional from another agency might moderate the process of setting goals with all staff. Alternatively, small teams that represent various staff positions could work to develop goals. The entire group could consider the ideas developed by each team.

- Participants can create networking opportunities by inviting community partners to meetings. At the meeting, invited guests can spend a few minutes introducing themselves, describing their program, and providing information pamphlets. In addition, at every meeting, organizers can maintain a contact list of information for each key partner, including the partner's agency name, position, phone number, fax number, address, and e-mail. The list of attendees could be distributed later to all who participated, along with meeting minutes and invitations to attend future events.

Handout 1: Focus on the Child

Directions: *Think of a child or family in your program who has recently transitioned or will soon be experiencing a transition. In the outlined figure below, record through words or drawing your hopes for the child or family during the transition process. Consider all of the changes that occur during transition and describe the outcomes you would like to achieve.*



Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework

Assess current practices and the results of these practices in order to evaluate available resources and needs.

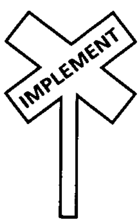
- Informally or formally survey staff and families from your program and the community.
- Review written documents (community assessment, county or state reports).
- Review data from the sending and receiving programs (crisis referrals, absenteeism, retention).

Set goals for desired transition practices and outcomes for families and children based on the assessment of resources and needs.

- Develop a shared vision with key partners.
- Identify short-term and long-term transition planning and implementation goals.
- Identify short-term and long-term individual and program goals.

Define action steps to be carried out by parents and staff members as they work together to meet desired goals.

- Define action steps and clearly indicate who is responsible for each step.
- Set target dates and prioritize steps.
- Make a timeline that includes time to meet and review progress.
- Base the action plan on available resources.



Implement the action steps outlined and keep track of how the plan is implemented, the difficulties that arise, and the progress made.

- Periodically check with the team to provide support (solve problems, answer questions).
- Keep track of resources used and people involved in each step.
- Use a system to document progress (journals, checklists, monthly meetings).

Review progress and identify new issues that need to be addressed as the plan is refined.

- Visit sites to observe the plan in action.
- Meet with those implementing the action steps.
- Ask partners from each organization to review written and anecdotal evidence.
- Hold community forums or focus groups to discuss progress and results.
- Recognize the team process as progress, too.
- Celebrate accomplishments.

Refine the Plan: Use information gathered to reassess needs, set new goals, and define new action steps that need to be implemented and tracked.

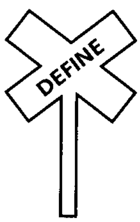
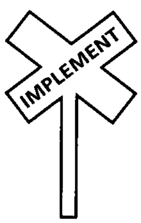
Handout 3: Integrating Transition Services

Directions: *Using the Head Start Program Performance Standards, record all of the standards you can find that could affect transition planning. Then investigate current program efforts and potential planning ideas.*

Performance Standard	Current Program Efforts	Transition Planning Ideas
Example: Education approach must recognize children's individual ability levels, culture, ages, and learning styles.	***Example:*** At the beginning of each year, teachers meet with parents to discuss child's strengths and needs.	***Example:*** Head Start teachers meet with parents and staff from sending programs to share information about child's abilities, learning styles, and preferences.

Handout 4: Refining Plans

Directions: *In the chart below, identify how elements of your current transition planning reflect the five stages of the transition planning framework. In the second column, record strategies for strengthening each element.*

Planning Stage	What elements are included and how are they addressed in the current plan?	What other strategies could we use to refine the plan?
    		

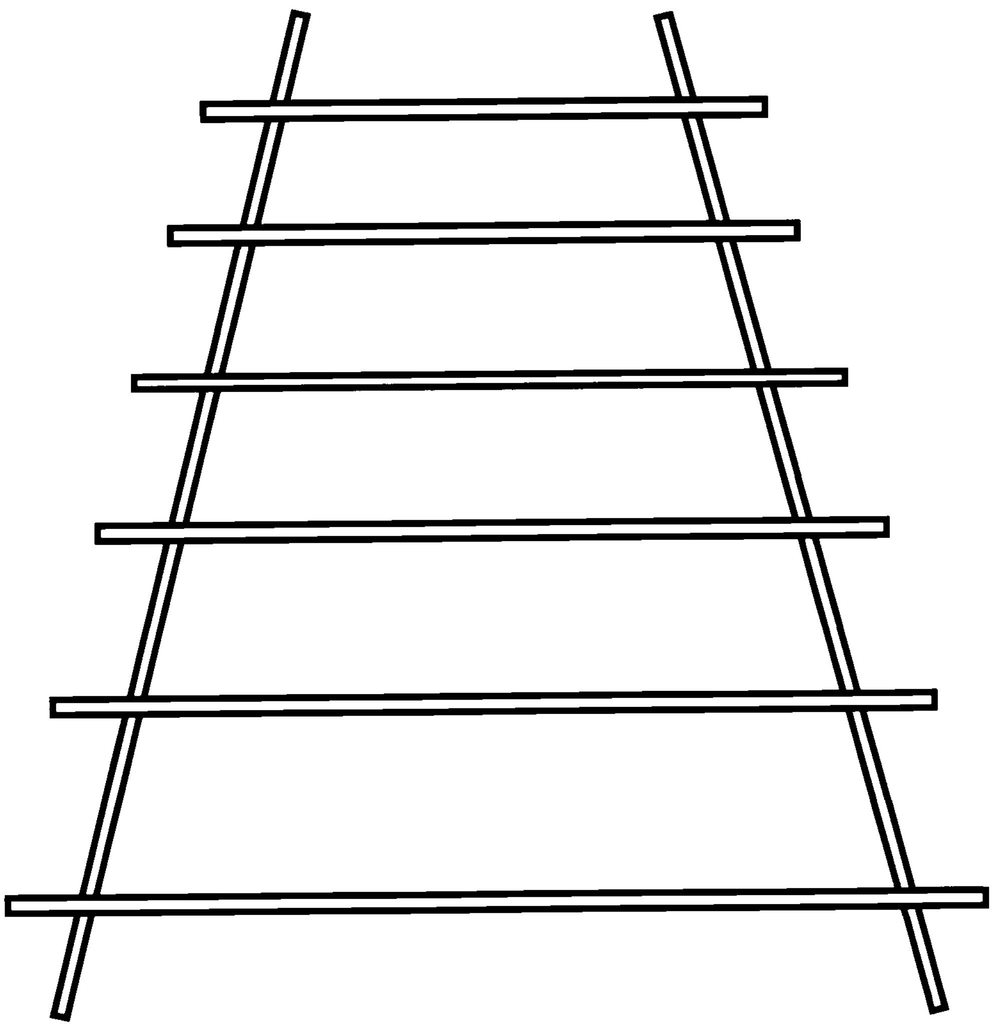
Handout 5: Laying the Track

Directions: *Choose a stage of the transition planning framework that you would like to strengthen in your program. Then, write current practices at the bottom of the page, set a long-term goal at the top of the page, and record action steps for reaching the goal between the tracks.*

Framework Stage:________________________

Long-term Goal:____

Action Steps:



Current Practices:____

Handout 6: Where Are We?

Practice	Current Practice	Desired Practice
Networking	How do staff and families build relationships with others in your program and community?	What other networking strategies might be initiated?
Sharing Information	How does information sharing among staff, families, and other programs assist families and children in transition?	What information would you like to share with other partners in the future?
Establishing Common Goals	Do staff, families, and those within the community have a common understanding of transition issues and goals?	What other goals would you like to share?
Coordinating Services	What transition services are coordinated by program staff and representatives from community agencies?	What other coordinated efforts are necessary?
Formalizing Support	What policies and formal agreements support coordinated transition efforts?	With which other agencies do you need to formalize agreements?
Pooling Resources	What resources are pooled under existing policies and regulations?	What specific resources might be accessed to provide continued services?

Handout 7: Building a Team

Directions: *Using the table below, list in the first column all of the potential partners who may contribute to a transition planning team. In the second column, record the roles that each key partner may play on the team.*

Key Partners	Roles

Handout 8: Key Partners

Early Childhood Community
- ☐ Teachers
- ☐ Center Directors
- ☐ Child Care Providers
- ☐ Principals
- ☐ Parents
- ☐ Head Start Staff and Administrators
- ☐ School Counselors
- ☐ PTA Leaders
- ☐ School Board Members
- ☐ Superintendents
- ☐ College Instructors
- ☐ Resource and Referral Specialists
- ☐ Researchers
- ☐ Parent Educators
- ☐ Early Intervention Specialists
- ☐ Trainers

Service Providers
- ☐ Licensing Specialists
- ☐ Health Department
- ☐ Department of Social Services
- ☐ Private Health Providers
- ☐ Clinical Social Workers
- ☐ Community Action Agencies
- ☐ Pediatricians
- ☐ Family Counselors

Organizations
- ☐ Civic Groups
- ☐ Religious Groups/Leaders
- ☐ High School Clubs
- ☐ Corporate Foundations
- ☐ Professional Associations
- ☐ Job Training Groups
- ☐ Chambers of Commerce

Media
- ☐ Newspaper Reporters
- ☐ Television Reporters
- ☐ Radio Announcers
- ☐ Public Radio
- ☐ Cable Access Directors

General Public
- ☐ Business Leaders
- ☐ Senior Citizens
- ☐ Adult Educators

Handout 8: Key Partners (Continued)

Invite participation in meetings

- ☐ Make a personal contact.
- ☐ Send announcements to key partners.
- ☐ Post flyers in public places and send home invitations with school children.
- ☐ Include postings in community calendars and local newspapers.
- ☐ Make announcements at community association meetings.

Create a welcoming environment

- ☐ Personally greet every participant.
- ☐ Introduce newcomers to the group.
- ☐ Use nametags and sign-in sheets and serve refreshments.
- ☐ Make follow-up calls to show appreciation.
- ☐ Hold meetings throughout the community at convenient times.

Share information

- ☐ Develop a mailing list of key partners.
- ☐ Periodically publish a newsletter.
- ☐ Develop and use a telephone tree.
- ☐ Present progress reports at association meetings.
- ☐ Create anecdotal and data-based reports to share with partners and the press.
- ☐ Conduct workshops at conferences or sponsor joint transition training events.
- ☐ Conduct or participate in special community events.
- ☐ Provide partners with new tools such as curriculum materials.

Provide diverse opportunities for involvement

- ☐ Planners: Organize meetings, write the plan, and explain the plan to others.
- ☐ Advisors: Explain current issues to planners and recommend steps to include.
- ☐ Doers: Carry out events and practices and document and report progress.
- ☐ Reviewers: Review progress to help refine the plan and identify missing elements.
- ☐ Advocates: Testify before policy makers, educate the public, and organize letter writing campaigns.

Develop shared leadership

- ☐ Share responsibility for goal setting and decision making.
- ☐ Celebrate and recognize the contributions of all partners.
- ☐ Allow time for the group members to develop trust and identify their roles.
- ☐ Resist the urge to organize everything; recruit volunteers to head committees.
- ☐ Match your requests for help with the partners' interests, skills, and resources.

Bringing Families on Board for Planning

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Develop and apply systems for sharing information among families and sending and receiving staff
- Work with families to assess their transition priorities and then identify specific transition goals and action steps
- Collaborate with families, school staff, and program staff to develop individualized transition plans
- Use planning tools and review the impact of planning on children's and families' transitions

Key Concepts

- Transition practices meet individuals' needs and facilitate continuous growth when the practices build on the experiences, culture, and language of children.
- Assessment of family transition priorities and current transition practices provides a foundation for planning individual transitions.
- Family members are an integral part of the planning team because they best understand their children's strengths and needs.
- Planning tools facilitate the planning process by helping staff organize, track, and record progress.

Background Information

As children's first caregivers and teachers, families play a key role in all aspects of their children's growth. Families are particularly important during times of transition because they provide a constant as children move between settings. Not only do families provide stability and support for children during this period, but they also serve as the principal information carriers, creating a link between the sending program and the receiving one. Because families are the primary experts on their children, their participation during all stages of transition planning is essential. (See *Communicating with Parents* from the **Training Guides for the Head Start Learning Community** series for more information.)

Families recognize their children's strengths and their families' unique resources. This understanding helps them assess the amount of preparation and support needed for transitions. Module 1 (see **Background Information**) introduces two children preparing to enter Early Head Start and

Head Start whose families could play a key role in transition planning. These children, Maria and Marcus, have different strengths and needs. For the past year, Maria has received home-based services that focused on her communication skills, which have been affected by frequent ear infections. Marcus has never been cared for by any adults other than his parents and is very reluctant to explore new things on his own. His parents would like him to learn to trust the Early Head Start teachers so he can adjust to their absence. Both families play an important role in planning.

Transition Planning Meeting

Both Maria and Marcus will benefit from individualized transition planning. Maria needs assistance in transferring existing skills into a new environment. Marcus needs assistance in developing skills to cope with new experiences. Before Maria and Marcus enter the program, a **transition planning meeting** begins the planning process. The planning teams for Maria and Marcus will include different members. Maria's team may include her mother, her grandparents, the county health worker who has been providing home-based services, her Head Start teacher and director, and a speech therapist. Marcus' team may include his parents, his Early Head Start teacher, and the family and community partnership coordinator who helped the family register.

Transition Planning Framework

Once the planning team has been assembled, the transition planning framework provides direction (see *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* in Module 1). The framework has five stages: assess current practices, set goals, define action steps, implement action steps, and review progress.

The transition planning framework can be individualized as follows:

Assess Current Practices

During the planning meeting, families, Head Start staff, and service providers share valuable information about the Head Start program and its policies, classroom experiences, available services, family priorities, previous experiences, and expectations. In essence, the planning team *assesses* what the child needs for a smooth transition. When sharing information, it is important to consider the communication styles of the individuals involved. Some people prefer to complete written forms, while others prefer to share information orally.

Each member of the team has unique information to share. Maria's family may share their wish for her to develop English and Spanish linguistic skills. The home provider may share strategies that can be continued in Head Start. Because of this meeting, Maria's receiving teacher and speech therapist have valuable information that will help them to better serve Maria. Rather than spending weeks testing various learning strategies, they can build on what she already knows.

During the planning process, Marcus' family may describe the uncomfortable reaction that Marcus has had when left with other family members. His teachers then know that Marcus may need extra time to adjust to the program and that it is beneficial to plan various strategies to help both the child and family. By sharing the ways that Marcus comforts himself at home, his parents provide his teachers with information they can build on as they help him in the program. Marcus' teachers can also share developmental information to help his parents understand how young toddlers perceive separation.

Set Goals

Enhancing English and Spanish language development and establishing positive child-staff relationships are examples of *goals* that the transition planning teams have identified for Maria and Marcus.

Define Action Steps

A transition plan also includes action steps that families and staff can take to achieve these goals. Maria's transition plan may include the following *action steps*:

- The Head Start director will place Maria in a classroom with children who speak both English and Spanish.
- Maria's mother will encourage Maria to speak Spanish at home.
- The speech therapist will practice both Spanish and English sounds with Maria.

Marcus' transition plan may include the following *action steps*:

- Before he begins the program, teachers will conduct several home visits and Marcus will visit the program with his parents several times.
- Marcus' parents will bring Marcus' special stuffed animal from home on a daily basis.
- Every day when it is time for Marcus' parents to leave, the teacher will take him to the window to wave goodbye.

Implement Action Steps

To *implement action steps*, planners need to identify who will be involved, the resources they will need, and when each action step will occur. For example, to ensure Maria is in a bilingual classroom, the program director needs a list of children enrolling and information about their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. She would also need to assign to the classroom bilingual teachers or a volunteer who speaks Spanish.

Review Progress

Reviewing progress occurs throughout the planning process and ensures that the original plans are implemented and that changes are made as necessary. Informal conversations held during pick-up and drop-off, written communications such as journals and daily reports, and formal home–school conferences provide opportunities for families and staff to *review the child's progress*.

For example, Maria's mother notices that several weeks after entering Head Start, Maria is using less Spanish at home. Maria's mother can discuss this change with Maria's teacher when she takes Maria to school. Or she can inform the teacher by using a home–school journal. After discussing the problem, Maria's mother and teacher can adjust their action steps to include teaching some other children Spanish words and posting labels in both English and Spanish in the classroom.

Act as Sender and Receiver

At some point during the school year, staff who were *receivers* of information about a child begin to prepare the child for transition. They now become *senders*, and their role is to provide the receiving teachers with valuable information about the child's experiences. When the time comes to plan for the next transition, Marcus' family will continue to play a key role in providing information, sharing goals, and evaluating potential placements.

Crossroads

At the end of each workshop and coaching activity in this document, participants reach a *Crossroads*. There they are asked to decide how they will extend the training experience using the activity's information and resources. The trainer asks participants to organize their materials in a *Planning Folder* and record their ideas on their *Personal Planning Log*. To prepare for the *Crossroads*, refer to Trainer/Coach Preparation Notes on page 4 of the **Introduction**.

Trainer/Coach Preparation Notes:

When conducting training from this module, use examples from the **Background Information** to help participants understand the planning process.

Activity 2–1: Sharing Information

Purpose: In this activity, participants will develop strategies for formally and informally sharing information between families and early childhood programs to prepare children for transition.

Materials:

Handouts 9 and 10
Planning Folder, Personal Planning Log (Introduction)

Transition Scenarios

1. Have participants separate into small groups. Assign each group a *Current Situation* from *Handout 9: Situations.* Although the descriptions provide few details, participants should do their best to find a solution to the assigned problem. Have one member of each group record the group's suggested solutions.

Apply Missing Information

2. Distribute to each group the second page of *Handout 9: Situations (Continued).* After participants read the *Additional Information* for their situation, have them reevaluate their solutions and make necessary adjustments. Ask:

   - How does this additional information change your original solution?
   - Which key partner was most knowledgeable about the missing information?
   - Sometimes teachers do not review a student's records because they want to avoid being prejudiced. How can this concern be balanced with the need to share appropriate information?

Brainstorm

3. Discuss *Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs.* Ask the group to refer to *Handout 9: Situations* and see if there is additional information that families and staff need to share to prepare children for transition. Have them record their ideas on the bottom of *Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs.*

Small Group Assignment

4. Have the participants form two groups. Ask one group to act as parents and the other group to act as staff members. Using the strategies from *Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs (Continued)*, ask the two groups to decide how they would communicate the information to the other team.

Formal vs. Informal

5. Bring the group back together and have them discuss their various strategies for formally and informally sharing information. Ask:

   - Which methods were parents most likely to use? Were they formal or informal?

   - Which methods were staff most likely to use? Were they formal or informal?

   - Are these two approaches compatible? Why or why not?

Summarize

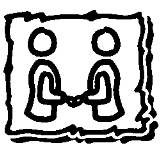
6. Discuss the importance of balancing the strategies used for sharing information. Make the following points:

   - Everyone has a preferred communication style.
   - Everyone can develop supportive styles.
   - Using a variety of strategies improves communication.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants use their *Personal Planning Log* to record a strategy that they can use in their program to improve two-way communication with parents. Also suggest that they store the handouts from the activity in their *Planning Folder.*

Activity 2–2: Assessing Transition Priorities



Purpose: In this activity, staff members will work to assess the priorities that families have for children in transition.

Materials:

Handouts 1 (Module 1), 10, and 11
Digest: Surviving the Late Spring Jitters (Informational Resources)
Hands-on Tools: Information Release (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)

> **Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> This activity is divided into two parts. *Activity 2–3: Meeting with the Transition Team* is the second half of this activity.

Introduction

1. Using examples from the **Background Information** section and from *Digest: Surviving the Late Spring Jitters* in the **Informational Resources** section, briefly discuss the kinds of support that children in transition need. Ask staff members to identify a child who has recently experienced a transition in his home life or early childhood program. Have them write this experience in the drawing of the child

on *Handout 1: Focus on the Child*, located in Module 1. Have them label the left side of the page *Existing Supports* and the right side *Missing but Needed Supports*.

Discuss Supports

2. Ask staff members to name the supports that were available to the child during the transition. Have them write these supports on the left side of the page. Then ask staff members to name supports that were unavailable but that could have helped the child through the transition. They should write these on the right side of the page. Discuss:

   - Why do you think these supports were not available?
   - How would the child's experience have been different had these supports been available?
   - How would assessing the child's situation *before* the transition have ensured that additional necessary supports were available?

Identify a Family

3. Ask staff members to think of a child and family who are preparing for transition. This family should be willing to work with them on a transition planning team. Have the staff members set up a pre-transition meeting with the family.

Prepare for the Meeting

4. In preparation for the meeting with the parents, discuss *Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs*. Ask the staff members to consider:

   - What transition information do you have to share with the parent?
   - What information about the child and the family's priorities do you hope to learn from the parent?
   - How will you address the issue of confidentiality? (See *Hands-on Tools: Information Release* from the **Informational Resources** section for possible resource materials.)

Share Resources

5. Share *Handout 11: Transition Passport* with the staff members. Explain that during their meeting with the parent, they should discuss the form and tell the parents how the information will be used. The parents and staff member should fill out the left side of the form at the initial meeting; the right side will be completed when the full transition planning team meets (see Activity 2–3). The staff member should also describe what the parents can expect in the transition team meeting and what role they can play.

Summarize

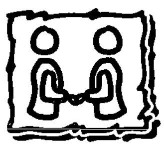
6. Hold a follow-up coaching session after the participants meet with the parents. Review the information that the staff members and parents shared during their meeting. Ask:

   - What are the child's strengths and needs?
   - What are the family's main priorities for their child's transition?
   - How can you help this family continue their participation in the transition planning process?

Crossroads

Suggest that staff members use their *Personal Planning Log* to record the names of family members or other professionals who have been identified as potential transition planning team members. This list will be used in Activity 2–3. Also suggest that staff members store the handouts from the activity in their *Planning Folder.*

Activity 2–3: Meeting with the Transition Team



Purpose: In this activity, staff members work with a transition planning team to develop transition plans for an individual child.

Materials:

Handouts 2 (Module 1) and 11
Hands-on Tools: (Informational Resources)
Sample Information Sharing Forms
Action Plan Outline
Making Sure Your Plan Succeeds
Planning Folder, Personal Planning Log (Introduction)

> **Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> This is the second part of *Activity 2–2: Assessing Transition Priorities*. If staff members have not completed that activity, provide them with the time and assistance they need to meet with a family and collect information about their transition priorities.

Review Activity 2–2

1. Hold an initial coaching session. Review the information gathered in Activity 2–2 about a child and family preparing for transition. Explain that the next step is to have the staff members and family share this information with a transition planning team. Refer the staff members to the list of potential planning team members developed at the *Crossroads* of Activity 2–2.

Introduce the Action Plan Outline

2. Have the staff members organize a meeting with the potential partners and the child's family. Prior to the transition planning meeting, review with staff members the *Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline* from the **Informational Resources** section. Discuss how this planning tool helps record goals, define action steps, and keep track of a child's progress. Also review *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* from Module 1. Explain that the purpose of the transition team meeting is to set goals and define action steps.

Share Information

3. To provide participants with another resource for the meeting, distribute the five *Hands-on Tools: Sample Information Sharing Forms* from the **Informational Resources** section. These forms are:

   - *Individualized Transition Plan Conference Guide*
   - *Who Is This Child?*
   - *Intake Form*
   - *Worksheet for Sharing Information about Your Child*
   - *Information Release*

   Explain that these tools help the transition planning team members communicate information about their programs and the children and families in transition. Ask meeting participants to consider which forms would be helpful to the transition planning team.

Role of the Coach

4. Provided the family gives permission, the coach should attend the transition planning meeting as an observer and explain that his or her role is to observe and provide support during the initial planning efforts. The staff members being coached should lead the meeting.

Meeting Structure

5. Staff members and parents can begin the meeting by sharing *Handout 11: Transition Passport*, which was partially completed in Activity 2–2. The team can then brainstorm strategies to support transition and record this information on the right side of the page.

Action Plan Outline

6. After reviewing *Handout 11: Transition Passport*, the group can use the *Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline* from the **Informational Resources** section to record the goals, action steps, and follow-up methods that senders, receivers, and parents can use to design an individualized transition plan for the child. Suggest that the staff members being coached conclude the meeting by emphasizing the roles that each team member, including parents, will play.

Summarize

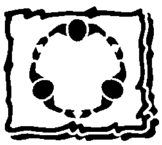
7. Hold a follow-up coaching session. Discuss the importance of making sure that actions steps are implemented. Refer them to *Hands-on Tools: Making Sure Your Plan Succeeds* from the **Informational Resources** section for more information. Ask:

- How did the group decide to keep track of progress?
- How will you adjust the plan when necessary?
- How will you maintain the family's participation?

Crossroads

Suggest that staff members use the *Personal Planning Log* to record how this planning process can be applied to all children in the program. Recommend that the staff members store the handouts and tools from the activity in their *Planning Folder*.

Activity 2–4: Using Planning Tools



Purpose: In this activity, participants use planning tools to develop individualized transition plans for children.

Materials:

Handouts 12 and 13
Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)
Notebook paper

Individual Tools

1. Explain that in addition to everyday tools, participants have many *mental tools*, such as good problem-solving abilities or consensus building skills. On a small piece of paper, ask each participant to record her name and one *tool* that she brings to the planning process. Collect the papers and set them aside until the end of the training.

Introduction to Activity

2. Ask participants to suggest tools that are used in Head Start and explain how they assist in accomplishing tasks (for example, the Program Information Report). Explain that in this workshop, participants develop and apply the tools needed to create individualized transition plans.

Planning Tools

3. Have participants separate into small groups. Assign each group a scenario from *Handout 12: Transition Scenarios* and provide them with *Handout 13: Planning Tool A*, *B*, *C*, or *D* as indicated. Tell the groups to develop an individualized transition plan.

Discuss Benefits

4. Discuss how using such tools helps staff plan transitions. Ask:

   - How did the planning tool help you to organize goals and action steps?

   - How flexible was the tool for recording important information from the family and previous programs?

   - How can a planning tool help you keep track of progress?

Create a Planning Tool

5. Have participants form new groups that contain a mix of people who have used different planning tools. Have the participants design a transition planning tool that incorporates the best elements of the four individual tools used in Steps 3 and 4. Allow time for each small group to share their new-and-improved planning tool.

Distribute Action Plan Outline

6. Reconvene and ask participants to discuss how the right tool can make planning easier. Explain that an ideal planning tool helps a team list goals or strategies, plan action steps, describe benefits, assign responsibilities, establish a deadline, and describe a system for documenting progress. Share the *Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline* from the **Informational Resources** section so participants can see a comprehensive example of a planning tool.

Summarize

7. Bring out the papers collected in Step 1. Explain that all of the team's internal tools supplement their new planning tools. Have each participant select a piece of paper and point out the person and tool recorded on it. Close by saying that everyone on the team has a tool that is useful to the group.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants record in their *Personal Planning Log* how they can use transition planning tools in their overall program planning. Also suggest they store the activity handouts in their *Planning Folder.*

Activity 2–5: Fast Forward

Purpose: In this activity, participants will review current transition plans, compare them with the original transition plan goals, and recommend necessary adjustments.

Materials:

Handouts 1 and 2 (Module 1), 10 and 14
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)
Blindfold, masking tape, scissors

> **Trainer Preparation Notes:**
>
> Steps 2 and 3 are a variation of the game pin the tail on the donkey. Clear a small area of the room near a wall and tape an *X* on the wall. Cut out several figures of *Handout 1: Focus on the Child* and put a piece of tape on the back of each figure. The object is for the blindfolded participants to place the cutouts on the *X*, which you may refer to as a child care center, Head Start program, or kindergarten classroom.

Review Planning Framework

1. Review *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* from Module 1. Have volunteers give examples of steps that apply to the first four stages. For example, to assess, a receiving teacher may have a phone conversation with a sending teacher. Explain that planning teams often complete the first four stages of the framework, but they usually do not review progress or refine plans.

Hands-on Activity

2. Ask a volunteer to come to the front of the room to be blindfolded. Explain that the goal of the activity is to help move the child to the new program, represented by the *X*. Hand the person the paper cutout and spin him or her around several times. Do not allow anyone to speak to the person as they place the cutout on the wall. Leave the child taped to the spot where the volunteer placed it.

Repeat Demonstration

3. Repeat Step 2 but use two volunteers. Blindfold one and tell the second volunteer to give feedback on the first volunteer's progress toward his goal. Then ask:

   - Which person put the child closest to the destination?
   - How did having a partner to review progress and share information assist in getting closer to the goal?
   - What did this activity demonstrate about transition planning?

Review Progress

4. Distribute *Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs (Continued)*. Have participants place a check beside the information sharing methods that they can use to review progress and give feedback. Discuss:

   - What are the differences between using this method to check progress and using it to assess?
   - How do you include methods for reviewing progress in a child's transition plan?

Check Progress

5. Discuss methods for following up on individual children, such as sharing progress reports, visiting the child in a new setting, or conducting follow-up meetings. Discuss and compare the benefits of the methods participants have used in their programs.

Use Scenarios

6. Have participants separate into small groups. Assign either the scenario for Maria or for Marcus from *Handout 14: Progress Report* to each group. Tell the groups to read the *Transition Plan* and the *Fast Forward* descriptions and discuss the following topics:

- What progress has been made toward the goal so far?

- What additional action steps could be taken to refine the plan to reflect new circumstances?

- How could a timeline assist the transition team in reviewing progress more regularly in the future?

Summarize Experiences

7. Reconvene the entire group and have participants share their strategies for reviewing and documenting progress. After they have shared their strategies, make these points:

   - It is important that the individualized transition planning process for all children includes a plan for reviewing progress.

   - All team members, including parents, share responsibility for accomplishing tasks, reviewing progress, and adjusting plans.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants use their *Personal Planning Log* to record current transition efforts that need to be reviewed by their planning team. Suggest that they store their handouts in their *Planning Folder*.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

The following activities can help participants review key information, practice skills, and assess their understanding of the concepts in this module:

- Have participants contact a staff person from another program to discuss how that program shares information with families. Ask participants to set up a meeting with this person to compare that process with the one used by their program. At this meeting, participants should review forms that their programs use to share and collect information. Together, they can develop forms that both programs can use or incorporate each other's ideas into their own process.

- Have participants review the ***Accreditation Criteria & Procedures of the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs***, published by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Ask them to identify the criteria that address transition issues for children and families. Have participants select one criterion as a goal for their program and, in conjunction with other staff, have them develop an action plan for achieving this goal.

- Have participants identify a child who is preparing for transition. Ask them to meet with the people who have or will have regular contact with the child. This group could include family members, sending and receiving teachers, social service personnel, and others. During this meeting, family members and sending staff could use one of the information sharing tools or create a collage of words, pictures, and drawings that describe the child's personality, significant life experiences, likes and dislikes, family aspirations, and teacher observations. Receiving staff can use this opportunity to ask specific questions. After the profile is finished, the receiving staff can take it back to their programs and share it with others who will have contact with the child.

- Ask participants to follow up on a child whose transition placement they recently planned or coordinated. Have them informally survey the parents to learn how they felt about the transition and to request permission to discuss the child's progress with staff from other programs and agencies. Tell staff to ask about additional issues that may concern the child, family, or receiving program. Help staff answer these questions and schedule a follow-up meeting.

Handout 9: Situations

Directions: Read the scenarios below and discuss possible solutions.

Current Situation

Steven

Steven's family is moving to a new town. His parents can enroll Steven in one of two schools. The first school, where they plan to enroll Steven's older brother, is across the street from their home. The other school offers more services to families, but to get there, Steven would have to take a fifteen-minute bus ride. It is time to register, and his parents need to decide which school would be better for Steven. As the family services coordinator, which school would you recommend?

Demitrius

Demitrius is a new child in your Early Head Start Program. Each afternoon when his babysitter arrives to pick him up, he hides under a table. It takes ten minutes to coax him out to go home. As his teacher how would you help Demitrius and his babysitter?

Shephali

Once every few weeks, Shephali refuses to eat lunch. When the teacher encourages her to *try* to eat, she plays with the food but does not finish it. On these afternoons, Shephali is not interested in any activities. She seems sleepy and inattentive. She does not even want to paint, which is one of her favorite activities. As a teacher, what could you do to help Shephali?

Handout 9: Situations (Continued)

Directions: *Read the scenarios below, and using the additional information, evaluate your previous solutions.*

Additional Information

Steven

During a meeting with Steven's parents, the transition coordinator learned that Steven had some speech delays for which he was receiving services at Head Start. The coordinator knows that the school farther from Stephen's home offers daily, integrated services to children with speech delays, while the school across the street buses children to the other school for speech services. At the school across the street, children receive this service only once a week.

Demitrius

When Demitrius' aunt enrolled him, she told the social services specialist that his mother is very ill. Demitrius' mother has been hospitalized for two months and no longer lives at home. The aunt also explained that Demitrius has a hard time when he is at his home with a babysitter or his grandmother, especially since his mother has been in the hospital. Although the aunt works during the evenings, she tries to have Demitrius spend nights and weekends at her home.

Shephali

The health intake form describes Shephali as a typically active child who tends to get tired in the late afternoons, especially if she is hungry. In response to the question on dietary restrictions, Shephali's parents had written, *no meat*. The health specialist had written, *When meat is served, we will provide an alternative for Shephali.*

Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs

Directions: *The following are suggestions about the kinds of information that families and staff can share. Add your suggestions in the space provided below.*

The child and family:

- ☐ Home cultures and languages
- ☐ Child's strengths
- ☐ Child's interests
- ☐ Child's accomplishments
- ☐ Home experiences
- ☐ Daily routines
- ☐ Health or dietary needs
- ☐ Family's goals for the child
- ☐ People important to the child
- ☐ Parenting practices
- ☐ How parents want to be involved

The program:

- ☐ Program philosophy
- ☐ Program policies
- ☐ Program routines
- ☐ Transition procedures
- ☐ Transition processes
- ☐ Registration process
- ☐ Records transfer
- ☐ Teaching styles
- ☐ Services available for families
- ☐ Child development
- ☐ Ongoing progress
- ☐ Parent involvement opportunities

What other kinds of information might families share?

What other kinds of information might programs share?

Handout 10: Information Sharing between Home and Early Childhood Programs (Continued)

Directions: *Review the strategies suggested below for sharing and obtaining information.*

Informal Strategies

- ☐ Telephone conversations
- ☐ Informal pick-up and drop-off conversations
- ☐ Home and school visits
- ☐ Enrolled parents mentoring incoming parents
- ☐ Social events for families and children before school begins

Formal Strategies

- ☐ Transition planning meetings
- ☐ Meetings and intake forms during the registration process
- ☐ School and community meetings
- ☐ Scheduled parent meetings before child enters a new program
- ☐ Follow-up meetings and notes

Written Strategies

- ☐ Written correspondence such as notes or home–school journals
- ☐ Program, school, or community newsletters
- ☐ Monthly activity calendars

Hands-on Strategies

- ☐ Child portfolios
- ☐ Dramatic play with children
- ☐ Role play a day in the new program
- ☐ Kindergarten children preparing information for Head Start children

Handout 11: Transition Passport

Directions: *Attach a photo or draw a picture of a child in the small box. Then, on the left side of the page, describe the strengths, needs, and priorities that team members have identified for the child. On the right side, describe strategies that your program can implement to help meet these needs.*

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">TRANSITION PASSPORT</th></tr>
<tr><td>Child/Family Name

____

Sending Program

____

Receiving Program

____

Strengths:

Needs:

Transition Priorities:</td><td>Strategies to Support Transition:

Staff and Family Member Roles:</td></tr>
</table>

Handout 12: Transition Scenarios

Directions: *Using one of the scenarios below and Handout 13: Planning Tool A, B, C, or D, create an individualized transition plan for the child and family.*

Lynston (Use *Planning Tool A: Action Plan)*

Lynston has blossomed since he began Head Start. For the first time, he and his mother have been able to access mental health services, which has helped both of them deal with a previous domestic violence situation. Unfortunately, Lynston's out-of-state grandmother has become ill, and his mother has decided to move the family. She is wondering how she can build on the progress Lynston has made when she enrolls him in a state-funded preschool. Plan action steps that can be implemented immediately and in the next few months.

Pilar (Use *Planning Tool B: Sample Transition Timeline)*

Pilar is a toddler who lives with her grandparents. Her home language is Spanish. During the past year, Pilar has been receiving home-based services from a state-funded early intervention program. Pilar's aunt arranged for these services when Pilar could not talk and had a difficult time walking. The family hopes she can continue to receive these services in a preschool setting in six months when she turns three. She will no longer qualify for services from the early intervention program. Plan a nine-month timeline for completing each step of the transition process for children with disabilities.

Anthony (Use *Planning Tool C: Planning Calendar)*

Anthony has been attending an Early Head Start program. In September, he will begin the Head Start program that is located in the same building. Eventually, he will attend kindergarten in this building. At the end of this school year, the nurse who serves Early Head Start and Head Start will be retiring. Anthony's family is worried about the change because Anthony has asthma and this nurse was extremely helpful to him. Anthony's parents are concerned that the new nurse will not be familiar with Anthony's special health needs. Plan transition practices for the next twelve months.

Sabrina (Use *Planning Tool D: Head Start/School System Plan of Action)*

Sabrina is five and has attended Head Start for two years. The family recently registered her for kindergarten and discovered that none of the other children from Sabrina's Head Start class will be attending the same school. Sabrina's mother is concerned that Sabrina will have a hard time making new friends and that she may get lost trying to find her new class. Sabrina's mother has enjoyed serving on the Policy Council. She wonders what opportunities there are for parent involvement in the new school. Plan and assign transition tasks that will assist Sabrina before and after she enters the kindergarten class.

Handout 13: Planning Tool A
Action Plan

Head Start Program ______________________ School District ______________________

Objectives

1. ______________________

2. ______________________

3. ______________________

Objective 1:		
Action Steps	Target Date	Who

Objective 2:		
Action Steps	Target Date	Who

Objective 3:		
Action Steps	Target Date	Who

(Portgage Project)

Handout 13: Planning Tool B
Sample Transition Timeline

***Note:** This sample transition timeline identifies what steps will be followed in planning transitions for children with disabilities, who is responsible for each step in the transition process, and when each step will be accomplished. This includes steps that are required by law as part of the IFSP and steps that are options to consider when developing a transition plan. Steps that are required as part of the IFSP appear with an asterisk (*).*

Date	Responsibility	Steps
______________	____________________	Hold first planning meeting to begin the transition process.
______________	____________________	Develop a transition plan and provide information concerning child and parent rights.*
______________	____________________	Identify goals and methods to prepare the child and family for transition.*
______________	____________________	The family provides consent for release of information to public school and other programs or services.*
______________	____________________	Identify necessary evaluations to determine eligibility for continued special education services and conduct evaluations.*
______________	____________________	The transition team discusses eligibility for continued special education services and other issues related to transition, and identifies future program options (MDC meeting).*
______________	____________________	Members of the transition team visit program options.
______________	____________________	If the child is eligible to receive special services, the transition team writes the IEP and identifies new program(s) and services.
______________	____________________	The family and child visit the new program and meet with the teacher and related services staff.
______________	____________________	The early intervention staff transfers records and contacts the new program staff to exchange information.*
______________	____________________	The child starts the new program on the eligible or agreed upon date.
______________	____________________	The family meets with the new program staff to assess child adjustment.
______________	____________________	Early intervention and the new program staff evaluate the transition process, including child adjustment and family satisfaction.

Adapted from: *Planning Your Child's Transition to Preschool: A Step-by-Step Guide for Families*, FACTS/LRE Project, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign.

Handout 13: Planning Tool C
Planning Calendar

Directions: *Identify transition practices and plan when each will be implemented over the next twelve months.*

Transition Practices	Month 1:	Month 2:	Month 3:	Month 4:	Month 5:	Month 6:
Transition Practices	**Month 7:**	**Month 8:**	**Month 9:**	**Month 10:**	**Month 11:**	**Month 12:**

Handout 13: Planning Tool D
Head Start/School System Plan of Action

Head Start Program ____________________

Contact Person ____________________

Telephone Number ____________________

Date ____________________

School District ____________________

Contact Person ____________________

Telephone Number ____________________

Task(s)/Objectives	School System Responsibilities/Contact Person	Head Start Responsibilities/Contact Person	Date Task/Objective To Be Completed

Handout 14: Progress Report
Maria

Transition Plan—August

Goal:

Maria's family, the sending program, and the Head Start program will coordinate services so that Maria continues to develop her English and Spanish language skills.

Action Steps:

- Maria's health records will be forwarded so that the Head Start staff is familiar with her frequent earaches and their potential impact on her language development.
- The Head Start director will place Maria in a classroom with children who speak both English and Spanish.
- Maria's mother and grandparents will encourage her to speak Spanish at home.
- The Head Start speech therapist will make sure that Maria practices both Spanish and English sounds when she works with Maria.

Fast Forward—November

The home-based provider who worked with Maria prior to her transition to Head Start forwarded Maria's health records, but the health coordinator could not use them because they were in an unfamiliar format. The Head Start director tried to place Maria in a class with children who speak Spanish, but there is only one other child enrolled this year who speaks Maria's native language. Her teacher has reported that Maria is extremely quiet in class, and although she seems to want to participate, she is hesitant to interact with the other children. The speech therapist has been working with her regularly and has prioritized Maria's English skills because these are the ones that she will need most in Head Start. Maria's grandparents have noticed that Maria is using less Spanish at home.

- What progress has been made toward the goal so far?
- What additional action steps could be taken to refine the plan to reflect new circumstances?
- Develop a timeline to assist the transition team in reviewing progress more regularly in the future.

Handout 14: Progress Report (Continued)
Marcus

Transition Plan—November

Goal:

Marcus' family and the Early Head Start staff will work closely together to create an environment that supports the development of trust as Marcus separates from his parents.

Action Steps:

- Before he attends the program, Marcus' teachers will conduct home visits and his parents will bring him to visit the program.
- Once Marcus is enrolled, his parents will bring his special stuffed animal from home on a daily basis.
- Every day when it is time for Marcus' parents to leave, the teacher will take him to the window to wave goodbye.

Fast Forward—January

The Early Head Start teacher made several home visits before Marcus entered the program. During the last home visit, Marcus was comfortable with the teacher when his parents left them alone in the room for a short time. His mother brought him to visit the program the day before he was enrolled and stayed with him on the first day of care. For the first few weeks, Marcus clung to his stuffed animal and cried for long periods of time after his parents left for the day. The teacher explained to the parents that this was not unusual for a toddler. Two weeks ago he stopped crying and waved goodbye without any tears. Now after a brief illness, he screams and cries uncontrollably as soon as his parents leave. When his teacher wanted to console him with his special animal, she discovered that he had not brought it and she did not know why. The father explained that throughout Marcus' illness he clung to the animal. They were worried that Marcus was too dependent on the stuffed animal and felt he should not bring it to the program.

- What progress has been made toward the goal so far?
- What additional action steps could be taken to refine the plan to reflect new circumstances?
- Develop a timeline to assist the transition team in reviewing progress more regularly in the future.

Making Connections with Other Programs

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Assess joint transition practices, the relationships among staff in different programs, and the role of each program in planning and implementing initiatives
- Build relationships between sending and receiving program staff by exchanging information about program-specific terms, program policies, transition practices, and goals
- Establish common goals and share with key partners the responsibility for planning and implementing joint transition efforts

Key Concepts

- Staff can develop effective strategies for coordinating transitions by assessing program connections, including their relationships with staff from other programs.
- When partners are familiar with each others' terminology, policies, practices, and regulations and when they can agree on goals, they reduce misunderstandings, enhance communication, and plan more efficiently.
- Coordinated transition planning based on common goals and shared responsibility ensures that children and families receive support from both senders and receivers throughout the transition process.

Background Information

In the same way that individual transition planning creates positive outcomes for children like Maria and Marcus, joint transition planning creates positive outcomes for each program involved. Program staff gain a broader understanding of the issues children and families face as they move between settings. Joint planning helps staff develop ongoing efforts within their programs to address these issues, thereby increasing the overall quality of the program. In addition, joint planning ensures that resources are pooled and programs are not duplicating efforts.

Supporting Children and Families

Coordinated transition efforts are easier to plan when staff have developed an understanding about each other's programs and strategies for communicating with each other. Staff from both sending and receiving programs work as a team coordinating transition efforts such as health fairs, summer learning packets, multi-age classroom activities, and systems to track children's progress. Through strong program connections and regular contact, these staff establish continuity for children and families. Then, when it is time to meet for individual transition planning, staff have already laid the foundation for effective transitions between their programs.

In the case of Maria, the Head Start program is located in the elementary school building. The Head Start and kindergarten teachers conduct joint classroom activities on a regular basis. For Maria and her peers, familiarity with the environment eases transitions. The Head Start children become accustomed to the next classroom, hear about the class from older peers, and learn the routines before they move to the next class. In addition, the children establish a relationship with the kindergarten teacher before they leave Head Start.

In some instances, although programs may be located many miles from each other, they still have similar philosophies and regularly share information about their daily activities and special events. These connections help staff provide support to families during transitions. For example, staff from an Even Start Program and a Head Start Program may discover at a statewide conference that they have similar philosophies. Although they are not located near each other they can keep in contact by exchanging newsletters and regularly engaging in phone conversations. Then, when families move between settings, sending staff can point out the activities and services that will continue or help the family make a personal contact with staff in the receiving program.

Some programs do not have strong connections with other programs. The programs may be isolated by distance, philosophy, and even language. **Jargon**, or acronyms and other program-specific terminology, makes communication difficult. Planning transitions can be very frustrating for both staff and families without these connections. Transition planning meetings may be ineffective because of poor communication among programs. Parents may have difficulty obtaining necessary forms because of insufficient coordination among programs. Neither staff nor parents have accurate information to share with the child, and as a result, the transition is difficult.

Beginning Connections

Beginning program connections arise from the initiative of an individual or the need of a small group working on a short-term project. These connections are not reliable from year to year. However, they provide a starting point for establishing stronger connections. For example, a staff member who has taken responsibility for organizing an informal idea exchange with her counterpart in another program creates a link between programs. This link might be broken if she leaves the program. However, connections can be strengthened by sharing ideas programwide.

Established Connections

Regular participation of partners in planning meetings and annual joint initiatives such as health fairs and joint training indicates **established** connections. These established connections increase the effectiveness of coordinated efforts. When planning teams meet regularly to review their progress, issues in implementation can be discussed and new strategies developed. For example, individualized transition conferences might be ineffective because staff do not have adequate planning time for the conferences. The team can ensure that planning time is available by developing an administrative policy stating staff can use substitutes to prepare for transition conferences.

Institutionalized Connections

As staff formalize established connections they become **institutionalized**. Formal agreements, administrative policies, and funding provide structural supports enabling programs to pool resources and develop collaborative initiatives. These strong connections offer models for building other program connections.

Making Connections

Many steps can be taken to make connections with early childhood programs. Through informal telephone conversations and formally scheduled meetings, staff can discuss transition policies and administrative practices. Joint training and discussion groups provide staff and parents with opportunities to share experiences and discuss educational philosophies, services, and issues. By visiting other programs and participating in their events, staff observe important setting characteristics such as class size, curriculum content, discipline practices, available services, and parent involvement practices. Even when direct visitation is difficult, staff can gain insight into how other programs work by sharing newsletters.

Partnerships

Once staff from different programs have learned about each other's program policies and current transition practices, they can identify common concerns and goals. When they establish mutual goals and implement the steps needed to achieve these goals, programs form a partnership. As partners, they share responsibility for developing, implementing, and reviewing their joint transition plan. It takes strong connections, commitment, and time to achieve long-term goals. However, with more coordination there are better transition outcomes.

Crossroads

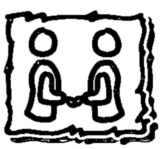
At the end of each workshop and coaching activity in this document, participants reach a *Crossroads.* There they are asked to decide how they will extend the training experience using the activity's information and resources. The trainer asks participants to organize their materials in a *Planning Folder* and record their ideas on their *Personal Planning Log.* To prepare for the *Crossroads* refer to Trainer/Coach Preparation Notes on page 4 of the **Introduction**.

Trainer/Coach Preparation Notes:

The workshop activities in this module are designed as joint training sessions for staff and parents from two or more programs. For more information on joint training refer to *Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: Developing Joint Training* from the **Informational Resources** section.

If you are conducting joint training workshop sessions be sure to mix staff from various programs when dividing into small groups or teams. If staff from other programs are not participating in the training sessions, you can use the following suggestions to arrange for participants to meet staff from other programs. Schedule site visits or meetings, arrange for staff from other programs to give a short presentation during the workshop, or pair the workshop and coaching activities.

Activity 3–1: Program Linkages



Purpose: In this activity, participants will assess joint transition practices and develop strategies for strengthening their connections with other programs by improving these practices.

Materials:

Handouts 15 and 16
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)

Discuss Joint Practices

1. In the first coaching session, use *Handout 15: Joint Transition Practices* as a guide to discuss the joint transition practices that staff have initiated and the strategies used to involve various partners.

Identify Successful Strategies

2. Ask staff to focus on one program that they have worked with successfully. Discuss the strategies they used to implement each joint transition practice with this program and suggest that they list them in the right-hand column of the handout.

Review Strategies

3. Use the **Background Information** to explain the kinds of connections that can be developed among programs. Then review the strategies listed on *Handout 15: Joint Transition Practices* to help staff determine if the connections between these two programs are *beginning*, *established*, or *institutionalized* connections.

Illustrate Connections

4. Have staff label one building on *Handout 16: Mapping Connections* with their program name and another building with the name of the program identified on Handout 15. For each joint practice, have them use the legend to draw one line connecting the buildings.

Assess Second Program

5. Ask staff to choose another early childhood program with whom they have a connection. Have them write this program name under the third building on *Handout 16: Mapping Connections.* Give staff a clean copy of *Handout 15: Joint Transition Practices* and have them use the two handouts to assess and map these program connections.

Compare Assessments

6. Discuss and compare the connections staff have with the two different programs. Explain that strategies that work with one program may not work with another because of the connections that exist. Use the **Background Information** to help participants identify strategies they could use to strengthen their current connections.

Crossroads

Ask staff to choose one connection that they want to strengthen or build with each program. Have them write their goals on their *Personal Planning Log.* Suggest that staff keep the handouts in their *Planning Folder* and use them to record new practices and stronger connections as they are developed.

Activity 3–2: Beyond Jargon

Purpose: In this activity, participants will work with key partners to develop strategies for effectively communicating with each other.

Materials:

Handouts 17 and 18
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)
Newsprint, markers

Read Script One

1. Have three volunteers read *Script One* from *Handout 17: Clarifying Jargon.* Ask participants to identify the volunteers' roles and the type of information each could share. List these answers on newsprint.

Read Script Two

2. Ask the volunteers to read *Script Two* of *Handout 17: Clarifying Jargon.* Then ask for new ideas about the roles of each volunteer and the information each could share. List these answers on newsprint.

Compare Scripts

3. Discuss how participants' perceptions changed when the same information from *Script One* was communicated differently in *Script Two*. Distribute the handout and make these points:

   - The role of each volunteer in *Script One* was only defined by a title; in *Script Two*, it was defined by a task.

   - The type of information each participant offers to share in *Script One* is referred to by a name; in *Script Two*, more information is offered to define the name.

Define Jargon

4. Explain that the words in bold are **jargon** or terms that are specific to the program or family in the script. Make the following points:

   - Staff and family members within a program or family understand each other when they use jargon.

   - When staff and families meet with people from other programs jargon interferes with communication.

Develop Clear Definitions

5. Have participants form small jargon-busting teams. Distribute *Handout 18: Pocket Dictionary* and have each team identify five words or acronyms from each of their programs and work together to develop a jargon-free definition for each term.

Share Definitions

6. Reconvene the entire group and ask the teams to share their definitions. Explain that as each definition is read, participants will make a ***BZZZZ*** sound when they hear an unfamiliar word. Challenge the teams to continually revise their definitions until the buzzing stops and everyone understands the meaning of the program terms.

List Communication Strategies

7. Refer participants to *Handout 17: Clarifying Jargon*. Have each participant review *Script Two* and identify additional strategies that are used to improve communication. Have them share their own strategies and brainstorm new ones. List all strategies on newsprint.

Summarize

8. Review the strategy list and add the following items if they have not been included:

   - Set ground rules such as *no acronyms will be used in meetings.*

   - Request a clarification or rephrase what you hear when unfamiliar terms are used.

   - Ask parents in your program and staff from other programs to review your materials and point out any terms that are unclear.

   - Hold a staff meeting to evaluate your own language and work together to redefine terms so that they can be easily understood.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants put *Handout 18: Pocket Dictionary* in their *Planning Folder* and record in their *Personal Planning Log* how they will use it for transition planning.

Activity 3–3: Coordinating Efforts

Purpose: In this activity, participants will exchange information about their program practices, policies, and procedures and informally assess joint practices.

Materials:

Handouts 2 (Module 1) and 19
Overhead of Handout 19 or newsprint and markers
Overhead projector (optional)
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)
Notepaper

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Ask staff from each program attending the workshop to provide various materials that will help others learn about their program. These materials may include program handbooks, informational pamphlets, newsletters, or newspaper articles.

In Step 2, trainers working with small groups may wish to pair individuals from different programs to gather information on *Handout 19: Learning about Other Programs*. The partners can then share their findings, and the trainer can consolidate the information on an overhead of the handout or on newsprint.

Welcome Participants

1. Welcome all participants and ask them to introduce themselves, sharing their names, titles, and programs. Point out that the workshop will help participants get to know staff from other programs, learn about each other's programs, and begin working together on transition issues.

Complete Questionnaire

2. Ask a representative from one program to distribute her materials and give an overview of her program. Using an overhead of *Handout 19: Learning about Other Programs*, ask all those present from the program to help answer the questions. Repeat the process for each program represented in the workshop. Then make these points:

- Many issues impact the transitions of children and families among community programs.

- Program staff who are familiar with each other's programs, policies, and transition practices can begin working together to identify and address transition issues.

Discuss Current Practices

3. Have participants form four small teams and be sure to include representatives from different programs on each team. Assign one of the following categories to each team: coordination of health and social services, transfer of records, continuity of curriculum, and staff development. Ask the members to discuss the following questions and record their thoughts on notepaper:

   - How does this issue affect the transitions among programs in your community?
   - What efforts have been made to address this issue in your programs and in your community?
   - How have these program and community efforts impacted families and children in transition?

Review the Planning Framework

4. Ask the teams to share the information they gathered with the whole group. Then distribute *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* from Module 1. Point out that the questions each group answered for Step 3 are used to assess transition practices. Ask:

   - What other strategies from the framework might have helped your group assess current practices?
   - What additional kinds of information did you learn about other programs by participating in this discussion?

Summarize

5. Use the **Background Information** to explain the benefits of strong connections among programs. Explain how exchanging information about program policies, practices, and procedures provides a *beginning* connection among programs. Point out that developing *established* connections requires ongoing efforts such as maintaining regular communication and planning joint transition practices.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants review the information about other programs. Have them write down any new questions they have about the program or record additional information they can share with others in that program. Ask them to put the program materials in their *Planning Folder* and use their *Personal Planning Log* to record how they can exchange this information with parents and others in their program.

Activity 3–4: Agreeing on Goals and Action

Purpose: In this activity, participants will learn to work with others to define transition goals and develop steps for achieving these goals.

Materials:

Handout 2 (Module 1)
Program Profiles (Informational Resources)
Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices (Informational Resources)
Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, Personal Planning Log (Introduction)

> **Trainer Preparation Notes:**
>
> This activity uses the *fist-to-five* system. Participants express their opinions by raising the fingers on one hand. When a person raises five fingers in response to a statement, she is showing complete agreement. When a person raises a closed fist, he is showing complete disagreement. The more fingers displayed, the stronger the agreement.

Discuss Transition Goals

1. Point out that when developing joint transition plans, people must appreciate the perspectives of others and identify common goals. Have participants separate into small teams. Provide teams with *Program Profiles* from the **Informational Resources** section to review the goals of these programs. Then have team members discuss their personal and program transition goals.

Agree on a Long-Term Goal

2. Have teams draft a long-term transition goal that incorporates the perspective of each team member. Once the teams have decided on a goal, explain and demonstrate the *fist-to-five* system. Ask the teams to use the system to determine how strongly members agree with the goal and to refine their statements to increase the level of agreement among members. Help any teams that are having difficulty.

Discuss Ongoing Team Process

3. Point out to all the participants that for teams to develop truly comprehensive goals, they need to assess all the issues that are concerning members. Then they need to identify the overriding issues and concerns and use these concerns as the basis for goal setting. Suggest that teams who are interested can continue working on their goals outside the training session.

Develop Action Plan

4. Provide teams with *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* and point out that once teams identify goals, the next step is to define action steps. Distribute *Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices* and the *Action Plan Outline* from the **Informational Resources** section. Ask the teams to use the resources to help them brainstorm

strategies, develop a timeline for meeting their stated goal, and assign tasks to team members.

Review Planning Process

5. Ask each team to share their goals. Then have each team member with an assigned task explain his or her responsibility to the entire group. Once all groups have shared their plans, review the important concepts of joint planning:

   - Joint planning works best when systems exist to ensure that everyone participates in the decision making process and shares responsibility for implementing the plan.

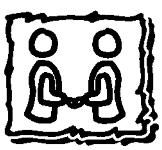
   - Planning tools help people organize the planning process.

   - As action steps and timelines are being developed, planners must decide how they will keep track of their progress and review the results of their efforts.

Crossroads

Have participants review the resources provided. Suggest that they put the materials in their *Planning Folder* and use their *Personal Planning Log* to record the action steps they will be responsible for implementing.

Activity 3–5: Benchmarking



Purpose: In this activity, staff will use successful strategies from other programs to improve coordination with key partners.

Materials:

Program Profiles (Informational Resources)
Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: Benchmarking (Informational Resources)
Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)

Discuss Personal Goals

1. During the first coaching session discuss any difficulties that staff have encountered in planning transitions with key partners. Refer to the *Program Profiles* from the **Informational Resources** section and explain that many programs have developed promising practices they might adapt.

Research Promising Practices

2. To prepare for the second coaching session, ask staff to research community programs. Explain that the purpose of this exercise is to identify community programs that have promising practices that staff would like to adapt. Suggest that participants:

- Call the president of the state Head Start Association or other community leaders who have contact with various programs.
- Review literature from other programs.
- Ask the program director and other staff about possible contacts.

Identify Programs to Visit or Call

3. At the second coaching session, find out what programs interest staff. Explain that *benchmarking* is one way for them to learn from their peers in the community. Review the guidelines in *Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: Benchmarking* from the **Informational Resources** section. Help staff prepare questions such as:
   - How did you initiate the transition practices you now use and what first steps would you recommend for our program?
   - What specific planning tools were useful?
   - How have you overcome obstacles?

Use Resources for Benchmarking

4. Have staff follow the guidelines in *Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: Benchmarking* to plan and conduct a visit to another program.

Adapt Promising Practices

5. In the final coaching session, discuss the information that staff collected through benchmarking and find out what practices they would like to implement in their own program. Provide them with *Hands-on Tools: Action Plan Outline* from the **Informational Resources** section and help them brainstorm action steps to initiate.

Crossroads

Help staff identify those who can help implement these practices. Have them use their *Personal Planning Log* to record steps for involving these partners. Suggest that they keep their handouts in their *Planning Folder*.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

The following activities can help participants review key information, practice skills, and assess their understanding of the concepts in this module:

- Invite several staff members from another program to meet your staff and observe your program. Explain to staff that the goals of the visit are to become better acquainted with their counterparts in other programs and to help key partners learn about your program. Provide each person with *Handout 19: Learning about Other Programs* and explain that visiting staff may ask many of these questions. Explain that they can use the handout to record what they learn during the visits, too. After the visits, meet with staff to discuss what they have learned and what else they can do to strengthen relationships. Discuss the possibility of sending a team to visit the other program.

- Ask participants to coordinate with staff from other programs and use *Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: School Readiness Fair* from the **Informational Resources** section as a guide to plan a school readiness fair. Ask them to research any fairs that have been held and to contact those who planned the fair. For more guidance, order a copy of *Building Bridges with Your Community: How to Conduct a School Readiness Fair for Families and Children under Five*, by calling the Ready At Five Partnership at 1-410-726-6290.

- Record a staff meeting on audio or videotape. Then distribute *Handout 18: Pocket Dictionary* to those who attended the meeting. Explain that jargon is understood by program staff but it is unclear to others outside the program. Play the recording of the staff meeting and have staff use the handout to write down any jargon they hear. Work together to develop clear definitions of these terms. For the next few weeks, have each staff member record additional jargon used in the daily program. Meet again to consolidate the list of terms and definitions that can be shared with parents and staff from other programs.

Handout 15: Joint Transition Practices

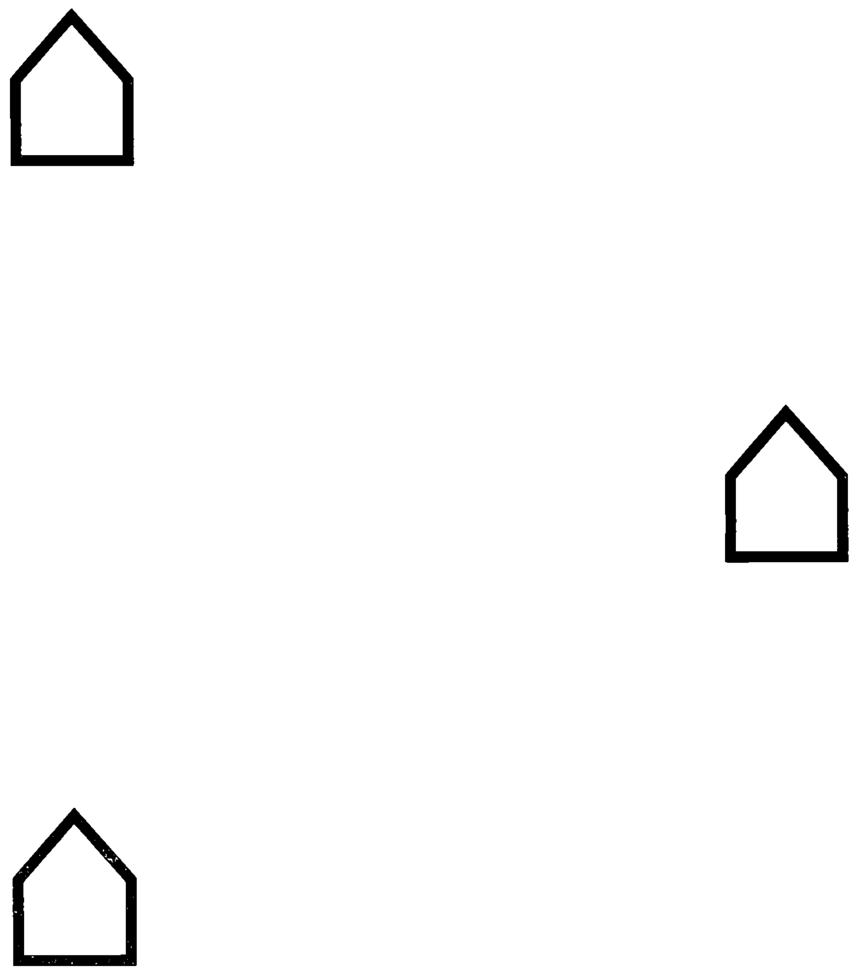
Program Name______________________________

Directions: *Identify a program in your community in the space above. Review the list of joint practices. In the right-hand column next to the practices, note what strategies were used to implement them (i.e., informal meetings, telephone calls, program visits, interagency agreements, joint funding).*

Plan experiences for children that provide continuity between settings. For example, provide home learning packets, share curriculum, and use familiar routines.	
Share information about setting characteristics such as the educational philosophy, daily routines, and parent role.	
Share information about how programs prepare children for transition.	
Share information about timelines for program registration, referral, and records transfer.	
With parental consent, share follow-up data about children and families after the transition.	
Conduct meetings to plan transitions for individual children.	
Coordinate transfer of records through parent conferencing.	
Plan classroom experiences such as mixed age activities and classroom visits.	
Plan joint programs for family services such as health screening and registration, home visits, and school fairs.	
Identify common transition goals and develop joint plans.	
Provide joint training and study groups for staff.	
Coordinate continued services for families.	

Handout 16: Mapping Connections

Directions: *Write your program name under one building and the name of another program under a different building. For each joint transition practice, use the legend to draw a solid, dashed, or dotted line connecting the buildings. Repeat the process for another program with which you would like to coordinate transition efforts.*



Legend

Institutionalized Practices (Supported by policy, funding, agreements) ————————

Established Practices (Supported by regular meetings, plans, systems) — — — — — — —

Beginning Practices (Based on individual initiative or one-time events) • • • • • • • • • • •

Handout 17: Clarifying Jargon

Script One:

Sarah: Hi, I'm Sarah, the **Family Advocate** for the Jones family. It is wonderful that you have joined me in this **LEAP Review**. The **MAX Team** has a report on Tucker's progress. After you introduce yourselves, we will review the **LEAPS** that were identified by our **ED Coordinator**.

Troy: I work with Tucker as a **Learning Specialist**. Our agency has adapted **Total Family Support**. So I am very interested in being a part of the team. In our evaluation sessions, we have identified the **Locus of Control** along with Tucker's **PLS**. It should be valuable information.

Edith: As Tucker's **Mamo**, I want you to know how important his **Softie** is to him. Whenever we have **Family Learning Hour** he just wants his **Softie**. The **Parent-Child System Cards** are hard to use when I can't get his attention.

Script Two:

Sarah: Hi, I'm Sarah, and this is Edith Jones, Tucker's grandmother. As **Family Advocate**, my job is to support the Jones family as they work toward their goals. We asked you to join us today to talk about Tucker's progress and to brainstorm ways that we can work together to prepare him for next year's program. We will review some of the observations our staff have made in the classroom using a tool called the **LEAP Review**. First, I would like to give Edith a chance to share her concerns, and then we would like you to share what you have learned during Tucker's counseling sessions.

Edith: As Tucker's grandmother, I want you to know how important his special blanket is to him. He calls it his ***Softie***. When he comes home each day we have a special time to do learning activities together. He keeps saying ***Mamo*** (that's what he calls me), *I want my Softie, I want my Softie*. The activities that the teacher gave me to work with him are hard to use when I can't get his attention.

Troy: I am glad to meet you both and to be invited to work as part of Tucker's transition team. My job as a **Learning Specialist** is to find out more about Tucker's special learning needs. Our agency believes that children are best supported when their families also receive support. So I hope to give you some practical tips that will help the whole family. In our sessions, we have been asking Tucker questions and doing special activities with him. This helps us learn about Tucker's view of the world and to identify his personal learning style—or how he learns best.

Handout 18: Pocket Dictionary

Directions: *Identify program-specific terms and write a clear, jargon-free definition that can be understood by parents and staff from other programs.*

Program-Specific Terms	Jargon-Free Definitions
Job Titles (*Master Teacher, Family Advocate*)	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	
Acronyms (*LEA, IFSP, FPA*)	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	
Other (*Creativity Hour, Floor Time*)	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	
____________________	

Handout 19: Learning about Other Programs

Program Name______________________________

Directions: *Use the following questions to guide a discussion with staff and parents from another program. Identify the program name in the space above. Note that not all questions may apply. The overall goal is to learn about the experiences families and children have as they transition among community programs.*

Setting Characteristics:

What is the building arrangement and what spaces do children use during the day?

How many children are enrolled and what is the ratio of adults to children?

How long is a child's day?

What are the cultural backgrounds of the staff and students?

How does the amount of structured time compare to unstructured time?

What is included in the curriculum?

What opportunities exist for family involvement?

What are the educational and disciplinary philosophies and practices?

What services (e.g., health, social, literacy, transportation) are offered to families and children?

Handout 19: Learning about Other Programs (Continued)

Transition Procedures:

What is the process of records exchange?

What information is shared before a child enrolls and is this a formal or informal exchange?

What is the process for individualized transition planning and who is involved in this process?

What are the procedures for writing Family Partnership Agreements, Individualized Family Transition Plans, Individualized Education Plans, and/or Individualized Family Service Plans?

What is the process for registration?

When does the program schedule visitation days for families?

Has staff received any training on transitions and continuity issues?

Administrative Structures:

Who negotiates transition policies?

Who approves staff leave for training and planning?

Who coordinates staff development?

Accessing Services through Community Linkages

Outcomes

As a result of completing this module, participants will be able to:

- Identify service gaps that occur during transitions and determine potential community resources that could provide needed services
- Coordinate transition planning efforts among early childhood program staff and community service providers
- Develop systems to follow up on the outcomes of transition planning efforts with families, community service providers, and other early childhood program staff

Key Concepts

- For various reasons, families may not receive needed services when they transition from one early childhood setting to another. For transition planning to be effective, these gaps in services and the reasons that they occur must be identified.
- Some gaps in services can be eliminated when service providers are included along with early childhood program representatives and parents on the transition planning team. Interagency planning teams can better address needs and tap into the community's resources.
- When tracking systems are easy to use, teams are better able to coordinate and refine their plans, share progress with stakeholders, and celebrate success.

Background Information

Early childhood program staff facilitate continuity of education, care and services when they plan transitions with parents and staff from other early childhood programs. However, even when these teams implement a variety of strategies to support children and families, difficulties can occur in the new setting. For example, teachers may find that parents do not understand school policies or that children have difficulty with new routines. Families may find that the progress they made in comprehensive programs such as Head Start is difficult to sustain when full support services are not continued.

Many early childhood settings do not offer the comprehensive services that Head Start provides, nor do they coordinate services within the community. This means that even when transitions are planned jointly with staff from other early childhood programs, families and children may experience gaps in services when transitions occur.

Head Start staff must anticipate that families in the program may eventually transition to other settings that do not coordinate or provide comprehensive services.

By reaching out to the broader community, staff can help sustain the gains children and families have made in Head Start. Staff can work toward making services available and accessible to families in all learning and care environments by involving community service providers in transition planning teams. Interagency transition planning teams engage in the community assessment in order to provide linkages within the early childhood community.

Assessing the Community

Interagency transition planning begins with a coordinated community assessment. Staff from various programs and agencies come together to share information about the services they offer to families and the processes required to qualify for those services. As program staff exchange information, they also assess the effectiveness of their current transition practices.

For example, in many communities Head Start family advocates routinely refer families leaving the program to a community-based clothing bank. However, through the community assessment process, one of these programs discovered that its referral process was inadequate. What the family advocate did not know was that referrals were only accepted by the clothing bank if they were dated within the last three months. As a result, the referral system did not work for those families who received the referral from Head Start in June and requested services in the winter. To receive a current referral those parents had to meet with another person in their new setting. In the meantime, some children went without the warm clothes they needed.

Bridging Gaps

After developing *beginning connections* in an initial meeting among service providers and other program staff, the next step is to establish stronger connections. Program staff can take action steps to close the gaps in services. In this case, Head Start staff have several options for changing their referral system. With parental consent, they could identify families that may need the clothing bank referrals and share the names with staff in the receiving program *before* the child is transferred. The staff in the new setting could then follow through by providing the needed referral or explaining to parents the process of obtaining a referral. Alternatively, Head Start staff could meet with the clothing bank personnel and request that Head Start referrals be considered valid for a longer period of time.

Increasing Accessibility

By working together on a regular basis, diverse interagency transition planning teams are able to identify new solutions for providing continuous, accessible services to families and children. *Established* *connections* among early childhood program staff and service providers will prevent service gaps that occur because of more complex issues, such as inaccessible services or lack of resources. Some agencies place health and social service providers in school buildings. Other community programs and agencies have hired transition coordinators to conduct home visits and coordinate services. Still others meet regularly to determine how the various agencies can work together to meet family needs.

Communicating with Stakeholders

To ensure that these initiatives are continued, the transition planning team should work to build *institutionalized connections* such as the pooling of resources, interagency agreements, and integrated roles for frontline staff. However, the team cannot build these connections without the support of families and staff. The more **stakeholders**—parents, frontline workers, administrators, and policymakers—are aware of and understand the needs, goals, and strategies of interagency planning teams, the more involved they will be.

To help these stakeholders understand how transition planning affects them, the planning team can share the outcomes of their efforts. Some stakeholders will want to know how individual children are helped, others will want to know the benefits to their program, and still others will be interested in the overall efficiency of services. The interagency transition team can periodically collect information about the implementation of the plan. Planning teams can gather this information best when they work with parents and frontline workers to design *user-friendly* reporting systems such as simple forms, anecdotal records, or oral reports.

Sustaining Efforts

The interagency planning team can use the information gathered from the frontline to help sustain the efforts of team members as well as to gain the support of the community. The recognition of team members and celebration of success encourages all of them to continue their efforts to create new systems of providing services. As progress is recognized and more stakeholders become involved, the team may expand and diversify.

To continue to work as a team requires hard work. Members must take time to evaluate how meetings are run, how decisions are made, what resources are shared, and which community partners are involved. In addition to refining transition plans, the team must refine the implementation *process*.

Acquiring Funding

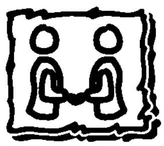
When evaluating progress, teams may find that they have limited resources to achieve their goals. The team may then seek funding for collaborative projects through grants. For example, the Nebraska Head Start–State Collaboration Grant funds joint staff training for Head Start and public schools. In Texas, the Langston Family Life Center, which provides a one-stop service delivery system center, received a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Readiness Initiative. In Florida, many programs were developed through a $3 million state appropriation for Early Childhood Collaboration Partnership Grants.

To take advantage of funding opportunities, a planning team must have established connections, identified resources and needs, and developed plans for collaboration. Through interagency transition planning, new possibilities are created and nurtured. Head Start staff can take the lead in initiating communitywide involvement in early childhood programs by initiating a community assessment and plan of action.

Crossroads

At the end of each workshop and coaching activity in this document, participants reach a *Crossroads*. There they are asked to decide how they will extend the training experience using the activity's information and resources. The trainer asks participants to organize their materials in a *Planning Folder* and record their ideas on their *Personal Planning Log*. To prepare for the *Crossroads* refer to Trainer/Coach Preparation Notes on page 4 of the **Introduction**.

Activity 4–1: Accessing Services



Purpose: In this activity, staff will assess the need for continued services and the accessibility of services in other settings.

Materials:

Handouts 8 (Module 1), 20, and 21
Digest: Planning for Comprehensive Services (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, Personal Planning Log (Introduction)
Community Resource Directory (Optional)

> **Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> In Step 1, staff are asked to review family transition priorities. You can help those who have not already identified these priorities by conducting *Activity 2–2: Assessing Transition Priorities*, reviewing the **Background Information** in Module 2, or using the *Hands-on Tools: Sample Information Sharing Forms* from the **Informational Resources** section.

Identify Potential Service Providers

1. Have staff review the individual transition priorities of a family that needs ongoing services. Help participants identify potential service providers for continuing these services after the family leaves the program. You might use a community resource directory.

Contact Providers

2. Ask staff to brainstorm specific questions they have about service delivery and referral procedures. Have them use these questions and *Handout 20: Survey of Community Services* to gather information from potential service providers.

Review Community Services

3. At the next coaching session, ask staff to share what they learned about the services and referral processes of those providers contacted. Ask staff the following questions and help them brainstorm appropriate action steps they might take to help the identified family:

   - If services are available, is there a referral process to follow? If so, is it a process that allows the family to use records from your setting or are new forms required?

   - If no referral process is in place, how can you work with the providers to simplify procedures for this family?

   - If services are not available, what other providers may become involved with the family to provide needed services?

Discuss Comprehensive Services

4. Review the information contained in *Digest: Planning for Comprehensive Services* from the **Informational Resources** section. Explain that services can be coordinated for individual families on an as-needed basis, or systems can be established for all families that will need the service. To establish appropriate systems, staff need to assess what services are needed by the families in their program.

Choose Assessment Methods

5. Provide staff with several copies of *Handout 21: Transition Services Request Form.* Explain that this form is a tool to help staff identify the services families need during transition. Suggest that staff interview a number of families and record their transition service requests on the form or use one of the following methods to gather information.

   - Review program documents such as family service records or individualized transition plans.

   - Hold a special service needs assessment meeting that includes parents, service providers, and program staff.

Assess Community Resources

6. Meet again with staff and help them prioritize the greatest needs of families. Explain that once needs are established, the next step is to assess the resources available and the process of obtaining services. Then action steps can be developed.

Determine Accessibility of Services

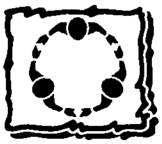
7. Have staff plan a joint meeting of parents, staff from receiving programs, and service providers from the community to examine how current services are accessed. Use *Handout 8: Key Partners* from Module 1 to help them plan the following for the meeting:

    - Presentation of the services families receive in each program and the process of referring families
    - Summary of the greatest needs identified by program staff
    - Suggested strategies for improving coordination among families, early childhood program staff, and service providers

Crossroads

Suggest that participants put *Handout 21: Transition Services Request Form* in their *Planning Folder.* Have them record their plan for evaluating the meeting on their *Personal Planning Log.*

Activity 4–2: Transition Resources



Purpose: In this activity, participants will involve key partners, including parents, in assessing the community resources available to families in transition and setting goals for the community.

Materials:

Handouts 20, 21, and 22
Digest: Planning for Comprehensive Services (Informational Resources)
Community Resource Directories (see Trainer Preparation Notes)
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)

Trainer Preparation Notes:

Before the workshop, collect community resource directories from your program and others in the community.

This activity is presented as two sessions, but you can adapt Step 3 and complete it in one session. You can gather the information before the workshop using several forms (see Handout 20) or invite representatives from other programs to the workshop. Another way to adapt the step would be to ask participants to discuss the referral process and use *Handout 20: Survey of Community Services* after the training to confirm the information.

Complete Survey

1. Distribute *Handout 21: Transition Services Request Form.* Have participants use the second column to identify services families receive while enrolled in the program. Review *Digest: Planning for Comprehensive Services* from the **Informational Resources** section to discuss the need for services to be available and accessible as families move among programs within the community.

Identify Resources

2. Divide participants into small groups and distribute community resource directories to each group. Assign each group a scenario from *Handout 22: Referrals and Applications* and have them use the directories to identify possible resources for the family assigned.

Research Referral Process

3. Ask participants to brainstorm specific questions they have about service delivery and referral procedures. Have them use these questions and *Handout 20: Survey of Community Services* to gather information from potential service providers. Suggest that a few participants speak informally with any families willing to share their perspectives as users of the services. Participants can explain that they want to find out about the availability and accessibility of services.

Discuss Accessibility of Services

4. Reconvene the small groups and tell participants to discuss the information they gathered about the services available and referral procedures currently in place. Have them work together to complete the questions on *Handout 22: Referrals and Applications (Continued).*

Identify Gaps in Services

5. Have each group share their ideas with the large group. After all the groups have reported, use *Handout 21: Transition Services Request Form* to review the services available after transition. Ask:

   - Where are the gaps in services and in which areas are efforts duplicated?

   - Are the gaps occurring because of a lack of connection between senders and receivers or are services currently unavailable?

Set Goals and Action Steps

6. Work with participants to determine a long-term transition goal that addresses the gaps in services or duplication of efforts that were identified. Help them brainstorm action steps they can take to involve the whole community in working toward that goal.

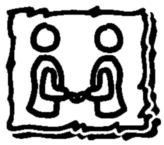
Summarize Background Information

7. Use the **Background Information** to emphasize the importance of including families, early childhood staff, and supportive service providers in planning teams.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants put the handouts in their *Planning Folder.* Have them use their *Personal Planning Log* to record their ideas for involving community service providers in addressing the gaps in services.

Activity 4–3: Reviewing the Map



Purpose: In this activity, participants will evaluate and report their team's progress to gain and sustain the support of stakeholders.

Materials:

Assessment tools (see Coach Preparation Notes)
Handouts 2 (Module 1) and 23
Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: Formal Administrative Agreements (Informational Resources)
Hands-on Tools: Sample Transition Plans (Informational Resources)
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)

> **Coach Preparation Notes:**
>
> The previous modules include handouts that are used as assessment tools. *Handout 6: Where Are We?* can be found in Module 1. Two assessment tools, *Handout 15: Joint Transition Practices* and *Handout 16: Mapping Connections*, are in Module 3. In this activity, participants are asked to repeat an assessment already done. Ask them to bring a copy of one of the assessments described above, along with their *Personal Planning Log* and reports from families and frontline workers.

Discuss Evaluation

1. In the first coaching session, explain that an important part of planning is gathering information on the outcomes of planning efforts. This helps planners to do the following:

   - Address issues in implementation through problem solving
   - Sustain the support of team members by acknowledging the positive outcomes of their efforts
   - Gain the support of stakeholders in the community by increasing their awareness of transition issues

Identify Progress

2. Ask staff to tell about their progress in planning transitions. Review their *Personal Planning Log* and other documentation they brought to the coaching session. Have them repeat a previously conducted assessment and identify any progress made since then. Then have them create a success list, including progress in working as a team.

Review Plan Implementation

3. Discuss the strategies for reviewing progress listed on *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* from Module 1. Note the importance of meeting with others to discuss and celebrate progress. Next, have staff meet with frontline workers and parents to do the following:

- Gather firsthand information about how plans were implemented
- Brainstorm additional ways to systematically track progress
- Acknowledge the contributions of frontline workers and parents
- Ask for ideas on celebrating progress

Plan Progress Review

4. At the next coaching session, ask staff to share what they learned from frontline staff about their progress and their tracking systems. Review their suggestions for new tracking systems and discuss alternative ways to document progress. Discuss how celebrating and communicating their successes can help them gain new support from stakeholders as well as sustain the team's support.

Choose Communication Strategies

5. Help staff choose communication strategies from *Handout 23: Expanding Support* to share information on the outcomes of their plan with the team and the community during a celebration. Work with them to draft press releases, design invitations for public officials, or follow through on other communication strategies.

Coach Preparation Notes:

You may choose to celebrate and recognize the staff members you have coached. The recognition might be providing certificates for participating in the training, making a brief acknowledgment speech during the gathering, or simply giving staff a personal note.

Review Community Involvement

6. At the next coaching session discuss all the key partners recognized at the celebration. Review the support that administrators and policymakers have provided. Help staff identify any issues in implementation that could be improved with formal administrative support.

Formalize Supports

7. Help staff use the *Hands-on Tools: Joint Transition Practices: Formal Administrative Agreements* from the **Informational Resources** section to develop a plan for formalizing support. Use the following examples to help staff choose appropriate agreements that address implementation issues identified in Step 3.

   - Written transition plans (see *Hands-on Tools: Sample Transition Plans* from the **Informational Resources** section) can specify partner roles and responsibilities in implementing joint practices.

   - Personnel policies can provide staff with substitutes while they attend transition planning meetings or specify that joint training will fulfill staff development requirements.

- A memorandum of agreement can stipulate how resources such as school buses can be shared among community agencies.

Crossroads

Suggest that participants keep their list of successes and handouts in their *Planning Folder*. Have them use their *Personal Planning Log* to identify who can help track the involvement and support of administrators.

Activity 4–4: Checking Back

Purpose: In this activity, participants will develop tracking systems that are easy for frontline workers to use.

Materials:
Handout 24
Planning Folder, *Personal Planning Log* (Introduction)

Read Scenario

1. Read *Handout 24: Reports from the Field, Part One*. Explain that although the planning process in this scenario involved all stages of the planning framework, the goals were not met. Ask participants to suggest why the plan failed. Some reasons might include:

   - Lack of coordination during the implementation of the plan
   - Lack of involvement of frontline workers and parents on the team
   - Steps taken were minimal

Present Different Perspectives

2. Explain that if the planners had developed a *user-friendly* system of tracking progress, they could have discovered the problems earlier. Ask volunteers to read to the group the personal perspective of the kindergarten teacher, parent involvement coordinator, parent, and parent educator from *Part Two* of the handout.

Develop a Tracking System

3. Distribute *Handout 24: Reports from the Field* and ask staff to work with you to develop a *user-friendly* tracking system. Some suggestions might include:

   - Staff give regular oral reports to supervisor
   - Planning team conducts brief meetings in June and September
   - Twelve-month staff conduct follow-up phone calls in the summer
   - Parents record summer activities on a calendar

Test the Tracking System

4. Have participants suggest how the scenario would have changed if their tracking system was used in Hopeville. You might ask:

   - When would the team have been alerted to problems?
   - How would this have changed the action steps taken?
   - How would these new action steps impact families and children?

Discuss Current Tracking Systems

5. Ask participants to think about their own transition plans and discuss the various kinds of feedback that might help them refine their plans. Examples of useful information include the following:

   - Child's adjustment to the setting
   - Family goals achieved
   - Parent involvement in the program
   - Services families are receiving
   - Rate of retention or referral to school specialists
   - Rate of crisis referrals
   - Information used by teacher or caregiver

Crossroads

Suggest that participants keep their handouts in their *Planning Folder*. Have them use their *Personal Planning Log* to identify the kind of feedback that would help them refine their own plans. Have participants identify frontline workers and families who could help develop and implement a tracking system to provide this information.

Next Steps: Ideas to Extend Practice

The following activities can help participants review key information, practice skills, and assess their understanding of the concepts in this module.

- Participants can use *Handout 21: Transition Services Request Form* and *Hands-on Tools: Sample Information Sharing Form: Information Release* from the **Informational Resources** section to track the services families receive after leaving Head Start. One staff person can take responsibility for making follow-up calls or home visits. The information can be compiled and shared with stakeholders.

- To simulate current duplication of efforts and gaps in services participants can invite community representatives to take on roles of families in transition and service workers in the community. In a large room, tables can be set up to represent different programs and agencies within the community. As family members visit the various service workers around the room they will experience the difficulties that low-income families have in accessing and coordinating services. A skilled facilitator might help debrief participants and assist in developing a vision for linking services.

- Head Start staff can use their community resource directory to increase the awareness of resources and needs. Have participants use *Handout 20: Survey of Community Services* to update their community resource directory. The community resource directory can include sample applications for services to enable staff outside of specific programs to assist families in the application process. Participants can also use the community assessment to produce a report on the needs of the community. Refer to the *Joint Transition Practices: Report Card on the Community* from the **Informational Resources** section.

- A task force of interagency partners can review funding opportunities. Members should include individuals such as program directors or board members who are familiar with budgeting and funding programs. The task force can discuss funding sources with which they are familiar. If the group believes that additional funding needs to be identified, they can research sources such as:

  — Head Start–State Collaboration Grants
  — Title I Schoolwide Initiatives
  — State and Local Initiatives
  — Foundations and Associations
  — Even Start
  — Family Literacy Initiatives

Handout 20: Survey of Community Services

Directions: *Use this form to guide a discussion with staff from community agencies. The overall goal is to identify or develop a system for families to access services during transition. Share the information gathered with staff and families and use it to update your community resource directory.*

AGENCY VISITED: ______________________________

DATE: ______________________________

ADDRESS AND PHONE #: ______________________________

____

____

CONTACT PERSON(S): ______________________________

____

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES (Attach any written material about the program): ______________

____

____

____

REFERRAL SYSTEM (Forms needed, timeline for receiving services, criteria for eligibility, and referrals required to receive services):

____

____

____

____

____

Adapted from Arizona Head Start–Public School Transition Project

Handout 21: Transition Services Request Form

Directions: *Throughout the year, use this form to identify the services families receive and those they request (either to begin or to continue). Potential service providers to contact about the request may include current service providers, staff in the next setting, and other community agencies.*

Services	Program or agency currently providing services	New or continuing services requested	Potential service providers to contact about the request
Child care			
Counseling			
Dental care			
Developmental, sensory, and behavioral screenings			
Emergency shelter, food, and clothes			
English as a second language instruction			
Family literacy services			
Financial assistance			
GED classes			
Health care			
Home budgeting classes			
Immunizations			
Interpreters			
Job training, referrals			
Occupational therapy			
Parent classes			
Physical therapy			
Speech therapy			
Support groups			
Transportation			
Other:			

Handout 22: Referrals and Applications

Directions: *Research community resources to determine if the requested services are available and accessible.*

Teen parents with two children (infant and kindergartner)

Services requested:

- Parent support group
- Immunizations and health care
- Job training

Family whose first language is not English caring for elderly parents and school-aged children

Services requested:

- Interpreters for school meetings
- Dental care
- Transportation to appointments

Family whose three-year-old child with a disability is entering the public school system

Services requested:

- Speech and physical therapy
- Sign language instruction for parents
- Respite care

Grandparents caring for a two-year-old child with AIDS who is entering family child care

Services requested:

- Emergency financial assistance during periods of home care
- Play therapy for child
- Ongoing information on AIDS

Handout 22: Referrals and Applications (Continued)

Directions: *Answer the questions about the scenario assigned to your group.*

What program and service referrals would you make for this family?

Is the referral and application process similar or different for each program?

Where are these services located and how are they connected?

What factors might make services inaccessible to the family in your scenario? (For example, language, transportation, cost)

If the services were not available, how could you involve community representatives in addressing the issues?

Handout 23: Expanding Support

Directions: For each target audience choose the communication strategies that best address their interests and needs.

Target Audience	*Communication Strategy*
Policymakers Federal officials State officials Local officials	☎ **Personal Contacts** Telephone calls Informal networking Individual meetings
Administrators Organizational leaders Program directors Project managers	☛ **Group Meetings** Issues presentations Planning meetings Focus groups Conferences Training sessions
Frontline Workers Teachers Home visitors Family advocates Community health providers	✉ **Written Communication** Newsletters Mailing lists Program pamphlet distribution Flyers Letters to the editor Press releases Petitions and letters from the public Reports
Families Parents Grandparents Extended family members Guardians Other caregivers	✎ **Creative Ideas** Special events Research or study groups Video presentations Testimonials

Handout 24: Reports from the Field
Part One

Hopeville Head Start Program and Elementary School Planning Process

Assess Current Practices

In Hopeville, the parent educator for the Health Department, the Head Start director, and the principal of Hopeville Elementary School began meeting to discuss the progress of students who had moved from the Head Start program into the elementary school during the past few years. After reviewing school records, the team discovered that several Head Start children had repeated kindergarten and others were being placed in a transitional first-grade class. In addition, some children had very spotty attendance records. The school records did not include any written information from Head Start families or staff. The principal was surprised to hear how much involvement parents had in the Head Start program because few parents volunteered at the school.

Set Goals

In March, after several meetings, the team set a long-term goal *to increase the achievement of Head Start children through the elementary grades by increasing parent involvement and reducing the absentee rate.* They also developed two short-term goals: (1) establish a system for kindergarten families to share information with the school before September and (2) provide parents with information about how to support their child's progress in school.

Define Action Steps

The Head Start director and the school principal held staff meetings to assign responsibilities for meeting these objectives. They asked staff to submit a detailed report of the plan's progress in the fall. The parent educator volunteered to provide a list of Health Department phone numbers.

Implement Action Steps

- In May, the kindergarten teachers mailed all incoming kindergarten families a six-page survey asking for personal information about the child and family.
- In June, Head Start sent all families leaving the program a packet containing parent-child activities, health tips, and a letter stating that the kindergarten teacher would contact them before September.

Review Progress

In October, all staff involved in implementing the plan met to write a report. They shared information on the number of families contacted, the survey response rate, and the number of hours spent on the project. The summary of the report stated: *The project has been very time-consuming with little results. Very few parents responded to the survey. Some parents called the school this summer expecting that teachers would be available to answer their questions. One child came to school on the first day crying because she and her mother did not finish the summer packet in time for kindergarten. A parent stormed into the kindergarten classroom demanding to know why the school needs personal information. Parent involvement has not increased and the absentee rate is still at a high level.*

Handout 24: Reports from the Field
Part Two

Kindergarten Teacher

The beginning and end of the school year are the busiest time for me. In the summer, when this project needed support, I am not paid to work. It was frustrating to spend a lot of time preparing a survey and writing a statistical report, especially when I get all the information I need at the annual October parent-teacher conference. The time I spent gathering data about the project would have been better spent making personal contacts with the parents.

Head Start Parent Involvement Coordinator

Once families leave Head Start, we have little contact with them unless they still have children in the program. The information that I receive about a child's adjustment to kindergarten is usually through the grapevine. The kindergarten teachers should have received lots of feedback about the summer packets when they contacted the families this summer.

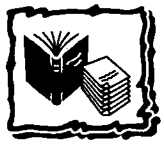
Parent

I remember getting a long survey in the mail. I had registered my child early and signed a form for Head Start to send my records to the school. I do not like filling out forms and I expected I could tell the kindergarten teacher about my child during home visits like the ones we had in Head Start. My child and I did a special activity from the summer packet every day and I saved all the papers and projects to show the teacher.

Parent Educator

If someone had informed me that the packets were mailed this summer, I could have kept track of Head Start parents who came to my summer seminars. I did not know that the packets had been mailed until it was reported at the October meeting, so I was unprepared to report back to the group.

Continuing Professional Development



Participants can expand their skills and knowledge by completing coursework, joining local and national organizations, networking with other early childhood professionals, and reading current literature.

Continuing Education

Several universities in the nation offer interprofessional development programs for professionals serving families and children. These university programs provide early childhood staff and community service workers with an opportunity to expand their understanding of how to link services and collaborate. Students in these programs come from fields as diverse as social work, nursing, teaching, law enforcement, and community development. To learn more about coursework, conferences, projects, and publications, contact the Interprofessional Education and Training Network representative:

Rick Brandon
Human Services Policy Center
University of Washington
Box 353060
Seattle, WA 98195-8486
Phone: 1-206-543-8483
Fax: 1-206-616-5769
E-mail: brandon@u.washington.edu

Study Groups

A study group made up of teachers from various grade levels and programs can successfully enhance the skills of its participants. The organizer of a study group should assess the interests of the teachers and promote the exchange of ideas within the group. A simple survey of teacher interests or a one-hour brainstorming session can produce a variety of appropriate study topics. The first study group session might involve a special presentation by an expert or the viewing of a videotape that provides an overview of the chosen topic. Then participants can begin to identify their questions and determine a format for study. Some study groups choose to meet for a limited period of time to discuss or research specific topics such as implementing a new curriculum or developing an integrated curriculum. However, these groups often continue as ongoing support groups where teachers can share ideas and help each other resolve issues as they arise.

Staff Retreats

Retreats offer opportunities for staff to spend time learning about each other and focusing on developing a greater understanding of how to implement promising practices. Representatives from a variety of professions can organize retreats. Ice breakers, team-building exercises, and social activities help participants build trust among partners. Video or speaker presentations can provide an overview of promising practices. Small groups can participate in focused discussions or problem-solving sessions.

Staff can present information about their programs and conduct training for others. For example, early intervention specialists can train child care staff on how to use specific techniques that encourage language or motor development.

Resource Organizations

Many foundations and organizations offer a variety of resources for professional development. Participants can obtain publications, newsletters, updates on research and professional networks, conference announcements, training, and technical assistance by contacting these and other organizations.

Bridging Early Services
210 S. Main Street
McPherson, KS 67460
Phone: 1-316-241-7754
Fax: 1-316-241-5153

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching
5 Ivy Lane
Princeton, NJ 08540
Phone: 1-609-452-1780
Fax: 1-609-520-1712

Family and Child Transitions into Least Restrictive Environments
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
61 Children's Research Center
51 Gerty Drive
Champaign, IL 61820
Phone: 1-217-333-4123
Fax: 1-217-244-7732

Institute for Responsive Education
Northeastern University
50 Nightingale Hall
Boston, MA 02115
Phone: 1-617-373-2595
Fax: 1-617-373-8924

National Community Education Association
3929 Old Lee Highway, Suite 91A
Fairfax, VA 22030-2401
Phone: 1-703-359-8973
Fax: 1-703-359-0972

Informational Resources

INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES SECTION

Informational Resources: Contents

Informational Resources: Contents

The **Informational Resources** section of the training guide *Planning for Transitions* is designed to be used with the workshop and coaching activities in the **Skill-Based Training** section. The **Informational Resources** section can also be used outside the training sessions to provide quick reference materials for those seeking transition planning information and examples of promising practices. A description of each of the section's four categories along with suggestions for using the materials follow.

Digests

Digests are short articles that summarize fundamental information on transition planning, comprehensive services, and implementing effective transition practices. They reflect current research and express a consensus of views. Suggestions for use include:

- Read in preparation for training sessions
- Summarize and share information with training participants
- Share with planning team members
- Share with administrators and other school and community officials

Program Profiles

Program Profiles describe promising practices of early childhood programs from both within and outside of Head Start. The planning process of each program is highlighted. Suggestions for use include:

- Disseminate to participants in training sessions
- Share with administrators and community leaders as examples of programs with continuity
- Adapt program ideas for use in local transition planning efforts
- Contact programs and learn more about their planning process and funding sources

Hands-on Tools

This section includes tools to help individuals and teams organize their overall planning efforts. Other tools provide helpful tips for planning specific joint transition practices (see also *Handout 13: Planning Tools* in Module 2). Suggestions for use include:

- Distribute to training participants
- Provide copies to all members of transition planning teams
- Share with key partners in transition, including parents
- Adapt to meet specific program needs

Resources

This annotated list of additional resource materials includes books, journal articles, and other documents. Resources provide both general and specific information. Suggestions for use include:

- Use the planning tools included in other resource materials to conduct surveys, develop effective action plans, and evaluate the effectiveness of transition practices
- Share the list with participants in training sessions and with planning team members
- Use listed materials as additional resources for program development

Benefits of Transition Planning

Effective Practices

Effective transition practices are based on the understanding that transition is a process of change that takes time, preparation, teamwork, and planning. Positive outcomes for children and their families can be achieved when transition efforts focus on four critical areas:

- Child preparation
- Ongoing communication and coordination
- Parental involvement
- Continuity of learning, care, and services

Benefits for Children

When transitions are planned, children of all ages have fewer difficulties adjusting to the new setting. When parents and staff help children prepare for their new environment, the benefits for children may include:

- Continuity of language and culture, earlier learning, care, and service experiences
- Increased motivation and openness to new experiences
- Enhanced self-confidence
- A greater sense of trust among children, educators, and caregivers
- Improved relationships with peers and adults

Benefits for Families

When transitions are planned, families are supported before, during, and after the transition. When parents are involved with educators and caregivers in easing the transition of their children, parents can gain:

- Increased confidence in their children's ability to succeed in the new setting
- Improved self-confidence in their own ability to communicate with staff
- A sense of pride and commitment in their ongoing involvement in the education of their children
- A greater knowledge of early childhood programs and services
- Enhanced ability to effectively influence education, care, and service delivery

Benefits for Programs

When teachers and staff from sending and receiving programs collaborate with each other to facilitate the transitions of children and their families, they can expect:

- Increased information sharing and an enhanced ability to address individual child needs
- Increased parental and community support
- Access to a larger network of resources and professional support
- Enhanced understanding of other early childhood programs in the community
- Renewed sense of professional pride and commitment in improving outcomes for children and families

Benefits for the Community

The entire community benefits from coordinated transition planning efforts because:

- Systems are in place to share information among agencies and programs that serve children and families during expected or sudden transitions.

- Accurate information about available services within the community can increase the responsiveness of service delivery.

- Resources allocated to early childhood transition planning can help families enhance their planning and advocacy skills in order to successfully manage future transition.

- Successful transition experiences during early childhood can have a lasting positive effect on the lives of families and the quality of life in the community.

Conclusion

When transition planning is a coordinated team effort, it benefits children, families, sending and receiving staff, and the entire community. Ongoing efforts help communities achieve long-term benefits.

Adapted from: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, *Easing the Transition from Preschool to Kindergarten: A Guide for Early Childhood Teachers and Administrators* (1986).

Planning for Transitions

Planning Framework

Addressing the total developmental needs of young children and families is a complex process that requires a comprehensive, coordinated approach. Planning involves a continuous cycle of developing, implementing, reviewing, and refining a plan to achieve transition goals throughout the year. Using a framework helps planning partners build or develop a plan. The elements of a planning framework are listed below:

Assessing current practices considers current transition systems and how well the needs of families and children are being met within the community. Questions that can guide this step include whether gaps in information sharing or service delivery exist and how involved key planning partners are.

Setting goals begins with identifying a direction for future transition efforts, both short term and long range, in light of the assessment. Questions that can guide this step include what specific outcomes can be achieved for children and families during the next year and over the next three years.

Defining action steps shapes the goals into concrete actions and assigns responsibility for initiating and completing the actions. Priorities and timelines are set to guide this step.

Implementing action steps involves coordinating actions throughout the year and periodically meeting with key partners. Documenting accomplished tasks, challenges, and solutions on a continual basis will help keep the plan on track.

Reviewing progress of the implementation of the plan helps monitor and evaluate the individual progress of children and families and also monitors the planning process and activities of those responsible for the actions. Receiving ongoing feedback from all planning partners can help strengthen relationships and improve coordination and joint planning.

Refining the plan involves incorporating the feedback gathered during the review process. Needs can be reassessed, new goals set, and action steps redefined. Questions that guide this step include how well the planning process worked and, most importantly, how well the transition needs of children and families have been met.

Planning Levels

The planning framework can be used to develop plans for individual children and families, or it can be used for program and community planning. Addressing each level helps ensure positive early transition experiences.

Why Plan?

Many factors affect the ease (or difficulty) that individual children and families experience during transitions. Some of the ingredients of successful transitions include preparing children for changes, creating a welcoming climate in the new setting, involving families, and fostering communication and coordination.

Positive outcomes occur when staff of the sending and receiving programs work together and with the family to develop and implement a transition plan. Planning for transitions benefits children, their families, and programs when the common goals of the process are to continue individual growth and prevent gaps in needed education, health, and family support services. All agencies that work with children in the community benefit from coordinated planning by avoiding duplication of efforts and resources.

Surviving the Late Spring Jitters

It's late spring and you're wondering what has happened to the class you thought you knew and the behavior you worked so hard to establish. A mere few weeks ago your children were working with great productivity and focus. They showed responsibility both independently and cooperatively and exhibited a positive and friendly attitude.

Now you see and hear bickering, testing, and uncaring behavior among the children. The room often looks like a hurricane blew through it. You spend meetings reminding wiggly children to focus and listen. Worktimes are loud, children get off track in their work, and suddenly they need you to help solve problems that they had been handling very well on their own. The children seem to be regressing to beginning-of-the-year behavior right before your eyes!

Don't despair and, most importantly, don't give up! This is a phenomena that occurs every year, in every classroom to some degree without fail. It's called "end-of-the-year anxiety" or "the late spring jitters."

Imagine yourself in a community of learners feeling wonderful about yourself and your work, deeply caring for your teachers and your peers, and feeling excited and challenged by your learning. It's natural to want this experience to go on forever. But it doesn't. In late spring you realize that this is all going to end in a few short weeks and the "unknowns" of next year begin to loom very large in your thinking.

Who will be my teacher and classmates? Will I be liked? Will I be with my friends? Will I have friends? Will I be up to the work of the NEXT GRADE? Will school work and learning be as fun and as exciting as they have been this year? I'm scared—I've heard stories about that teacher I might get. I'm worried—I'll be with the BIG kids at lunch and recess.

This is even a more difficult time of the year for children who struggle with appropriate social behavior or academic learning. These children may not have the same "warm glow" feelings about their class and learning experiences as previously described, but at least their experience is a "known" entity. The "unknowns" of next year can feel extremely threatening.

And for some children, a threatening "unknown" looms even sooner: SUMMER. For many children in today's world, summer is not a relaxed time of playing for endless hours outside with friends, going to camp, or enjoying a family vacation. For these children summer lacks the safety of the school environment, the access to friends, and the opportunity to engage in "childhood summer activities."

All of these worries, jitters, and anxieties get in the way of the work that needs to be done and the caring behavior that has been the norm. When children don't feel emotionally safe they are unable to take the risks necessary in academic or social learning. When they are preoccupied with worries, they have no energy left to remember routines and rules. As adults we often forget the influence of these fears and jitters. We are consumed with our own agenda— "fitting in" all the curriculum we know we must—and our own anxieties about that. We then become frustrated with our children as we come head to head, each driven by our own "late spring jitters."

Take heart! This phenomenon is not terminal. There are a few simple things that can be done to help ease the anxiety, at the same time teaching children ways of coping with fears and worries about things unknown.

From a letter to incoming Greenfield Center School K–1 children (Primes) from outgoing class:

You will have a partner that was here last year. Your new friend will help you to find things and help to remind you of the rules. Jeremy wants you to know that rules help.

Megan says it gets easier once you get the hang of it. And if you forget what to do Arden says you should ask someone who knows.

From a book written by Greenfield Center School Primes explaining what they do in their room:

Every morning we have a meeting to learn more about each other. Meetings can feel long at first but become really FUN as we learn more songs and games. Sharing happens at meetings too.

RX for Late Spring Jitters

- Engage in class discussions about the possibilities of next year in school and the natural fears and worries that children and teachers may have. Begin these discussions when the children return from their spring break and make them ongoing until the end of the school year. Children learn that everyone has these worries, even adults, and that talking about them and sharing them makes them seem less overwhelming and scary. Children can share strategies for what to do when you feel worried about something.

- Be proactive about your children's behavior. When they return from spring break, spend time in a collaborative review of rules, routines, and general expected behavior. Remember to use modeling and role playing as tools to make these ideas concrete and to actively engage children in thinking about them. Use this review as a tool to encourage and empower the children, not as a time to lecture and reprimand. Then be firm, consistent and caring in your follow-through. More than ever, the children need the structure and care you provide.

- Brainstorm about what made the children begin to feel comfortable this year or other years in their new grade, their new class or in their new school. Many ideas for constructive things to do will come from these discussions. Some ideas will be for your "this year's" class and some will be for your "next year's" class. The following examples are ideas that I either have used myself or have learned from other teachers:

  1. Deb Porter at Greenfield Center School shared that her class always makes a book about what happens in their room. This book is then shared with the classes that are moving up in the fall.

  2. Jean Schweikert and Carole Hoffman's classes in Cincinnati, Ohio, made videos about what it was like to be a fourth grader.

  3. Classes moving up can write out questions for the present classes to answer through books, videos, plays, or personal letters.

  4. Each student of an older grade can be a buddy to a younger student. They might write to one another, do some activities together, or have lunch together. The older student might even remain a buddy into the first few weeks of school in the fall.

  5. Teachers of two consecutive grades can combine their classes in various ways to have the older children teach the younger children games, songs, or activities that they might do at the beginning of the year in their new grade.

  6. Teachers of the older grade might spend time in the classrooms of the grade below. They might visit during Morning Meeting or come read a story.

7. Children might make a book about their hopes and perhaps one about their fears and worries that can then be shared with the older grade teachers when they visit.

8. Step-Up Day: Many schools, including Greenfield Center School, have a day like this when children visit in the classroom either of the teacher they are going to have next year or of a grade they will be in next year. However, this day is usually at the very end of the year and a lot of worrying and anxiety has already occurred. I encourage schools to think about having this day about three weeks before the end of the school year.

9. In general, the more classes share about the work at their grade level with other grade levels and engage in collaborative activities across grade levels, the more comfortable children will be with moving to new teachers and new grade levels. This approach needs to be considered throughout the year as well as in the late spring.

These steps are simple but take planning, time, and a belief in the resulting benefits. Children will end the year feeling comfortable and confident about themselves in school and positively anticipating their next year. The immediate benefits for you are that the children in your class will be better able to stay focused on their work and use the social skills and positive behavior that you've worked so hard all year to teach them. As you move into the last few months of school, remember to take this most important time to celebrate your children's accomplishments and to help them prepare for their new beginnings.

Planning for Comprehensive Services

Linking Services

In Head Start, addressing the needs of the whole child means addressing the needs of the whole family. To develop fully and achieve social competence, children and their families need a comprehensive, interdisciplinary approach to services. The range of services needs to be responsive to the unique needs, development, and cultural and linguistic preferences of each child.

As programs and schools struggle to serve students who have multiple needs, transition demonstration projects, integrated services demonstration projects, and state initiatives are attempting to link services so they can provide comprehensive services throughout the early childhood period. Emerging from these efforts is evidence that comprehensive, coordinated service delivery through interagency collaboration can be responsive and cost-effective. Some examples of the services that programs can provide are listed below.

Education Services

Education services focus on implementing developmentally appropriate curricula in all early childhood settings. This can be accomplished when parents and program staff from each setting collaborate to develop individualized education plans for children. Joint planning and activities provide children with program continuity as they change settings.

Family Development

Family services include home visits, referrals for social services and training, parent education programs, and crisis intervention. When family service providers work with classroom staff, they create a link between home and school. Information about home situations is conveyed to school staff, and school concerns are shared with families. By knowing this information, families and school staff can better address the needs of children.

Parent Involvement

Because parents are the primary teachers and caregivers of their children, they should be involved in all decisions that affect their children. Parents can volunteer in the setting, involve themselves on transition teams, organize and participate in monthly meetings, and work at home with their children to build on program experiences.

Health Services

Through direct service and referrals, communities can provide health screenings, immunizations, dental services, and other physical and mental health services. Health fairs, parent meetings, and workshops provide parents with nutritional and health education.

Programs can take several steps to link and integrate comprehensive services for children and their families, including:

- Expanding their formal missions to include the family and ensure that goals are consistent with this mission.
- Defining specific outcomes for families. By gathering data and assessing whether they achieve outcomes, programs can determine how they can better serve families.
- Collaborating with community agencies and other programs to obtain funding that will provide additional broad-based services.
- Using existing funding more effectively. By pooling funds from various sources, early childhood programs can develop more comprehensive programming.

Conclusion

When services are linked, families experience fewer gaps in services. Collaboration allows Head Start, public schools, other early childhood programs, and community agencies to make services more accessible and comprehensive. Providing services on-site, developing new referral systems, and pooling agency funds are collaborative methods that communities can use to maximize their resources and respond to community needs.

Adapted from: Greene, Andrea, and the Arizona Head Start–Public School Transition Demonstration Project, "Comprehensive Services and the Public Schools," Tempe, Ariz.: Morrison Institute for Public Policy (1993).

The **Program Profile** section highlights five programs that have initiated and sustained promising transition planning practices. Some of the programs have focused on transition planning for more than 20 years, while others have begun planning more recently. However, one common element throughout the profiles is that all of the programs involved many partners in the planning process, ranging from Head Start and school staff to health care providers and parents. These promising practices can be adapted for use in local transition planning efforts.

Transition Planning Framework

These five programs are briefly analyzed in the context of the stages of the transition planning framework (see *Handout 2: Transition Planning Framework* in Module 1). All of the programs have addressed the five stages of planning: assess current practices, set goals, define action steps, implement action steps, and review progress. Many of the programs have also refined their plans several times during the planning process.

As you review these profiles and share them with participants, emphasize that the stages of the transition planning framework are essential to successful transitions. Although the profiles describe diverse groups, the same planning process assisted each program in reaching its goals. Understanding this planning process will help some participants begin planning and help others strengthen their current efforts.

Implementation

The action steps implemented by each program can be placed into three categories: family services, education services, and community collaborations and health services. The scope of these categories shows that transition planning involves more than arranging to have incoming families visit their new school once in the spring.

Planning must address all of the factors affecting a child's growth. As children transition, consideration must be given to the strengths and needs of families, the educational environments of the sending and receiving programs, and the support services available. Each of the programs profiled here relies on this comprehensive view. You are invited to learn from these programs, apply the lessons they have learned, and contact them for further information.

Conehatta Family and Child Education Program

Address:	Conehatta Family and Child Education Program P.O. Box 146 Conehatta, MS 39057
Contact:	Joy McGarity, Director
Phone:	1-601-775-3845
Funding Source:	Bureau of Indian Affairs, tribal funds
Population:	Families of the Choctaw community in Conehatta, Mississippi, who have children from birth through third grade
Location:	Home-based services for children age birth to three years, center-based services for children aged three to five and their parents, and Conehatta Elementary School for children up to third grade

Initiated in 1991, the **goal** of the Conehatta Family and Child Education Program (FACE) is to enhance the continuity of services for families and children from birth to age eight. Continuity is achieved by coordinating curriculum and teaching philosophies and by placing a strong focus on the cultural relationship among children, parents, and early childhood programs.

Before the program began, early childhood leaders **assessed** the transition process between Head Start and tribal school programs. The parent advisory board was also consulted on what transition services were needed. The assessment showed that former Head Start children had to adjust to very different curricula, classroom settings, teaching styles, and behavioral styles when they entered kindergarten. In addition, high absenteeism and drop out rates among secondary students suggested that preventive health and education services for younger children were needed.

A team of parents, parent educators, social workers, Indian Health Service representatives, and special needs workers met to create a plan to address these issues. One **action step** was to create the FACE Program. The FACE program has four components—early childhood education, parent education, parent and child time, and adult education. In addition, the High/Scope curriculum, a well-documented early childhood education model that includes a parent involvement component, has been incorporated. The program has a strong focus on helping children and families build English skills while maintaining their Native American Choctaw heritage.

The **implementation** of the Early Childhood Education Program has involved many strategies:

Family Services

- A parent educator and school counselor serve as liaisons between the home and school. They conduct spring meetings to answer parents' questions about transition.

- Language barriers between staff, students, and families have diminished as a result of a focus on building language skills first in the native language and then in English.

- FACE works with the elementary schools to establish a time when parents can come to school to read with their kindergarten through third grade children.

- Preschool children participate in elementary school library visits once a week.

Education Services

- Daily transitions between the home and school are facilitated by extension activities that teachers send home for parents to complete with their children.

- Using High/Scope has led to a continuity of curriculum and teaching philosophies in classrooms for children from birth through third grade.

- High/Scope trainers conduct joint monthly inservice sessions for preschool and elementary staff.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- FACE parent educators teach parents about the services available to them in the community. A parent resource center is available to parents of school-aged children.

- The Choctaw Department of Social Services provides continuous services to families. The Department of Education provides hearing and speech assessment, in addition to sponsoring an early intervention program.

- A semiannual community relations day allows parents and teachers to receive and share information about available services. An annual spring festival highlights Choctaw culture, strengthening the connection among the home, school, and community.

The FACE program **reviews progress** by using interviews, observation, questionnaires, and student records to collect data on school climate, attendance, special services, discipline referrals, and teacher and parent attitudes. The Bureau of Indian Affairs also conducts a yearly evaluation of the project. These studies have demonstrated that FACE children are more prepared for transitions and more academically prepared for elementary school than children who have not participated.

Montgomery County Schools Transition Demonstration Project

Address: Head Start/Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Project
Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)
4910 Macon Road
Rockville, MD 20852

Contact: Pamela Prue, Director, Division of Early Childhood Services

Phone: 1-301-230-0691

Funding Source: National Head Start/Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Grant

Population: Families and children who had previously attended Head Start but who are now in kindergarten through third grade

Location: Suburban public schools in Montgomery County, Maryland

The overall **goal** of the Head Start/Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Project in Montgomery County, Maryland, is to create continuity of philosophy, programs, and services for children and families from Head Start through the primary grades.

The Transition Demonstration Project focuses heavily on planning for the individual child's transition. Planning begins with a family needs **assessment** for every incoming family. In addition, the transition family service coordinators and parent assistants review family information with the Head Start staff. A team is developed for each child, including the sending and receiving teachers, the family services coordinator, parents, the transition nurse and health technician, and the child as appropriate. The team discusses the child's strengths and needs in an individual transition meeting, which is held in an informal, comfortable, and safe setting prior to the Head Start child's entry into kindergarten.

The project has developed several **action steps** that encourage regular interaction between all key transition partners. Monthly meetings of the Head Start Governing Board bring together parents, school administrators, teachers, and representatives from community agencies. This group oversees the program and addresses transition issues for children and families. These interactions have improved Head Start-kindergarten, cross-grade, cross-program, and school-community communication.

These meetings have led to the **implementation** of several strategies, including:

Family Services

- Monthly family nights offer opportunities for school staff and families to socialize, engage in parent-child activities, and build stronger teacher-parent-child relationships.
- Training has been provided to foster teacher-parent partnerships. Sessions are provided to teachers, then to parents, and then jointly to teachers and parents.
- Head Start family services records are shared with the transition demonstration schools' family services coordinators who follow up on services as needed.
- Head Start and other early childhood staff work together to plan and conduct an annual Family Festival during Week of the Young Child activities.

Education Services

- MCPS's Division of Early Childhood Services oversees kindergartens, the state-funded early childhood program for four-year-olds, Title I, and the Head Start unit. All early childhood programs are guided by the same MCPS Early Childhood Policy that requires developmentally appropriate practice.
- Joint staff trainings are planned for Head Start and other early childhood personnel.
- The Head Start curriculum was developed in conjunction with MCPS K–12 curriculum.
- Head Start and the state-funded preschool program jointly developed an early childhood assessment. In the future, MCPS kindergartens may also use this tool.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- Head Start teachers maintain MCPS cumulative records and health records for all students. Head Start then shares these folders with children's kindergarten teachers.
- A multidisciplinary Head Start team makes recommendations for children with special needs. These MCPS records also follow the children into kindergarten.
- Three MCPS schools collaborate with other county human service agencies to provide on-site health and social services through *Linkages to Learning*.

This national demonstration project has used several methods to **review progress**. Families have rated the services they have received, the Governing Board initiated a self-assessment process modeled after the Head Start On-Site Program Review Instrument (OSPRI), and the University of Maryland has been involved in a formal research component.

Oregon Head Start–State Collaboration Project

Address: Head Start–State Collaboration Office
Oregon Department of Education
Public Service Building
255 Capital Street, NE
Salem, OR 97310-0203

Contact: Dell Ford, Director

Phone: 1-503-378-5585, ext. 662

Funding Source: Federal Head Start–State Collaboration Project funding

Population: Families with young children from birth through age eight

Location: Community preschools, family child care homes, Oregon Head Start Pre-kindergarten, public school grades K–3, and child care centers

Historically, Head Start and public schools in Oregon had different approaches and philosophies on curriculum, human services, and parent involvement. Then, in 1987, the Oregon State Education Reform Act was passed, enabling legislation that institutes developmentally appropriate practices for grades K–3 and creates connections with social services. Four years later, the Oregon Department of Education directed each school to create a transition plan. When the federally funded Head Start–State Collaboration projects were established in 1991, the stage had been set for a statewide focus on transition.

The **goal** of the Oregon transition demonstration project was to demonstrate a comprehensive, integrated program of education and family services for children in early childhood programs through the third grade. The collaboration project initiated a transition conference. Nineteen community transition teams from across the state attended the conference to develop their own models of transition planning.

Each conference team comprised an elementary school principal, a Head Start director, a public school teacher, a Head Start teacher, a social service worker, and a family with children who had recently transitioned. At the conference, the teams developed an overall transition vision, a team contract, strategies, timelines, and responsibilities. When the teams returned to their communities, they had clearly defined **action steps** to help them implement their transition plans. Five of the nineteen teams were selected as pilot sites to officially launch their transition planning.

Listed below are some of the transition strategies **implemented** at various sites around the state:

Family Services

- Systems for transferring files from Head Start to the public schools are in place.
- "Buddy Systems" link public schools with Head Start programs. Children are paired and visit each other's schools, making the younger children more familiar with the new environment before the transition.
- Head Start family advocates and school liaisons work together to help Head Start parent leaders transition to leadership opportunities in the new setting.

Education Services

- The public schools have integrated developmentally appropriate practice into the kindergarten curriculum. Home learning packets sent to incoming parents are consistent with these practices.
- Cross training Head Start and public school staff has led to more continuity in practices, in addition to improving staff interactions and levels of trust and respect.
- An open-door policy between the schools and Head Start has created a more welcoming environment for children, parents, and staff.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- Families receive more continuous health and social services because of links created between the Head Start family advocate and a designated liaison in the schools.
- Schools are partnering to offer more comprehensive services, including child care.
- One school holds a yearly health clinic modeled after Head Start.
- Schools have created resource guides to help families better access community services.

The demonstration sites completed informal **evaluations** of their transition plans' impact on children and families. Oregon State University was also contracted to interview team members about their progress and synthesize the information into a published report.

These evaluations made several lessons apparent. First, the sites learned that the best method was to start small and build a relationship with only one school. Second, they found that administrative support was essential, especially during the start-up phase. Third, they found that the structured planning in the beginning of the project created a common vision for child and family transitions that guided their work throughout the process.

Preschool Liaison Program

Address: School Board of Alachua County
3600 NE 15th Street
Gainesville, FL 32609

Contact: Ann Crowell, Program Director

Phone: 1-352-955-6875

Funding Source: Merged funding streams—Head Start, public school, Title I, and agency-managed subsidized child care

Population: Families with at-risk children from birth through fifth grade

Location: Family services center, child care centers, and public elementary schools in the Alachua County, Florida, school district

Efforts to help all children enter kindergarten on an equal playing field have been in place in Alachua County, Florida, since 1972 when the school board initiated the Preschool Liaison Program. A major **goal** of the program is to collaborate with community service providers to deliver the most effective and comprehensive services for young children and their families. Collaborating to provide these services gives children and families a solid foundation that assists them with the transition from preschool to kindergarten.

An Interagency Task Force, created in 1980, continually examines early childhood issues and works to **assess** the needs of children and families in Alachua County. In 1986, the Task Force determined that not enough publicly funded slots were available in preschool programs to serve all qualified children. In addition, the Task Force found that a great disparity existed in the funding of programs. Because of these gaps, county children were entering kindergarten without having their educational, medical, nutritional, and social service needs met.

The Task Force, which was renamed the Interagency Council in 1986, coordinates **action steps** to successfully provide comprehensive services to all children and families. The council, which has broad community and school representation, is involved in policy planning, goal setting, needs assessment, and networking. This planning supports collaborative efforts among local preschool programs, the school district, community service agencies, businesses, and families.

Planning has led to the **implementation** of several strategies, including:

Family Services

- Through cooperative funding, sharing of resources, and community involvement, Alachua County has greatly expanded the number of services it provides to children and their families. All eligible four-year-olds in the county have access to preschool programs.

- At the beginning of each school year, parents and professionals meet to determine appropriate social services.

- The family services center offers general equivalency diploma (GED) classes, parenting classes, employability training, family counseling, and economic and health services.

Education Services

- Preschool and kindergarten teachers receive regular joint training on curriculum and transition issues.

- A summer program allows preschool and kindergarten teachers to work, plan, and teach together.

- Preschool and public school teachers share resources.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- The county integrates local Head Start programs, state pre-kindergarten programs, subsidized child care, and private preschool programs to serve all eligible children.

- A kindergarten registration day in the spring enables families and preschool and public school staff to share information about needs and available resources.

Several methods are used to **evaluate** the impact of the Preschool Liaison Program, including surveys, records of referral and parent attendance levels, retention information, and portfolios that track the progress of families.

The information obtained from these informal and formal evaluation methods has helped the Interagency Council refine its plans for strengthening existing programs. Future plans include expanding the role of school liaisons to help families from various elementary schools access services through the family services center. The Preschool Liaison Program is located in a permanent structure, and the county is planning to build additional structures to house an early childhood classroom and a parent support area.

Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville Head Start Program

Address: Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville Head Start Program
411 East Broadway
East St. Louis, IL 63033

Contact: John Lovelace

Phone: 1-618-482-6958

Funding Source: Department of Health and Human Services

Population: Urban and rural children and families

Location: Center-based urban programs and home-based rural programs

When Head Start leaders in East St. Louis, Illinois, began focusing on transition in 1988, they started by **assessing** current transition practices. They interviewed parents about their experiences transitioning from Head Start to the public schools. They also surveyed more than 50 kindergarten teachers and principals about the abilities they thought parents needed before their children entered the public schools. What they found was that families were not being adequately prepared to be successful in the new public school settings.

Because of this assessment, an Advisory Committee composed of Head Start parents, teachers, staff, and select members from the school district was formed. Its primary **goal** was to ensure that children experienced success in the public schools and maintained the gains made in Head Start. Secondary goals included helping parents become advocates for their children; helping parents become equal partners in education; enhancing communication between the home and school; teaching parents their rights, roles, and responsibilities; providing families with access to community resources; and helping parents adjust to the public school setting.

One of their Advisory Committee's first **action steps** was to design a series of parent training modules. The materials explained parents' rights and responsibilities, and showed them how to approach and communicate with school personnel and how to help children learn at home.

In addition to the training program, the School of Education at Southern Illinois University received a grant to develop a standardized transition form. The form included the child's attendance pattern, parent participation, skills developed in Head Start, and other assessments.

Formal written transition agreements have been formed between the Head Start program and the seven school districts that receive its children. These agreements have led to the **implementation** of the following strategies:

Family Services

- Kindergarten children who are Head Start alumni return to Head Start to talk with younger children about what they can expect in the new school.
- Head Start children are prepared with the skills they will need in the more structured environment.
- Kindergarten round-up and registration days are coordinated with Head Start.
- Parents are taught to adapt to the parent involvement philosophies of the new school while maintaining their role as their child's advocate.

Education Services

- Teacher exchanges have led to the creation of new relationships among Head Start staff and public school teachers.
- Joint inservice meetings are held for parents and staff from Head Start and the schools.

Community Collaborations and Health Services

- Parents receive coaching and participate in role plays to help prepare them to access needed services that may not be available through the schools.
- Family members practice speaking on the phone or visit mental health, health, or other community service providers.

The effectiveness of the transition information sharing form has been **evaluated**. Teachers reported that as a result of completing this form prior to entering the public schools, parents were much more enlightened and better prepared to be advocates for their children. The Head Start program is working with Southern Illinois University to develop a systematic evaluation of the other transition strategies that have been implemented.

In the future, Southern Illinois University Head Start plans to expand the parent training program to include teaching parents how to introduce their children to their teachers, helping parents get to know their districts better, and encouraging parents to become leaders and agents of change in the school community.

Action Plan Outline

Goals (What do you want to happen?)	**Action Steps** (How will it happen?)	**Benefits** (What positive outcomes do you expect?)	**Evaluation** (How will you know when it is complete?)	**Assigned To:** (Who will do this?)	**Timeline:** (When will it be completed?)

Adapted from Oregon Head Start Collaboration Project

142

143

Action Plan Outline (Continued)

Resources Needed	Cost	Additional Community Contacts

Adapted from Oregon Head Start Collaboration Project

144

145

Sample Transition Plan:
School District Plan

Purpose of Planning Transitions:

Although Head Start children are already part of the school system, each level—Head Start, kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and third grade—is different and unfamiliar to the child and parent or guardian who have never been there. School staff from each level can assist families in planning for their children's transitions by developing an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) for each child. The use of an ITP should make the change from one class or program to another more comfortable and understood by the child and family. The following tasks and responsibilities ensure that all key partners, including families, participate in the ongoing development and implementation of an ITP for each child.

Administrative Tasks: (School Principal, Head Start Director, Transition Project Manager, and Supervisor of Family Services)

- Set dates for ITP conference with teacher and family service coordinator.
- Determine process for informing parents/guardians about ITP.
- Approve forms and general format to be used at conferences.
- Plan for family and staff feedback and evaluation of ITP process and conference.
- Include child as an ITP conference participant if requested.
- Assure that the ITP is part of an ongoing transition process rather than an isolated activity.
- Arrange the logistics for ITP conferences, including days needed for planning, implementing and following up on the ITP, space to be used, and budgeting for staff time.

Tasks for Sending Teacher, Family Service Coordinator, and Transition Nurse/Health Technician:

- Prepare hands-on support materials for parents/guardians to use with the student at home.
- Discuss and identify child's strengths and concerns or issues.
- Meet or call families to inform them of ITP conference purpose and procedures.
- Prepare parents for maximum participation in the ITP conference.
- Prepare a list of children needing immunizations.
- Prepare or access and review necessary materials such as child cumulative and confidential folders, child portfolio, and family records.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- Make and confirm appointment for ITP conference.
- Decide whether family would like child to be part of the conference and notify staff.
- Make notes and prepare questions and comments before the meeting.
- Identify child and family strengths, interests, and concerns.
- Attend ITP conference, participate fully, and sign plan after it is fully understood.
- Follow through on plan at home.
- Contact teacher as needed to discuss child's progress or concerns.

Tasks for Receiving Teacher and Family Service Coordinator (FSC):

- Coordinate and confirm scheduling of conference.
- Work with others to reschedule conferences when necessary.
- Participate in conference.
- Respond to and integrate information from the ITP in plans for each child.
- Provide materials, activities, and services agreed to in ITP.
- Remind parents/guardians of immunization requirements.
- Review ITP prior to and during November parent/guardian teacher conference.
- Capture the information shared throughout the ITP process and apply to receiving program documents such as child assessment, lesson plans, and family service plans.

Tasks for Family Service Coordinator:

- Arrange for interpreters when necessary and plan for child care.
- Meet with sending teacher to schedule ITP meetings with teachers and families.
- Conduct pre-ITP training meetings with parents/guardians.
- Inform family of the ITP process and about parents' rights regarding school files.
- Transfer information from ITPs to appropriate family service plans.
- Ensure that each parent/guardian/child is receiving agreed-upon ITP services.

Timeline for Planning ITP Conferences:

February	Principal meets with Transition Team(s) to set dates and clarify expectations.
March	Transition Team establishes forms to be used and develops format for conferences.
April	Principal approves forms, format, and parent notification process.
June	Sending teachers, FSCs, and health staff prepare and review records and prepare parents for ITP conferences. Staff begin scheduling appointments and interpreter services as needed.
July	FSCs remind sending and receiving teachers of conference schedule for parents.
August	ITP conferences occur.
September	The ITP process is assessed by those involved.
October	Staff incorporate information from ITPs and follow up as appropriate.
November	Individualized Transition Plan is reviewed at November parent-teacher school conference.

Adapted from: Montgomery County Maryland Head Start/Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Project

Sample Transition Plan: Coordinated Plan Head Start, Child Care, and School District

Planning Team Members:
- Head Start
- School Districts
- Early Childhood Care and Education Programs

Vision:

The community will provide comprehensive early childhood education for all children to grow in a safe, enriching, and supportive environment so that they may develop to their fullest potential.

Philosophy Statement:

Knowing that the early years are the most important for laying the foundation for intellectual, social, emotional, and physical development, we affirm that this is the most crucial time to support development and to attack educational deficiencies and problems. The vision we have for our children in later years is based on their initial success.

The first focus of the Early Childhood Education Cooperative Transition Planning team is to increase the quantity and quality of coordination activities between public and private schools and preschool programs and professionals in our communities. We enlist elementary principals in making a commitment to early childhood education transition activities and assume an advocacy role in the area of coordination.

Plan Monitoring:

Elementary school staff and ECE professionals will use an activities plan and timeline (see side 2) and hold regular meetings to review the progress of the plan.

Activities Plan and Timeline:

Fall Kindergarten Parent Meeting: Receiving teachers will welcome parents to their children's classroom to promote parent involvement, share information, discuss parents' concerns, and inform parents about Parent Packet Program dates. (September)

Shared/Cross Training: Elementary schools and neighborhood ECE programs will open staff training sessions to both elementary and ECE staff. Additional training will be planned and implemented jointly by elementary and ECE staff. (September–May)

School Liaison Identified: Each elementary school and ECE program will designate a staff liaison to communicate among programs. (October)

Buddy School System: Activities will be developed jointly by elementary staff and ECE professionals to encourage class-to-class, child-to-child, and teacher-to-teacher interaction and communication. (October–May)

Kindergarten Parent Packet Program: All elementary schools will use the Kindergarten Parent Packet developed by Title I schools. The packet will be introduced to parents by staff in ECE programs in the spring. (October–June)

Publicize/Open School Events: Schools will open events to ECE community members and keep them informed of parent classes and programs being offered. (Upon Occurrence)

ECE Team within School: Elementary schools will broaden the existing K–2 staff team to include ECE program staff. Each team will meet three times a year to discuss mutual interests and concerns. (November, February, May)

Special Needs Referrals: School staff will meet with ECE professionals in October to review the referral process for children with special needs. ECE professionals will complete referrals by January. (October, January)

Kindergarten Orientation: ECE program staff will send a list of parents' names and addresses to elementary schools. ECE programs will be informed of the timeline for kindergarten orientation and registration and promote early registration. Schools will issue special invitations to parents to attend kindergarten orientation. (March–May)

Transfer Files for Incoming Kindergartners: ECE program staff will review records and the transfer process with parents. Records will be transferred with parental permission. Kindergarten teachers will review portfolios, anecdotal records, assessment summaries, and other information from ECE programs. (June–September)

Adapted from Oregon's Early Childhood Education Cooperative Transition Plan (1990–1991)

Sample Transition Plan:
Interagency Plan
Special Service Provider and School District

Participating Agencies:

Early Intervention, Inc.: Provides services to infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families in Washington County and is viewed as the *sending organization* in the context of this agreement.

School District #1: Serves children K–12 who reside in the community and children eligible for special education from ages three through twenty-one, except for certain children whose education is contracted to Tri-County Special Education District. Viewed as a *receiving organization* within the context of this agreement.

Tri-County Special Education District: Serves certain children, ages three to twenty-one, eligible for services under IDEA, by criteria agreed upon and reviewed annually within the individual school districts. Viewed as a *receiving organization* within the context of this agreement.

Purposes of this Agreement:

We recognize that a transition from early intervention to an early childhood program is a major event in a child's life. We believe that family participation is crucial to a successful transition and wish to include families in all aspects of transition planning. Our commitment is to keep each other well informed, to avoid duplication of effort, to provide services that are of the highest possible quality, to ensure that needs and aspirations of families and children are at the center of each child's transition, and to deliver services in the least restrictive environment that is appropriate for each child.

Transitions for Individual Children:

Each child who makes a transition will receive transition planning services from a transition team. Members of the transition team will include any or all of the following:

- Members of the child's family or the child's legal guardians
- A staff member from the sending organization who is familiar with the child and family
- A staff member from the receiving organization
- A staff member from any program that is anticipated to be the location of service delivery when the receiving organization assumes responsibility for the child's special education
- Other persons invited by or acceptable to the child's family

Expectations for Transitions of Individual Children:

- Notify parents and receiving organization of the upcoming transition no less than nine months in advance.
- Sending organization convenes first transition planning meeting no less than six months before end of Part H eligibility.
- Determine how multidisciplinary assessment for further eligibility will be conducted, to minimize intrusiveness, avoid duplication, and maximize usefulness of information.
- Arrange for someone to accompany the family (if desired) on program visits to various options under consideration (if the child is likely to be eligible for continued services).
- Help ineligible families choose future care arrangements.
- Arrange for health screening and immunizations as needed.
- Arrange for sending or receiving agency to conduct inservice training, ongoing consultation, clinical services, and staffing at site where child will be served.
- Complete a written transition plan to include the family and program responsibilities at least one month in advance of transition.
- Sending organization provides discharge report to the receiving organization at least thirty days prior to the transition.
- Evaluate the success of the child and family's transition.

Long-term Transition Planning:

Each agency will designate a lead staff member to work as part of an interagency planning team. The team will work to create a foundation of communitywide understandings which will enable the transition teams for individual children to be most effective. Tasks will include:

- Project the numbers of children (and identify the individual children) who will be leaving Part H services and will need to be assessed for continued eligibility under Part B.
- Develop or revise procedures for transferring records.
- Compare child assessments and develop protocols that allow for sharing of information among agencies and reduce the duplication of efforts.
- Contribute funds and expertise to provide joint training to staff involved in transitions throughout the community.
- Initiate communication and site visits to locations serving same-age children without special needs (for example, child care homes, Head Start programs, preschools).
- Develop guidelines to enable payment of fees to nonspecialized agencies as listed above.
- Produce and periodically revise a family-friendly resource listing that briefly describes available program options for eligible children.
- Periodically review and propose revisions in the interagency agreement.

Signatures of authorized agency representatives ____________________

Adapted from: *Interagency Agreements: Improving the Transition Process for Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families*, FACTS/LRE Project, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign

Sample Information Sharing Form: Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) Conference Guide

Use the following form to guide discussion and help your team develop an ITP. Use additional paper if necessary.

Child's Full Name	Name Preferred	Birth Date

Parents' or Guardians' Full Names ______________________________

Transition planning team members are introduced.

- Parents/guardians or other family members
- Teachers, family service coordinator, and other staff from each program
- Community support service staff

Family and *sending program staff* provide information to the *receiving program staff*.

- Experiences that the child has benefitted from at home and in the program
- Child and family's strengths and interests
- Goals that have been achieved in the sending program
- Concerns about the transition and ongoing goals for the child
- Supportive services or accommodations requested by the family

Receiving program staff* provide information to the family and *sending program staff.

- Curriculum and program goals
- Opportunities for parents to become involved in the program
- Suggestions for addressing transition concerns and achieving goals
- Procedures for accessing services in the new program
- Methods staff use to individualize the program to build on previous experiences, strengths, and interests and to accommodate for special needs

The transition planning team develops a written action plan to address identified priorities and goals.

- Timeline for achieving short-term and long-term goals
- Role of the family, sending and receiving program staff, and community service providers
- Process for documenting and reviewing progress

Adapted from: Montgomery County Maryland Head Start/Public School Early Childhood Transition Demonstration Project

Sample Information Sharing Form: Intake Form

Child's Name ______________________________

Please check all that apply.

My child:

____lives with both parents

____lives with one parent

____spends time with both parents on a regular basis

____takes care of himself or herself after school

____goes to child care after school

My child learns best when:

____I show him or her how to do it

____I tell him or her how to do it

____He or she tries on her own

My child is especially good at or really enjoys:

____reading ____art

____writing ____math

____music ____helping others

____making friends ____self-help skills

Others such as sports, activities, hobbies: (list)

____

____

____

What types of books does he or she read? How often?

____

____

____

Does your child have a public library card?

When working or playing at home my child:

____likes to try new things ____is confident

____is often playful ____is serious

____is talkative ____is quiet/shy

____pays attention ____is distractible

____asks for help ____is frustrated

My child enjoys working:

____alone ____in pairs

____in small groups ____in large groups

My child communicates best by:

____talking ____writing

____sign language

Comments:________________________________

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

____

As a parent/guardian, I plan to be involved with my child's education by:

____attending parent/teacher conferences

____volunteering in my child's classroom

____talking to my child's teacher regularly

____sending materials for activities or special events

____chaperoning field trips

____sharing a hobby or skill with my child's class

____looking over my child's school work

____helping with homework

____talking to my child about his or her day

____attending school functions

Others: (list)______________________________

____

____

I have questions about:

____volunteering in the school

____participating on the school improvement team

____services available in our neighborhood

Others: (list)______________________________

____

____

I can be reached at:

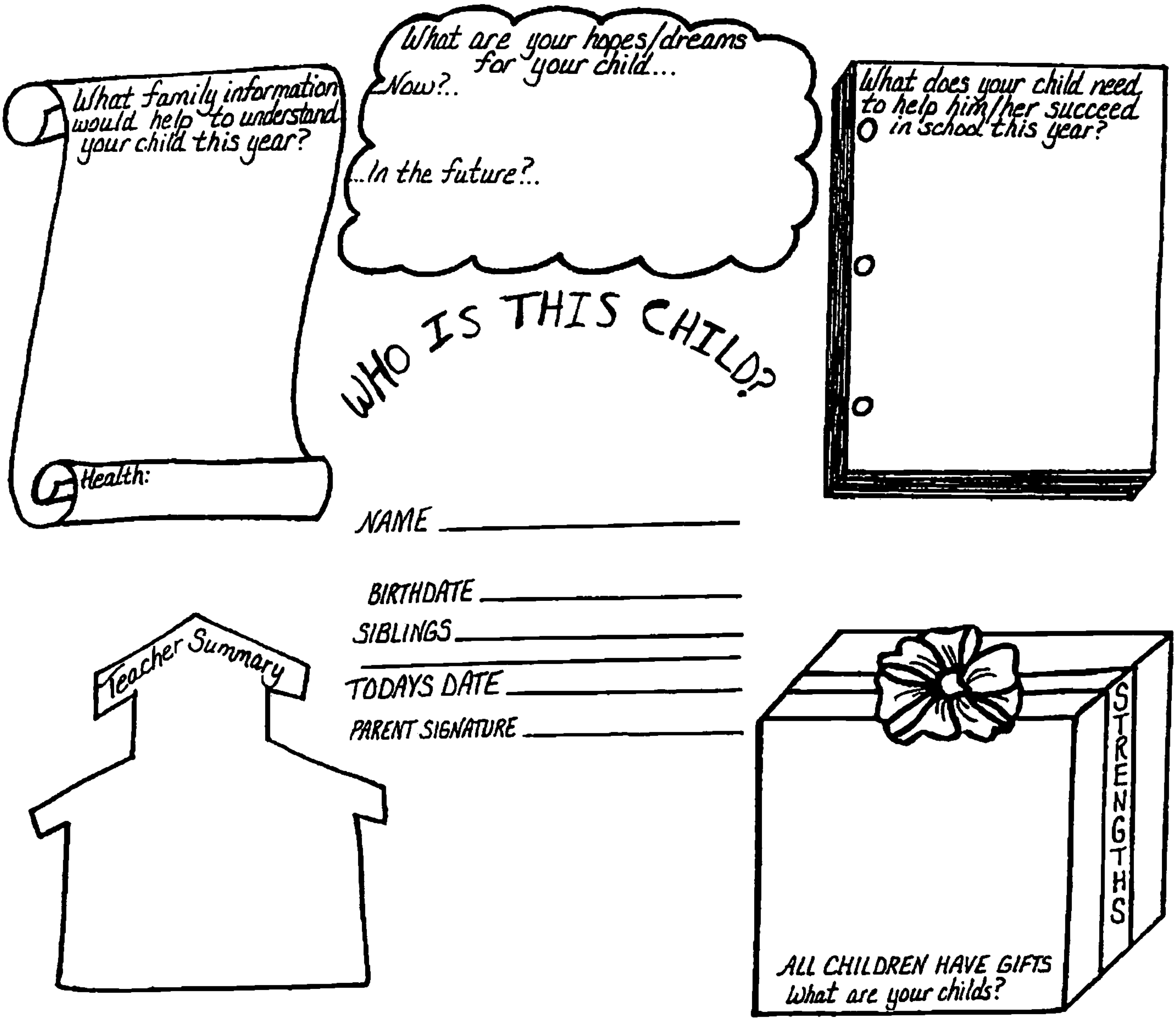
daytime #______________________________

evening #______________________________

Parent Signature________________________

Adapted from: Garfield Elementary School/U-46, Project TRANSFER, Carpentersville, Illinois

Sample Information Sharing Form:
Who Is This Child?



Adapted from: MAPS, Jack Pearpoint and Marsha Forest, by the deLacey Family Education Center, Community Unit School District #300/Funded Programs, Project TRANSFER, Carpentersville, Illinois

Sample Information Sharing Form: Worksheet for Sharing Information about Your Child

An important part of transition is sharing information about your child's needs, strengths, and abilities. The following information will help the staff in the new program learn about and plan for your child.

1. What kinds of things does your child enjoy learning?

2. What things are the most difficult for your child to learn?

3. What are your child's favorite toys and activities?

4. How does your child get along with other children?

5. What kinds of rewards work best with your child (for example: hugs, praise, or stickers)?

6. What kinds of discipline work best with your child?

7. What kinds of help does your child need during routines such as eating, dressing, or toileting?

8. What goals would you like to set for your child in the new program?

9. What other information would you like to share about your child?

Adapted from: *Planning Your Child's Transition to Preschool: A Step-by-Step Guide for Families*, FACTS/LRE Project, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign

Sample Information Sharing Form: Information Release

I, ______________________________, give permission for ______________________________ to
(Parent's Name) (Sending Program Name)

release the following information on my child ______________________________ to
(Child's Name)

______________________________. I understand that the following information will be shared
(Receiving Program Name)

to encourage a smooth transition.

_______________ Child's name
_______________ Present developmental skills (IFSP)
_______________ Child's strengths and goals
_______________ Effective classroom techniques used with the child
_______________ Child's health records
_______________ Family issues as they relate to the child's school success
_______________ Other ______________________________

_____ I also give permission for ______________________________ to track my child's progress
(Initial) (Sending Program Name)

through the first grade. I understand that this information will be used to assess how its program has affected my child's school success. I also understand this may include but may not be limited to:

- Classroom observations
- Report card copies
- Parent questionnaires
- End-of-year teacher questionnaires
- Attendance at individual planning meetings (if applicable)

This consent is effective until the child completes the first grade.

I understand that at any time, I may withdraw the permission given above.

Signed:______________________________ Date: _______________

Witness: ______________________________ Date: _______________

Adapted from Capital Area Head Start, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Making Sure Your Plan Succeeds

1. **Did we identify the right problem?**
   - ☐ Are the purposes of the proposed changes clear?
   - ☐ Does the present situation seem satisfactory?

2. **Did we involve the right people in analyzing our situation?**
   - ☐ Were all stakeholder groups involved in decision making?
   - ☐ Were all legitimate voices represented in planning meetings?

3. **Do we have the leadership needed to acquire resources and champion our cause?**
   - ☐ Are parts of our plan based on personal (hidden) agendas?
   - ☐ Is there a lack of respect and trust in the planners?
   - ☐ Are people afraid to fail?

4. **Did we design a plan with all parts of the system in mind?**
   - ☐ Have the habits of the work group been ignored?
   - ☐ Have we communicated our strategies widely and frequently?
   - ☐ Are our costs too high?
   - ☐ Are rewards for implementing the plan seen as inadequate?
   - ☐ Will some people experience work overload?

5. **Does this plan demonstrate better ways of working together?**
   - ☐ How is agreement reached on goals and priorities?
   - ☐ How are school resources used?
   - ☐ How do teachers work together?
   - ☐ How are people rewarded and recognized?
   - ☐ How are conflicts and tensions acknowledged?
   - ☐ How can everyday patterns of behavior be changed?
   - ☐ How can local norms and traditions be influenced?

6. **Did we develop a comprehensive implementation strategy?**
   - ☐ Did we anticipate obstacles and *first lines of resistance*?
   - ☐ Did we anticipate belated *second lines of resistance*?
   - ☐ Did we provide for skill training and follow-up?
   - ☐ Did we check for conflicts with other building-level priorities?
   - ☐ Did we obtain necessary materials?
   - ☐ Did we provide clerical, technological, or financial assistance?
   - ☐ Did we get back-up and endorsement of the central office?
   - ☐ Did we secure access to resource consultants?
   - ☐ Did we build in a process for monitoring, evaluating, and providing feedback?

Adapted from: *Leadership for Collaboration: A Training Program*, Developed by SERVING Young Children the Early Childhood Initiative of the Southeastern Regional Vision for Education (SERVE), Atlanta, Georgia

Joint Transition Practices: School Readiness Fair

Use the transition planning framework and the following suggestions to develop a school readiness fair with representatives from various agencies and programs. Each representative provides information and if possible, on-the-spot services for families attending the fair. This joint community project will assist families in accessing educational resources, streamline registration for various early childhood programs, connect parents with health and social services, and provide a means of improving relationships among community partners.

Assess: What is currently in place, what resources are available, and what is needed?

Interview service providers and families to identify available resources and services.
Review kindergarten through third grade achievement levels and retention rates.
Identify community outreach efforts that target families with young children.

Set Goals: What can be achieved in the short term that will lead to long-term goals?

Convene community representatives to identify health and school readiness concerns.
Communicate needs identified through the assessment and the benefits of working together.
Explain how a community focus on families assists parents in preparing children for school.

Define Action Steps: What steps will lead toward short-term and long-term goals?

Establish a budget and timeline to conduct a communitywide event.
Organize entertainment, activities, food, publicity, and other logistics.
Involve early childhood and parent educators, and health and social service providers.

Implement Action Steps: How can you ensure that staff are able to take the action steps outlined?

Choose one person to chair the project.
Organize committees to handle each aspect of the fair.
Follow up committee meetings by sending everyone involved a summary of the meeting.

Review Progress: How will you determine what works and what needs to be changed?

Informally interview fair participants during the event or conduct a follow-up call.
Survey organizations to determine the impact of the fair on serving families.
Ask committee members to make recommendations for improving the event.

Adapted from *Building Bridges with Your Community: How to Conduct a School Readiness Fair for Families with Children under Five.* Developed by the Governor's Office for Children, Youth, and Families, and the Ready At Five Partnership, Baltimore, Maryland

Joint Transition Practices: Benchmarking

Use the transition planning framework to identify how others in your community are implementing effective transition practices that you would like to adapt. Benchmarking involves teams in conducting site visits to better understand how these practices were developed and implemented. Benchmarking provides valuable information as staff develop these practices for their own programs.

Assess: What is currently in place, what resources are available, and what is needed?

Ask administrators to recommend model programs under their jurisdiction.
Review special reports issued by organizations that highlight their promising practices.
Ask training and technical assistance specialists for names of innovative programs.

Set Goals: What can be achieved in the short term that will lead to long-term goals?

Discuss with staff what you want to find out during site visits to other programs.
Identify who needs to participate.
Identify how benchmarking will lead toward long-term goals.

Define Action Steps: What steps will lead toward short-term and long-term goals?

Coordinate a site visit to meet with the administrator and key personnel of the program.
Request both a staff meeting and program tour for your team.
Develop a questionnaire to use during the site visit.

Implement Action Steps: How can you ensure that staff are able to take the action steps outlined?

Brief all team members on the purpose of the site visit.
Confirm your visit in advance.
Schedule the site visit at a time that is convenient for all team members.
Provide team members with instructions on using the questionnaire.

Review Progress: How will you determine what works and what needs to be changed?

Discuss the information compiled in a team meeting.
Identify questions that were not answered or new questions that need to be answered.
Brainstorm with team members ways of adapting the practices of the program visited.

Adapted from the *Responsive Schools Project Newsletter*, January 1996. Institute for Responsive Education, Boston, Massachusetts

Joint Transition Practices: Formal Administrative Agreements

Use the transition planning framework and the following suggestions to develop interagency agreements, memorandums of understanding, and program policies. These formal administrative agreements support coordinated efforts because key partners establish formal support for transition efforts, define roles and responsibilities, and ensure that resources are available to implement transition plans.

Assess: What is currently in place, what resources are available, and what is needed?

Interview staff to find out how administrative support would help them implement plans.
Review current and past policies and administrative agreements from your program.
Investigate previous attempts to develop formal administrative agreements.

Set Goals: What can be achieved in the short term that will lead to long-term goals?

Conduct a focus group with administrators, frontline workers, and staff.
Compare organizational goals to identify common ground.
Identify the impact that policies and regulations will have on achieving goals.
Identify legal and program requirements that must be included in goals.

Define Action Steps: What steps will lead toward short-term and long-term goals?

Organize a task force to develop strategies.
Adapt successful agreements used elsewhere in the community.
Use resources to identify successful strategies (see *Program Profiles* and *Resources*).
Incorporate everyone's concerns into the draft document.

Implement Action Steps: How can you ensure that staff are able to take the action steps outlined?

Recruit an experienced technical writer to prepare or review draft agreements.
Use telephone conference calls, e-mail, and mailing lists to communicate with team members.
Ask staff who have good relationships with administrators to negotiate agreements.

Review Progress: How will you determine what works and what needs to be changed?

Follow-up meetings with administrators, frontline staff, and families.
Conduct an annual review of the agreement.
Celebrate the anniversary of the agreement with a public signing.

Joint Transition Practices: Community Report Card

Use the transition planning framework to develop a report on your community that emphasizes the needs of children and families and the quality of services currently available. Organizations in all fifty states now produce annual statewide reports. To find out about your state's KIDS COUNT project contact the Annie E. Casey Foundation, 701 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202, 1-404-547-6600.

Assess: What is currently in place, what resources are available, and what is needed?

Review federal, state, and local documents that report health and social service statistics.
Gather and review public information pamphlets, newsletters, and reports.
Research advocacy efforts of others in the community.

Set Goals: What can be achieved in the short term that will lead to long-term goals?

Determine target population with greatest need (for example, infants need immunizations).
Consider public awareness and education as short-term or long-term goals.
Explain how report cards can be used to begin tracking the impact of new policies.

Define Action Steps: What steps will lead toward short-term and long-term goals?

Know your audience and what you want to convey to them.
Make a list of indicators that could be tracked and that represent outcomes.
Plan to write drafts several times to incorporate everyone's concerns.

Implement Action Steps: How can you ensure that staff are able to take the action steps outlined?

Recruit writers experienced in addressing your particular audience.
Use resource materials from national organizations.
Provide writers with accurate statistics and analysis reports.

Review Progress: How will you determine what works and what needs to be changed?

Periodically gather new statistics and compare the data to original data.
Survey organizations and programs to determine their response to the report.
Grade your community based on the trends, comparison to national averages, and other states.

Joint Transition Practices: Transferring Records

Use the transition planning framework to develop smoother systems of transferring records among programs and agencies or to develop joint records that can be used in various settings.

Assess: What is currently in place, what resources are available, and what is needed?

Hold a meeting to compare records and identify the kind of information each program needs.
Survey receiving staff to determine what records that were transferred were useful to them.
Interview families to determine how the current system impacts them.

Set Goals: What can be achieved in the short term that will lead to long-term goals?

Consider the benefits of decreasing the number and complexity of forms used by programs.
Determine how much information sharing might be achieved through efficient systems.
Discuss confidentiality as a priority issue.

Define Action Steps: What steps will lead toward short-term and long-term goals?

Include frontline workers in developing joint forms or new systems for records transfer.
Interview families to determine confidentiality issues.
Test the system for a short time and use the feedback from this pilot test to make refinements.

Implement Action Steps: How can you ensure that staff are able to take the action steps outlined?

Adapt systems that have been successfully implemented in other programs.
Orient and coach staff on how to use the new system.
Post a timeline for completing forms, making contacts, and transferring records.

Review Progress: How will you determine what works and what needs to be changed?

Meet jointly with senders and receivers to discuss the new process.
Track the number of records transferred and dates of transfer.
Conduct a staff and family opinion survey.

Joint Transition Practices: Joint Training

Use the transition planning framework and the following suggestions to develop joint training opportunities with staff from partner programs and agencies. Whether training is a one-hour workshop, a week-long conference, or a summer training program, partners will learn about each other and develop stronger relationships.

Assess: What is currently in place, what resources are available, and what is needed?

Interview or survey staff from each program to identify training needs and interests.
Interview administrators to discuss their training priorities and requirements.
Review training calendars of programs, professional associations, and resource organizations.
Interview leaders of professional associations to identify current concerns.

Set Goals: What can be achieved in the short term that will lead to long-term goals?

Consider options: conferences, workshops, study groups, summer institutes, speaker series.
Access training resources through pooling of resources (speakers, videos, etc.).
Identify legal and program requirements that must be included in goals.

Define Action: What steps will lead toward short-term and long-term goals?

Open current program training to staff from other programs.
Establish a systematic method of assigning *training credit* for each training offered.
Obtain training resources from businesses, university staff, and community leaders.
Recruit neutral parties to conduct joint training.

Implement Action Steps: How can you ensure that staff are able to take the action steps outlined?

Meet with administrators to ensure that staff will be given time for planning and training.
Develop incentives for attending training.
Identify a contact person from each program.
Conduct joint training at a time convenient to staff members from both programs.

Review Progress: How will you determine what works and what needs to be changed?

Develop a workshop evaluation form for trainers and participants.
Informally check up on the planning team's progress.
Conduct follow-up meetings with planning team.

The following is a list of materials and resources that provide additional information about transition planning. The information contained in these resources will help you implement the training activities in this guide. Participants will also find these resources useful as they develop plans for transition efforts in their communities.

Barbour, Nita H., and Carol Seefeldt. *Developmental Continuity across Preschool and Primary Grades*. Wheaton, MD: Association for Childhood Education International, 1993.

This publication defines developmental continuity. It describes a planning process that will help schools implement transition efforts to provide a continuity of experience for children. To order a copy, call 1-800-423-3563.

Carnegie Task Force on Meeting the Needs of Young Children. *Starting Points: Meeting the Needs of Our Youngest Children*. New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1994.

This document describes the impact that the first three years of life have on development. It describes what society, families, and businesses can do to provide children with a healthy start. To order a copy, call 1-212-207-6296.

Chandler, Lynette K., Susan Fowler, Sarah Hadden, and Lisa Stahurski. *Planning Your Child's Transition to Preschool: A Step-by-Step Guide for Families.* Champaign, IL: FACTS/LRE Project, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, 1995.

This booklet provides families with the tools and resources needed to plan for their children's transition. An appendix contains twelve handouts on topics such as family involvement in transition planning, participation on a transition team, and a sample transition timeline. To order a copy, call 1-217-333-4123.

Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project. *Transition Kit*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1988.

This kit contains a 400-page manual and four filmstrips with synchronized audio cassettes. The filmstrips are used for training staff and parents in each of the four main sections of the manual: I. General Transition Issues; II. Transition Planning; III. Preparing Children; IV. Preparing Families. To order a copy, call 1-919-490-5577 or fax 1-919-490-4905.

Fink, Dale B., Eileen Borgia, and Susan Fowler. ***Interagency Agreements: Improving the Transition Process for Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families.*** **Champaign, IL: FACTS/LRE Project, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, 1993.**

This booklet describes interagency agreements as invisible braces to support children and families. The document provides an overview and rationale for developing these agreements by using family stories and background information. To order a copy, call 1-217-333-4123.

Garland, Corinne, Adrienne Frank, Deana Buck, and Patti Seklemian. ***Skills Inventory for Teams (SIFT).*** **Lightfoot, VA: Child Development Resources, 1995.**

This assessment tool helps team members identify the individual skills they need to work as part of the team. It also shows how to assess team development needs. To order a copy, contact: Child Development Resources Training Center, P.O. Box 280, Norge, VA 23127-0280. Phone 1-757-566-3300.

Goffin, Stacie, and Dolores Stregelin, eds. ***Changing Kindergartens: Four Success Stories.*** **Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1992.**

In this book, several authors describe their experiences evaluating current teaching methods and implementing new teaching strategies. The scenarios describe the assessment, planning, and evaluation strategies that staff used. To order a copy, call 1-800-424-2460.

Hadden, Sarah, Susan Fowler, Dale Fink, and Mike Wischnowski. ***Writing an Interagency Agreement on Transition: A Practical Guide.*** **Champaign, IL: FACTS/LRE Project, College of Education, University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, 1995.**

This booklet offers a step-by-step guide that agencies can use to develop interagency agreements. It covers topics such as forming a team, writing the agreement, and getting the agreement signed. To order a copy, call 1-217-333-4123.

Institute for Responsive Education. ***Building a Learning Community: Tools for Changing Schools: Four Guides to Dialogue and School Improvement Planning*. Boston, MA: Institute for Responsive Education, 1994.**

These guides offer practical tools, answers to questions, and step-by-step instructions for school improvement planning. Each guide focuses on a different topic—developing school and community partnerships, building a shared vision, implementing and evaluating school improvement efforts, and creating community alliances. To order a copy, call 1-617-353-3309.

Knitzer, Jane, and Stephen Page. ***Map and Track: State Initiatives for Young Children and Families*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty, 1996.**

This document describes comprehensive, state-initiated, and cross-system planning efforts. It provides a state-by-state description of programs, policies, and strategies that support young children and their families. To order a copy, call 1-212-304-7100.

Melaville, Atelia, and Martin Blank. ***Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993.**

This book guides communities through the process of planning coordinated and integrated services for families and children. By using vignettes and case studies, the guide highlights examples of successful coordination efforts. Stock # 065-000-00563-8. To order a copy, call 1-202-512-1800 or fax 1-202-512-2250.

Ottlinger, Kerry. ***Collaborative Teaming for Inclusion-Oriented Schools: A Resource Manual*. Topeka, KS: Kansas State Board of Education, 1995.**

This resource manual describes how to develop and strengthen planning teams for children enrolled in inclusion-oriented schools. The information in this manual can also be used to enhance collaborations with staff in other educational settings. To order a copy, call 1-800-531-3685.

Policy Studies Associates. ***Implementing Schoolwide Projects: An Idea Book.*** **Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1994.**

This document provides ideas for schools with Title I funding to implement schoolwide projects. It provides examples of successful projects along with information about the planning process. Sample forms are included. To order a copy, call 1-800-424-1616.

Project Steps. ***Assessment of Current Transition Practices: Community and Individual Agency Forms.*** **Lexington, KY: Child Development Centers of the Bluegrass, 1990.**

This planning tool helps program staff assess the transition practices they implement in their community for administrators, families, children, and staff. To order a copy, call 1-606-257-9117.

Project Steps. ***Transition Systems Development Plan.*** **Lexington, KY: Child Development Centers of the Bluegrass, 1990.**

This tool helps program staff develop a transition plan. It lists transition practices and provides checklists for staff, indicating who will be responsible for implementing each practice. To order a copy, call 1-606-257-9117.

Putting the Pieces Together: Comprehensive School-Linked Strategies. **Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1996.**

This guidebook explores the issues involved in creating and maintaining innovative and inclusive school-linked strategies. It provides useful tips and information for schools as they focus on involving families with many different cultures and backgrounds. To order a copy, call 1-800-424-1616.

Regional Educational Laboratories. ***Continuity in Early Childhood: A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages.*** **Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education Regional Educational Laboratories Early Childhood Collaboration Network, 1995.**

This document describes a framework for providing continuity in early childhood education. It defines eight elements of continuity and enables communities to assess their own practices. To order a copy, call 1-800-424-1616.

Romney, Valerie A. ***Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment for Schools and Communities*****. Fairfax, VA: National Community Education Association, 1996.**

This book outlines the strategic planning process for schools and communities. It describes methods for assessing internal and external environments, developing visions and missions, setting goals, implementing plans, evaluating progress, and revising plans. To order a copy, call 1-703-359-8973.

Rosenkoetter, Sharon, ed. ***Bridging Early Services: A Guide for Service Providers.*** **Topeka, KS: Bridging Early Services Transition Taskforce, 1995.**

Designed for service providers, this guide suggests ways that members of a community can work together to plan and develop effective practices for children and families in transition. To order a copy, call 1-316-241-7754.

Rosenkoetter, Sharon, ed. ***Bridging Early Services for Children with Special Needs and Their Families: A Practical Guide for Transition Planning*****. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing, 1994.**

This book offers numerous suggestions for helping young children with disabilities transition to regular preschool or kindergarten programs. It describes strategies and provides tools for planning and implementing effective transition practices. To order a copy, call 1-800-638-3775.

Rosenkoetter, Sharon, ed. ***It's a Big Step.*** **Topeka, KS: Bridging Early Services Transition Taskforce, 1995.**

This booklet summarizes research on transition and offers practical planning strategies that community members can use to improve the transition to kindergarten for young children and their families. To order a copy, call 1-316-241-7754.

Smith, Pamela, Sharon Rosenkoetter, and Carolyn Streufert, eds. ***Step Ahead at Age 3.*** **Topeka, KS: Bridging Early Services Taskforce, 1995.**

Written for families, this booklet describes the transition process that three-year-old children with disabilities experience. It offers a step-by-step guide to assist families through the process. This brief booklet is also available in Spanish. To order a copy, call 1-316-241-7754.

State Child Care/Head Start Work Group. ***Cooperation, Coordination, and Collaboration: A Guide for Child Care and Head Start Programs*****. Salem, OR: Oregon Department of Education, 1995.**

This planning guide tracks the progress of a child care/Head Start work group as it develops a vision and model for a supportive system for families and children in Oregon. To order a copy, contact: Dell Ford, Director, Head Start Collaboration Project, 1-503-378-5585, ext. 662.

Winer, Michael, and Karen Ray. ***Collaboration Handbook: Creating, Sustaining, and Enjoying the Journey.*** **Saint Paul, MN: Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, 1994.**

Divided into four parts, this publication examines the collaborative process. Part I provides a story that serves as a point of reference throughout the rest of the book. Part II defines collaboration and describes the collaboration process. Part III describes four stages of collaboration and highlights the challenges at each stage. Part IV is a resource section that provides forms, books, and articles that can support the collaborative process. To order a copy, call 1-800-274-6024.

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