

**Navigating the Maze of Transitions:  
From Early Intervention...to Preschool Programs...and School-Age Services (Part 2)**



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# Learning Outcomes

## Webinar 1 and 2

- Gain an overview of the transition process for children birth to five and the steps involved in achieving a smooth transition
  - From Early Intervention to Preschool Services
  - **From Preschool to School age Services**
  - **Child Preparation Activities**
- Learn what must professionals do to apply the principles of family-centered practices to ensure that programs and services achieve desired child and family outcomes.
- Identify what families must know and do at various stages of transition
  - To coach/guide families to play an informed and effective role in navigating their child's transition from preschool to school age services.



# Achieving Smooth Transitions

## Learning Outcomes - Webinar Session 2

- Increase knowledge of child preparation activities for smooth transition to next environment.
  - Learn what must professionals do – Sending and Receiving programs
- Gain skills in evaluating the transition process to ensure that Family-focused and Child-centered practices are pursued:
  - Family focused?
  - Collaboration between service providers, families and community?
  - Adequate staff preparation?
  - Targeted child preparation?
- Identify steps to strengthen current transition strategies to lead to better child and family outcomes.

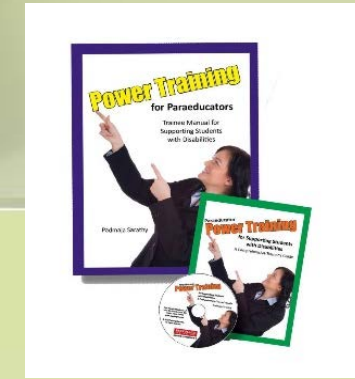
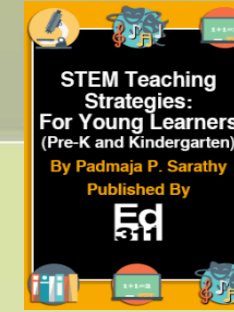
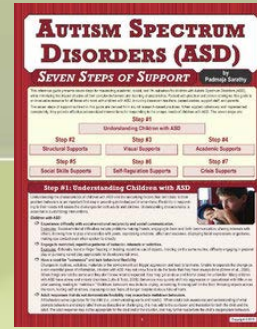
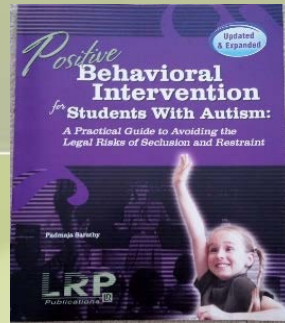


## Participant Poll

In what capacity do you serve?

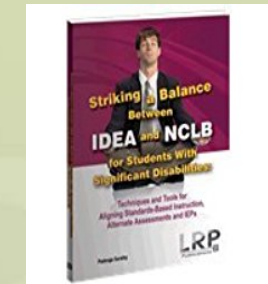
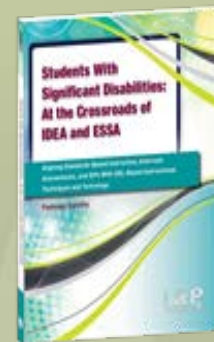
- Early Intervention-Part C Professional
- Preschool Sp. Ed Program Administrator
- Head Start Professional
- Family Member
- Special Education Teaching Staff
- OT/PT/Speech Therapist

# Sarathy's Publications: Books and Quick Reference Guides



## Focus Areas

- Autism: Behavior Interventions, Support Strategies, Music CD - Transitions
- Early Childhood: Transition, Parent Guide and STEM Teaching Strategies
- Executive Function
- Paraeducator Training Guide and DVD
- Severe and Multiple Disabilities
- Significant Disabilities and ESSA



Out of print



# IDEA Services and Child Outcomes

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds programs providing services designed to assist children with a range of delays or disabilities to achieve individualized developmental functional goals:
  - **Part C Early Intervention Services is for children birth to 2 years.**
  - **Part B Preschool Services is for children 3 to 5 years.**
- States have to report data annually to OSEP on the following child outcomes:
  - **Social relationships** (includes getting along with peers and relating well to adults)
  - **Use of Knowledge and Skills** (refers to thinking, reasoning, problem-solving, and early literacy and math skills)
  - **Taking action to meet needs** (includes feeding, dressing, self-help, and following rules related to health and safety).



# ESSA and Early Childhood Education

- With Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states can seize the opportunity to better align their school improvement plans with current research findings about child development and early learning from birth to third grade.
- Potential early learning indicators states might consider (according to ESSA), are grouped into three categories, which represent different aspects of educational quality:
  1. **Access indicators**, which measure student access to learning experiences both in and out of school;
  2. **Academic indicators**, which measure instructional quality or student learning outcomes; and
  3. **Engagement indicators**, which measure school climate, environment, and/or culture.



# ESSA Resources

- The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) have created a number of resources for SEAs focusing on early learning. (See next slide for resources you can download.)
- **Policy Brief: The State of Early Learning in ESSA: Plans and Opportunities for Implementation**; Go to: <http://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2018-02/ESSA%20Early%20Learning%20Policy%20Brief%20FINAL.pdf>
- **New Early Childhood Coordination Requirements in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): A Toolkit for State and Local Educational Agencies, Head Start Programs, and the Early Childhood Field** (2017 by CCSSO).  
<http://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2018-02/Toolkit-New%20Early%20Childhood%20Coordination%20Requirements%20in%20the%20ESSA-for%20pr....pdf>





# Transition Best-Practices

- **DEC Recommended Practices: Transition** (<http://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices>)
- Practitioners in sending and receiving programs exchange information before, during, and after transition about practices most likely to support the child's successful adjustment and positive outcomes.
- Practitioners use a variety of planned and timely strategies with the child and family before, during, and after the transition to support successful adjustment and positive outcomes for both the child and family.
- The transition process involves a collaborative effort between the sending and receiving program and the child's family.
- Involves preparing families through providing step-by-step guidance and resources to assist with smooth transitions
- Involves preparing the children for successful inclusion in the next environment.



# 'Together We Succeed (TWS)' System Components

## Five Major Components

Placing Child and Family at the Center of the Transition Process:

- Parent education and empowerment
- Collaborative relationships
- Staff preparation
- Child preparation for the next environment
- Evaluation (ongoing) of the transition process



# Child Issues - Transition

- Child may have difficulties in adjusting to the new setting.
  - Difficulty in transferring skills to unfamiliar settings, activities, people and routines of a new program
  - Fears and anxieties about the new program.
  - Important gains made may be lost due to initial emotional adjustment.



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  - Difficulty in transferring skills to unfamiliar settings, activities, people and routines of a new program
  - Fears and anxieties about the new program.
  - Important gains made may be lost due to initial emotional adjustment.
- Inadequate preparation of child for the new setting may impact significantly.

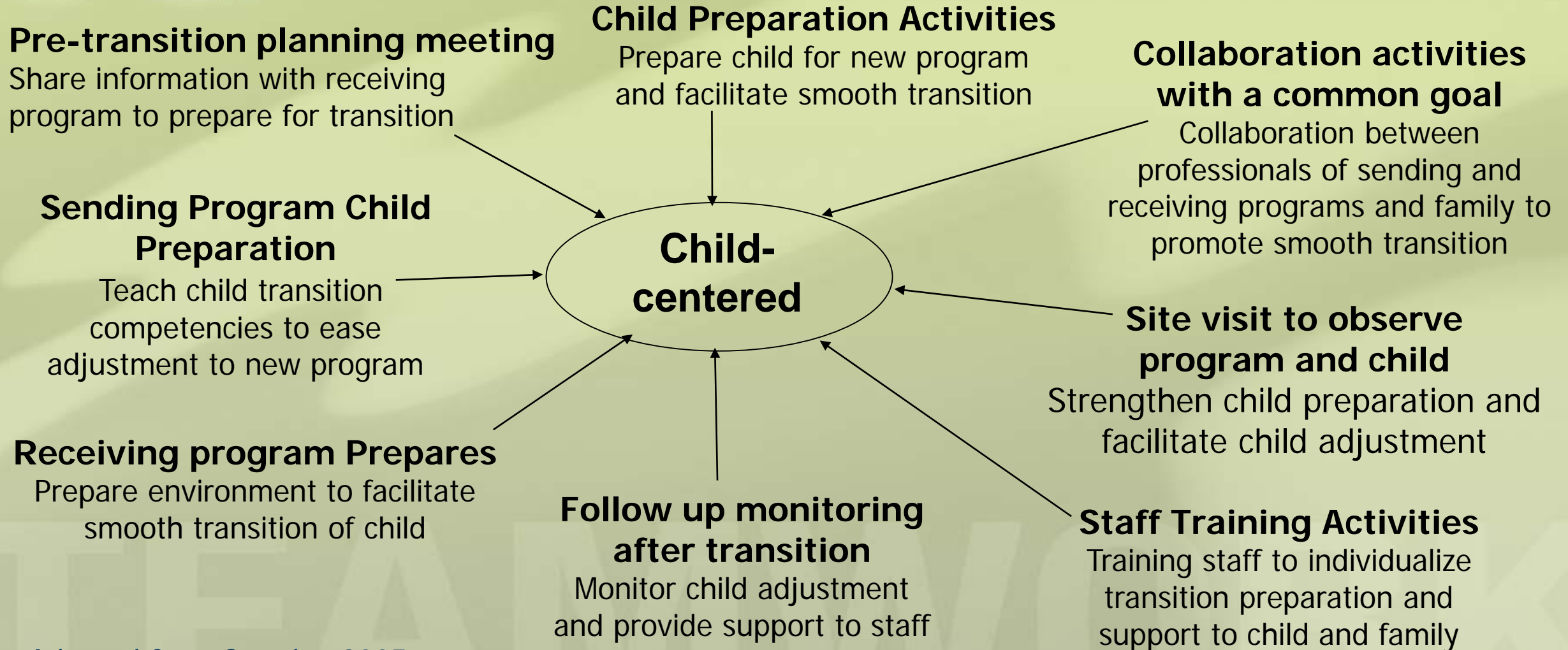


# Child Issues - Transition

- Child's current functioning level (cognitive, language and social emotional needs) may present challenges.
  - Child may have difficulty with appropriate responsiveness to various instructional styles and environmental structures.
  - Child may need survival/coping/age-appropriate social skills to facilitate active engagement and attain desirable gains.
- Difficulty of the new program in adapting and adjusting to match the complex and diverse needs of the child.



# Child-centered Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool Special Education and to School-age Services



Adapted from Sarathy, 2005

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# Teaming for Success<sub>1</sub>

## Child Preparation Activities

- Sending program together with the family develop an action plan.
- Familiarizing with the skills that will facilitate the child's smooth adjustment to the new program's routines and expectations:
  - Focusing on transition competencies and social survival skills.
  - Teaching/adapting activities from the new program to facilitate easy transfer of skills.
  - Teach skills that move the child toward greater independence.
  - Incorporate routines from the new program to familiarize child.
  - Kindergarten teachers rank skills like self-discipline and attentional control as more critical for school readiness than content knowledge (Diamond, et al., 2007)



# Child Preparation

- Train and teach child skills that move a child toward greater independence (the ability to interact with peers, the ability to demonstrate appropriate play skills).
- Provide opportunities (both at school and home) for child complete tasks as independently as possible with minimal prompting.
- Talk with or read books to child about what he will experience in the new program (activities, routines, opportunities and expectations). (ECTA Center, 2017)
- Provide opportunities for child to visit the new program she will attend, meet teachers and other children, and observe classroom activities (ECTA Center, 2017)





# Teaming for Success<sub>2</sub>

## Activities to Support Smooth Transitions

### **Receiving program prepares for the child:**

- Observes the child in the current setting or in the home.
- Invites child and family to visit the program.
- Shares information about the program, the activities and routines.
- Involves families to assist with easing the transition for the child.
- Gathers information about child's favorite songs, activities and toys to facilitate smooth adjustment and to incorporate it within daily routines.
- Makes child-specific adaptations after the child's move to the new program/environment to enable successful transition.



# A Case Study

## Maria, Her Family and the Service Providers

Maria (2 years 8 months old) is currently receiving EI services in the home setting. She has been diagnosed with cerebral palsy. She has significant cognitive, communication and motor impairment. The plan is to make her transition to Preschool as smooth as possible. Her parents are extremely concerned and resistant to the move to another delivery system. Parents speak in Spanish. Family wants family-focused services to continue.

### Strengths

- ✓ Alert and active most of the time
- ✓ Responds with a smile to adult attention
- ✓ Communicates her need when hungry or wet or diaper change through crying.
- ✓ Eager to explore her environment
- ✓ Gets around by crawling around the floor.

### Needs

- ✓ Requires feeding through a gastrostomy tube
- ✓ Limited communication and language skills
- ✓ Addressing family concerns for transition.

Collaborative service provider activities with active involvement of family

Building family knowledge about new program



# Child and Family Support – A Collaborative Effort

- Empowering families with diverse resources to prepare child for transition
  - Program orientation with site visits
  - Parent education seminars
  - Welcome packets and transition information brochure, etc.
  - Orientation and transition meetings
  - Mentor family support (from another Spanish speaking family)
- Family prepares a profile of child with professional support
- Family incorporates some preschool activities into the child's routine and to increase child's self-dependence
- Receiving program demonstrates child access and engagement tools to enable child's active participation including assistive technology
- Single point of contact with district's primary transition contact



# A Case Study – Michael

Michael (4 years 8 months old) currently receives preschool special education services with eligibility of developmental delay (also has a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder). His parents are actively involved both in nurturing his strengths at home and in the transition process. The plan is to get him ready for transition to Kindergarten.

## Strengths

- ✓ Communicates mostly in single words and occasionally in 3-4 word phrases
- ✓ Shows interest in using the computer
- ✓ Responds to yes/no questions (somewhat inconsistently)
- ✓ Names common pictures/objects
- ✓ Responds well to music

## Needs

- Has difficulty staying focused during group activities longer than a few minutes
- Throws tantrums when asked to change tasks
- Shows limited social engagement skills
- Finds it difficult to play cooperatively with peers
- Experiences difficulty with transitions



# Family and the Service Provider Activities

## Preparing for Kindergarten

- Collaboration is key to child success: sending program and family prepare supports for child 's move to new program (and expectations).
- Preschool program assists Michael to gain competencies to be successful in the new environment (and share resources with the Kinder program. For e.g.,
  - Use of picture supports and activity schedules to group activities
  - Use of cue card to remind student about activity changes and transitions
  - Use of music to assist with transitions (and reduce transition related tantrums)
  - Train him to follow directions with minimal prompting
    - Teach Michael to attend and actively participate in group activities
    - Guide Michael with a step-by-step approach to seek attention in acceptable ways.



# Family and the Service Provider Activities

## Receiving Program Preparing for Child

- Receiving program prepares environment and supports for child with flexibility.
  - Individualized transition planning with site visits to observe child
  - Prepares environment, activities and adaptations to support the child
  - Receptive to guidance on adaptations from sending program and family (e. g., breaks)
  - Plan ahead to help Michael with making transitions with picture supports.



# A Case Study – Brian

- Brian is a five-year-old diagnosed with ADHD and has developmental delay.
  - Brian will be transitioning to a Kindergarten program in a few months, currently receiving preschool special education services at a Head Start program.

## Strengths

- ✓ Communicates using words and phrases.
- ✓ Is eager to please the adults around him and desires to play with his peers.
- ✓ He likes music and enjoys outdoor play.

## Needs

- (academic skills, literacy, and social skills)
- ✓ Requires frequent redirection to stay on a task (listen to stories, play at centers, etc.)
  - ✓ Requires help with following teacher instructions.
  - ✓ Experiences difficulty getting along with peers -- playing cooperatively with them.



# Child-centered Transition Preparation

- ❑ Begin planning for the transition process early (4-6 months before the end of the school year).
- ❑ Prepare the child for the new environment by teaching the specific skills required: transition competencies and survival skills for smooth adjustment.
- ❑ Adapt activities from the new program to facilitate easy transfer of skills.
- ❑ Plan visits for child and family to potential program sites or kindergarten programs.
- ❑ Establish a partnership with families involved providing them with the needed information about the transition process and the different programs and options.
- ❑ Pre-transition site visits by child, family, teacher and related service providers.
- ❑ Prepare a portfolio of the child including input from family and other professionals.
- ❑ Make follow-up visits and contacts to ensure child adjustment to new program.

(Adapted from Sarathy, 2005 and 2006)





# What Families Can Do...

## Guide families to Advocate for Their Children

- In advocating for their child during the IEP development process:
  - Provide input in developing the goals and objectives. Work closely with the team to design an appropriate program specific to meeting child's needs.
  - Consider the inclusion of staff members from all programs serving the child so that they can provide input in developing the IEP.
  - Discuss the type of programs/services that they you would like to pursue.
  - Assist in making decisions about special education and related services and placement.
  - Collaborate with the team in identifying the needed adaptations, accommodations and supports to facilitate their child's successful participation and learning in the new setting.



# The MAPS Mandala Planning Process

There are eight key questions asked of the team members.

Adapted from (Falvey and colleagues, 2003)



The MAPS planning process gathers information from people who know the student and who care for the student's future (contributing to this process).



# Participant Poll

## Early Childhood Transition Services Survey

- ❑ Gather feedback from all families on their experiences with the transition process regularly.
- ❑ Have a system in place to refine the transition process from data gathered from various sources (surveys of family and professionals and child data).
- ❑ Sending and receiving programs work with the family to prepare the child.
- ❑ Provide training opportunities and onsite technical assistance to staff inside and outside of the system (e.g., Pre-K and Head Start programs, Community preschools, Faith-based preschools, etc.).
- ❑ Policies in place to provide a personalized approach in meeting the needs of families from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds



# Evaluation of Transition Practices

## *Family and Child-focused Practices Assessment Checklist*

- Provide families with comprehensive information early in the transition process.
- Assess specific family needs and the skills they require for involvement.
- Strengthen family competence with a variety of family-focused activities.
- Respond sensitively to families from diverse backgrounds & individualize approaches.
- Ensure team planning and collaborative relationships between programs to individualize transition planning for child.
- Prepare the child for the new environment by teaching the specific skills required.
- Provide follow-up monitoring of child in the new environment after transition to facilitate successful adjustment.



# Evaluation of Transition Practices

## Collaboration and Staff Preparation Assessment

- Promote ongoing and continuous communication among the parties involved focusing on shared goals.
- Plan joint service provider collaborative activities.
- Have a single point of transition contact person.
- Have developed interagency agreements.
- Provide training and onsite technical assistance – staff inside and outside the system.
- Offer staff training on diversity and sensitivity issues
- Provide onsite coaching and support to staff to facilitate child adjustment.



## An Action Plan

Identify three activities to implement in each category for your program.

<b>Strengthen Current Practices or Initiate New Activities</b>	<b>Personnel Responsible</b>	<b>Resources Needed</b>	<b>Start/End Date</b>
<b>Child-centered Activities</b>			
<b>Family Empowerment &amp; Education</b>			
<b>Collaboration and Staff Preparation</b>			



# Evaluation of Transition Practices

How are we doing in meeting child and family needs and achieving positive outcomes?

- ❑ Evaluate the transition process gathering feedback from the families and staff involved (using surveys, checklists and interviews) and from data on child adjustment and success in the new setting.
- ❑ Review (family, child and professional data) data from various sources to refine and improve the transition process.



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# Helpful Web Resources

- Department of Education IDEA Part C resource: <https://idea.ed.gov/part-c/search/new.html>
- Family Guide for transition from EI to Preschool with video: <http://ectacenter.org/>
- IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinators Association 2010:  
<http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/>
- National Early Childhood Transition Center:  
<http://www.hdi.uky.edu/nectc/NECTC/Home.aspx>
- OSEP Part C Guidance and Training Resources are available at:  
<http://www.parentcenterhub.org/legacy-partc/>
- Pacer Center offers a variety of materials to inform families of the early childhood transition process, [www.pacer.org](http://www.pacer.org).



# Family Resources

- **Help Me Grow National Center**
- **Help Me Grow:** For parents and other key caregivers who have questions about their young children's development.
  - Services available to families include an online information and referral service, developmental screening using Ages and Stages questionnaires, and referrals to community resources along with care coordination.
  - Help Me Grow is being implemented in a number of states. (<https://helpmegrownational.org/resources/>)
- **Zero to Three**
- **Zero to Three** offers a variety of resources to families and educators on infants and toddlers – Early Development and Well-being Early Learning, Parenting and Policy and Advocacy, etc. (<https://www.zerotothree.org/>)



**Successful Transitions Lead to Positive Outcomes for Children and their Families.**



**THANKS.**

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