



A Newsletter from your Technical Assistance Center, Prevent Child Abuse-NJ

Supporting Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset Counties



Transitioning to Kindergarten

Starting Kindergarten in a new school can bring up many different feelings for children. Some children may be nervous or scared, while others are excited or eager. Some of these feelings stem from the attitudes of the adults around the children, and the general process of the change.

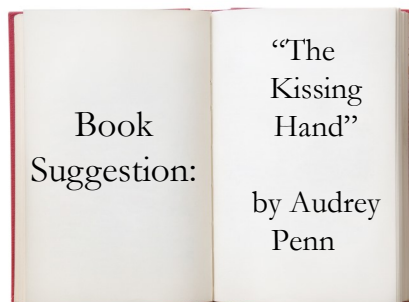
When preparing for transition, think of it as a process between education partners, families, and the community, rather than an event happening to a child. This can aid in the development of effective transition policies. There are various strategies that you can practice at Preschool, Pre-K, or Kindergarten level to help ease this transition for children and their families. When children are prepared for change and adjustment and educators are informed, the transition can be a positive experience for everyone involved. Remember to consider the community in addition to the children's cultures and backgrounds.

What can you do at your Early Childhood program?

- Build a relationship with the Kindergarten school administration
- Visit Kindergarten classrooms
- Invite Kindergarten teachers to observe your program or attend a staff meeting
- Educate Kindergarten teachers on your curriculum
- Create a policy on the use of transition folders *
- Connect parents to resources such as where and when to register their children
- Ask the Kindergarten teacher if there is anything he/she needs from you

What can Kindergarten programs do?

- Build a relationship with Early Childhood programs and their staff
- Provide Early Childhood programs with information about the school and curriculum
- Invite Early Childhood educators to visit the Kindergarten classrooms
- Include Early Childhood educators in professional development opportunities
- Hold special events welcoming incoming Kindergarteners and their families
- Make home visits to incoming Kindergarteners homes, when possible



*A transition policy should include how children's transition folders will be made available to new schools, and how permission from parents is obtained.

When asking parents to authorize the release of information, remember to include:

The child's name, the parents name and signature, date, who will receive the information, what type of information is being shared (e.g. academic, health, behavioral, etc.) and the method the records will be sent (fax, email or mail).

More information on transitions can be found on the NJ Shared Resources site, which is available free to all NAEYC members:

<https://www.njsharedresources.org/default.aspx>

References:

<https://www.naeyc.org/files/yc/file/200711/BTJPrimaryInterest.pdf>

<http://www.naeyc.org/tyc/files/tyc/file/V6N4/Transitions%20to%20Kindergarten.pdf>





Moving on Up!

New classroom transitions can be stressful for children, parents, and teachers. Appropriate communication can minimize problems and make for smoother transitions. Here are some ideas to help. How many do you do?

- Prepare the child by talking to them about moving to another room, and allow him or her to ask questions and share feelings, as developmentally appropriate
- Read stories about changing classes or schools
- Allow the child to visit the new room during different times of the day
- Pair the child with a “buddy” in the new room
- Provide a “transition file” from the current teacher to the new teacher* which includes:
 - Information on the home language
 - Assessment results
 - Beneficial environmental modifications
 - Best way to contact the family
- Provide parents with information on the new room, verbally and written
- Send parents photos that show the child’s adjustment in the new room
- Focus on the positive! Don’t tell parents the move is because another child needs the spot, or that their child is too big or bored. Talk about how the child is developmentally ready for new challenges and to learn more skills. Assure the family the child will continue to be nurtured and educated in a way that will meet his or her emotional, social, physical, language, and cognitive development.



* Consider limiting the amount of information given to the new teachers until they have a chance to “assess” the child themselves, either by observing in the current class, or by visiting the new class. If the moving child has been labeled “challenging” in any respect by the current teacher, this could negatively impact his or her experience in the new room. It is quite common for a child to move from one class as a “problem child” to a “star student” because of a change in environment, new peer interactions, or teacher interpretation of behavior. Keep informational exchange to objective facts.

Handwashing Success



No matter which classroom you’re in, Infant, Toddler, Preschool, Pre-K or Kindergarten, handwashing is needed throughout the day. Although having a system with consistent, proper handwashing for all the children is frustrating at times, it is crucial for their health.

Community Nursery School in Metuchen made handwashing a top priority and parents are beginning to thank the teachers for their continuous efforts...



“My child has gotten sick a lot less this year and I attribute it to all of the handwashing [the staff have] been doing with the children”

-Sara G., Parent
Community Nursery School, Metuchen

Transition Activities



Moving up to a new classroom is an exciting time filled with fun and opportunity. Planning carefully for children's first few days in a new classroom can ease transitions and help them feel more comfortable and secure.

Here are some suggestions and activities which can help both children and teachers when new students are joining the class:

Prepare the room.

Organize their cubbies with each of their names and pictures to make them feel welcome. Have some pictures of things they enjoy so they are happy and feel content within their new home. Create name tags and labels for all other items that contain the students' names.

Learning the schedule and routine.

Hang a picture schedule on the wall, and explain it to the new children. This visual reminder will help them become accustomed to their new routine.

All About Me Bag.

Send home a brown lunch bag and ask parents to fill it with 4 different items that represent the child, or reflect what they like. All of the items should fit inside the brown paper bag. The children can take turns during "show and share" introducing themselves to their new friends.

Getting to know everyone's name.

With everyone gathered in a large group, use the children's name while playing alliteration or rhyming games that stimulate participation from everyone. For example, "I spy with my little eye someone whose name rhymes with BAM." (The children respond, "SAM!") Or, "I'm thinking of someone whose name starts like /S/- SANDWICH." ("SAM!") Sam's name can then be posted where everyone can see the letters of his



[Guidance from NJ Center for Quality Ratings](#)

Standard 2.4.5 - Transition planning for all children going to preschool or kindergarten including successful interventions strategies for children who exhibit challenging behaviors is documented and shared with the child's parent/family, as well as next placement.

Transition Folders:

"NJCQR will need to see documentation of an actual plan in place that outlines the transition process: who gets the folder, where it goes and a list of what documents need to be in each folder. What we are also looking for here is that documentation is maintained collectively and follows children as they transition: e.g. results from developmental screenings, assessments, documentation from conferences, behavioral support plans as applicable, etc."

Transition Folders vs. Classroom Portfolios:

"If this information is kept the same in the classroom portfolio/file/folder, that is fine. We would not be verifying any files/folders in their next school year or at their next placement."

Save the Date for these Upcoming Opportunities!



Webinars, *Open to all GNJK programs*

Date	Time	Topic	Presenter	Description
8/3/17	1-2pm	Creating Portfolios	Grow NJ Kids Technical Assistance Center– Northeast	Explore the importance of documenting a child’s progress over time. In this webinar, participants will: have a better understanding on why we create portfolios for young children; discover the different components of children’s portfolios; consider how to use portfolios to discuss children’s progress; and have a better understanding of how to approach Grow NJ Kids standards 2.3.3 and 2.3.5.

GNJK Peer Learning Communities (PLCs), *County Specific*

Date	Time	Location	County
8/9/17	1:30-3:30pm	Children’s Center for Learning, South Amboy	Middlesex/Somerset
8/10/17	1-3pm	Childcare Resources, Neptune	Monmouth/Ocean
8/17/17	1-3pm	TBD	Mercer
8/17/17	10am-12pm	Learning Resource Center, East Orange	Essex
9/12/17	12-2pm	North Bergen Public Library- Kennedy Branch, North Bergen	Hudson

Virtual Learning Community

*Open to the Central Region
(Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean & Somerset Counties)*

Join us from the comfort of your office to discuss GNJK related topics, Continuous Quality Improvement and leadership in the field of Early Care and Education. On the third Wednesday of each month, we will be hosting an on-line forum to reflect on best practices and other topics as requested to meet your needs.

Online & Phone Accessible

7/19 1-2pm

[Click here to Register](#)

NEW!

CONGRATULATIONS!

The following programs have received...

3 STARS



Community Presbyterian Church– Sand Hills Preschool
Middlesex County

Edison Branch YMCA
Middlesex County

The Ultimate Scholar II
Ocean County

4 STARS



Oceanport Preschool
Monmouth County



Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey™

PCA-NJ operates a broad range of preventative services designed to support the improvement and quality of professional workforces and programming, resulting in significant positive impacts on family functioning and health in all 21 counties. **PCA-NJ programs include:**

- ◆ Grow NJ Kids TAC
- ◆ Healthy Families
- ◆ Parents as Teachers
- ◆ Parent Linking Program
- ◆ Enough Abuse
- ◆ Middlesex County Council for Young Children
- ◆ Human Trafficking Prevention
- ◆ Essex Pregnancy & Parenting Connection
- ◆ Parent Education & Technical Assistance
- ◆ The Period of Purple Crying

Central Region TA Center 103 Church Street, Suite 210 New Brunswick, NJ 08901 732.246.8060

Northeast Region TA Center 550 Broad Street, Suite 1105 Newark, NJ 07102 973.371.5301

<https://www.preventchildabusenj.org/growtac>

