

early Intervention



Celebrating Change: Transition from Early Intervention

Transition is an important part of life. The ability to transition smoothly from one activity to another, from one stage of life to the next, or from one program to another, can make all the difference for children and their families. As we look at the transition process from early intervention (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) to preschool programs (Part B of IDEA), it may be useful to understand that this process should not be seen as simply a bureaucratic change in responsibilities and services, but as a celebration of growth and change for the entire family.

Parents throughout Illinois have often been concerned about challenges they face in transition. According to comments which have appeared in the Family Outcome Survey, some of the concerns of family members have included service coordinator training in the transition process, difficulties with timing of the transition process, particularly if the child's 3rd birthday falls in the summer

between academic years, and the lack of involvement at some school system levels. It is important to note that the agencies primarily involved in the process, namely the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) have taken these comments to heart and have been working together to improve the transition process.

The Illinois Birth-5 Transition Guidance Committee has been meeting with representatives from Child and Family Connection offices, parent representatives and school district personnel in reviewing procedures. One of the results of the group's work has been the recent publication of *When I'm 3, Where Will I Be? A Family's Transition Workbook*, which is available in English and Spanish. This 39-page booklet is available online and in print from local CFCs. It is a family-friendly document loaded with good information and useful checklists to help ease the transition. There have also been a number of new trainings made available through both ISBE-funded STARNet and EI-funded Early Intervention Training that focus on transition. Even with these new supports, families may find the transition process challenging. One aspect of the process that gives families pause is the nature of the services involved. *Early Intervention* in Illinois has always had a family-focused approach to services

Some families may find the transition process challenging. One aspect of the process that gives families pause is the nature of the services involved.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Celebrating Change: Transition from Early Intervention	1
.....	
What Can Parents Do to Help in the Transition Process	2
.....	
Web Sites of Interest	2
.....	
Books and Videos About Transition	3
.....	
Illinois-Specific Resources for Transition	3
.....	
The Calendar Ahead	4
.....	

continued on page 2

Celebrating Change

continued from page 1

that involves parents at every level of activity, including home visits and parent training. The school systems have often taken a more *child-centered* approach that focuses on the educational needs of the child. This can be a jarring experience for some parents and requires some psychological adjustment as well as program adjustment. This difference is even reflected in the service planning process. In early intervention, families are involved in the development of an *Individualized Family Service Plan*. When the child enters the preschool program, the planning is documented in an *Individualized Education Program (IEP)*. One way to approach this issue is to tell the preschool professionals what you have liked most about your child's early intervention program, and work to be equal partners with them so that the preschool experience will be as family-centered as possible. Making this a positive experience for everyone involved will help your child during the transition period and improve future parent-professional relationships.

Please read on as this entire newsletter is devoted to tips and resources that can help your family play an important role in making transition a celebration experience.



What Parents Can Do to Help in the Transition Process

Tips on how you can help your child and your family make a smooth transition from early intervention into a new program at age 3 include:

- Ask your transition team to help with strategies and build them into your transition plan.
- Ask about possible program options or choices of programs.
- Keep a notebook about your child's interests and activities. Include your child's birth certificate, immunization record, medical reports, photographs, evaluations, assessments, and past IFSPs. Pictures of your child help personalize facts and information. Short videos can be useful here as well.
- Before your child starts a new program, visit the program with your child. Have staff give you and your child a tour. Ask about the routines your child can expect. If possible, meet the child's new teacher(s). Ask if there are any written materials that explain the new program.
- Attend orientation events that the new program offers for families. Ask how parents can be involved in the child's learning at home and at the program.
- Advocate for your child. You know his/her needs best. Know what to expect of your child and work with the school district and the IEP team to obtain these services for your child.
- Ask how you will be kept informed about your child's adjustment to the new services. Find out when you will receive reports and make sure this information is noted in the IEP.
- Ask if there is a local family support group or parent advisory group in your district. Ask if the district has a social worker or family services worker who could help you if you have concerns. Remember that you, as a parent, may benefit from support for yourself, as well as for your child, as your family moves through the transition process.
- Recognize that transition is a goal-oriented process. Because it is a process, it requires the family, teachers, and other involved to be partners – in planning before the transition meeting, in making decisions during the meeting, and in regular follow-up after the meeting.

These tips are adapted from *Transition: A Time of Change-Growing Up*, a publication of the Washington State Infant Toddler Early Intervention Program.

WEB SITES OF INTEREST

National Early Childhood Transition Center

<http://www.ihdi.uky.edu/nectc>

Beach Center Transition Knowledge Bank

http://www.beachcenter.org/wisdom_based_action/parent_rights/

The National Early Childhood Transition Initiative

<http://www.nectac.org/topics/transition/ectransitionta.asp>

Illinois-Specific Resources for Transition

The Family Transition Workbook

The Illinois Birth-5 Transition Guidance Committee has produced a useful handbook for families. The document is called *When I'm 3, Where Will I Be: A Family's Transition Workbook*. It is available online and is also available in both English and Spanish. The formal transition process should begin when your child is 2 years 6 months of age. This workbook takes you step by step through the six-month transition process. It is available online at:

English version: http://www.isbe.state.il.us/earlychi/pdf/transition_workbook/pdf

Spanish version: http://www.isbe.state.il.us/earlychi/pdf/transition_workbook_sp.pdf

It is also available in both versions in hard copy by contacting Look What I Can Do at 1-800-851-6197.

Getting Support: The Parent Training and Information Centers

Parent centers serve families of children and young adults from birth to age 22 with all disabilities. They help families obtain appropriate education and services for their children with disabilities; work to improve education results for all children; train and inform parents and professionals on a variety of topics; resolve problems between families and schools or other agencies; and connect children with disabilities to community resources that address their needs. Illinois has two federally-funded Parent Training and Information Centers:

Family Matters
1901 S. 4th St., Suite 209
Effingham, IL 62401
217-347-5428 • Toll-free: 866-426-7842
FAX: 217-347-5119
Email: info@fmptic.org
WEB: <http://www.fmptic.org>
Serves: 94 counties outside of Chicago area.

Family Resource Center on Disabilities
20 E. Jackson Blvd., Room 300
Chicago, IL 60604
312-939-3513 voice / 312-939-3519 TTY & TDY
Toll-free: 800-952-4199 (In Illinois) • Fax: 312-939-7297
Email: frcdptiil@ameritech.net
WEB: <http://www.frcd.org>
Serves: Statewide



Books and Videos About Transition

Books

From Early Intervention - to Preschool Programs - and School-age Services: A Parent's guide to Transitioning Young Children with Special Needs. Padmaja Sarathy. Horsham, PA: LRP Publications, 2006. Call # LC 4019.3 .S243 2006 – This parent guide is designed to empower families to ask the right questions and seek the most relevant information from the professionals to help make effective transition-related decisions for young children with special needs.

Tools for Transition in Early Childhood: A Step-by-Step Guide for Agencies, Teachers & Families. Beth S. Rous and Rene A. Hallam. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing, 2006. Call # HQ 778.63 .R863 2006 – This book describes a community-based approach for establishing transition processes and policies. Case examples and sample forms make the strategies easy to implement.

Videos

The First IEP: Parent Perspectives. (30 minute DVD videodisc). Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co., 2005. Call # LB 1031 .C518 2005 – This video answers questions and concerns about IEPs, gives viewers an accurate picture of the process, and promotes dialogue between families and professionals.

Turning 3, From C to B: Age 3 Transitions for Kids with Special Needs. (23 minute DVD videodisc – Sound track in English or Spanish). Boulder, CO: Landlocked Films, 2006. Call # LC 4019.2 .T955 2006 – This video explains the age three process from Part C to Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and helps families prepare to experience a child's transition to school-based services.

Illinois Public Health Association

223 S. Third Street
Springfield, Illinois 62701

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Springfield, IL 62702
Permit No. 577

Calendar Ahead

April 18, 2009

South of Seventy Vision Conference
Mt. Vernon, Illinois

CONTACT: Hearing and Vision Connections, www.morgan.k12.il.us/iad/hvc
or 877-731-8184

April 21, 2009

The Arc of Illinois 59th Annual Convention
Lisle, Illinois

CONTACT: Janet Donahue, 815-464-1832

April 25, 2009

Illinois Family Leader Collaboration 3rd Annual Family Conference
East Peoria, Illinois

CONTACT: STARNET, <http://www.wiu.edu/starnet> or 800-227-7537

July 22-25, 2009

Autism Society of America 2009 National Conference
St. Charles, Illinois

CONTACT: ASA, ellacott@autism-society.org

DHS Part C State Application Available for Review

The Illinois Department of Human Services is soliciting comments regarding the Federal FY 2009 Annual Part C State Application. Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as amended in 2004 addresses services for children birth to 3 years of age with developmental disabilities or delays and their families.

You may view the application at
<http://intranet.dhs/oneweb/page.aspx?item=43140>

Copies for review will be available at all 25 Child and Family Connections (CFC) offices. For Illinois residents, you may locate the CFC office nearest you by calling 800/323-4769. Comments to the application should be submitted in writing to: Illinois Department of Human Services, Bureau of Early Intervention, 222 S. College, 2nd Floor, Springfield, IL 62704. Comments will be accepted beginning March 18, 2009. All comments must be received by April 30, 2009.



Early Childhood Intervention Clearinghouse

223 South Third Street
Springfield, IL 62701
(217) 522-4655
(800) 852-4302 (in Illinois)

Early Intervention is edited by the Clearinghouse staff.

Project Director: Chet Brandt
Project Associate: Patricia Traylor
Editor: Krissy Roseberry

Editorial Policy

Early Intervention accepts original articles, but reserves the right to edit or refuse publication at the discretion of the newsletter committee. Opinions expressed are the responsibility of the author and are not necessarily those of the Clearinghouse staff or the Illinois Public Health Association, unless so indicated.

Early Intervention (ISSN 1058-8396) is published quarterly. Subscriptions are free. Subscription requests, change of address, and article submissions should be sent to 223 South Third Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701.