The transition from early intervention to school: Examining effective practices
Learning Objectives

Learners will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of the current US federal laws and guidelines regarding transition from Part C to Part B.
- Summarize the current research findings on transition to school for families of children with special needs, including hearing loss.
- Describe factors that facilitate or hinder a successful transition from the early intervention system to school.
Ecological Systems Theory
Ecological Systems Theory

- **Macrosystem**: The culture in which an individual lives.
  - E.g. laws, customs, cultural values

- **Exosystem**: Social settings that do not contain the individual, but affect their immediate setting.
  - E.g. impact of parent’s workplace on family; impact of child’s school schedule on parent

- **Microsystem**: Activities and interactions in one’s immediate setting.
  - E.g. family; neighborhood; friends; teachers & classmates

- **Mesosystem**: Relations between microsystems.
  - E.g. parents interactions with child’s teachers.

- **Chronosystem**: Life changes for and within an individual.
  - E.g. health; starting school; entering work force
Turn & Talk

- Describe to your neighbour a transition that occurred in your life.

1. Which of your systems changed?

2. How did these changes make you feel?
1. What helped you through your transition?
2. What made your transition difficult or stressful?
Ecological Transition: EI to School
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

PART C

PART B
Evaluation

**PART C**
- Multi-disciplinary
- Formal & informal measures
- Family’s language
- Parent can refuse

**PART B**
- Multi-disciplinary
- Formal & informal measures
- Family’s language
- Parent can refuse
- School can pursue due process ([www.idea.gov](http://www.idea.gov))
Plans

**PART C**
- IFSP
- Family Resources Coordinator (FRC)
- Families part of team

**PART B**
- IEP
- School district service providers
- Families part of team
Services, Goals, Delivery

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<th>Part C</th>
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<td>Child’s Educational Needs</td>
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<td>Home or community</td>
<td>School</td>
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Eligibility

**Part C**
- Under age 3
- Significant delay
- Condition that may cause delay

**Part B**
- Age 3-21
- Unable to receive reasonable education benefit from regular ed. due to condition
Eligible Conditions

**Part C**
- Developmental Delay
- Condition likely to result in a developmental delay

**Part B**
- Intellectual Disability
- Speech/Language
- Physical (incl. hearing)
- Emotion/Behavior
- Learning Disability
- Autism
- Traumatic Brain Injury
Part C to Part B: Timeline

- Transition meeting: 9 – 3 months before child’s 3rd birthday. [Section 303.209(c)]

- Transition plan must be included in the IFSP [Section 303.209(d)(2)]
Section J. Transition Policy (Section IV -22)

The State Lead Agency shall ensure a *smooth transition* for children participating in the early intervention program who may be eligible for preschool special education or other appropriate services.

(Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, 2011)
Transition: What does the literature say?

- Successful transitions for children promote...
  - Health
  - Social development
  - Academic progress
  - Positive self-esteem

(Pianta & Cox, 2000)
Transitions: School & Teacher Characteristics

- School Climate (Entwisle & Alexander, 1998)
- District size and SES (Daley, Munk and Carlson, 2010)
- Teacher expectations (Lin et al., 2003)
- Teacher experience (Crosnoe & Cooper, 2010).
Effective Transition Practices
(Pianta et al., 1999)

High Intensity
- Meet child & family before school start
- Contact previous teachers
- Visiting child & family
- Calling child & family

Low Intensity
- Flyers
- Brochure
- Letters
- Open House
When children transition into school there is a new set of child & family needs:

• Advocacy skills
• Information about services
• Teachers’ knowledge of child’s unique needs
• Resurgence of parent grief

(Jamieson et al., 2011; Janus et al., 2007)
Transition from EI to school: Parents of children with special needs

- 43% parents felt anxious, abandoned by EI, and uncomfortable with process. (Lovett & Haring, 2003)

- Most common complaint: educational programming. (Valeo, 2003)

- Satisfied with communication b/w prior-to-school services and school; less satisfied with quality of care after transition. (Janus et al. 2008)

- Anxious about child’s school readiness and ability to participate. (McIntyre et al., 2010; Quintero & McIntyre, 2011)

- Wanted more communication from school. (Malch et al., 2010)
Research on children who are deaf or hard of hearing transitioning to school
UBC Transition Study – Research Questions

What is the transition process for deaf and hard-of-hearing children in B.C. as they move from early intervention to kindergarten?

- What are the current policies?

- What is the process from the perspective of:
  - Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing?
  - Administrators?
  - Families?
Placement Options for D/HH Students in British Columbia

- Three early intervention programs (birth - 5)
- One School for the Deaf
- Two Elementary D/HH Resource Rooms
- Integration in neighbourhood schools
What are the Policies in BC?

- Searched 60 SD Websites
- Surveyed:
  - Teachers
  - Families
- Interviewed:
  - Administrators
  - Teachers
  - Parents
- Thematic content analysis
School district websites

- Information on transition process for children with special needs entering kindergarten: 13/60
- Contact information for TODHH: 15/60
- Contact information for Special Education administrator: 36/60
- Information about Special Ed. services 36/60
Transition Policies: Similarities among EI Programs

- Transition support to parents
  - Start one year before transition
  - Ask parents about preferences

- Contact the receiving TDHH or coordinator and arrange meetings, visits, or observations

- May retain child one year in preschool for readiness
Transition Policies: Differences among EI Programs

- Established transition procedures and resources
- Parent nurturing vs. development of advocacy skills
- School placement recommendations
- Facilitation of contact with school personnel
Administrators: Transition facilitators

- Clear communication
  - EI and parent
  - EI and receiving school
  - Receiving school and parent

- Clear Guidelines and Policy

- One individual assigned to track the transition process
Administrators: Transition barriers

- Receiving teachers don’t always follow the EI’s recommendations
- Early Interventionists sometimes did not understand the school’s system and services.
- Not enough supports for students who are not yet ready to transition into the mainstream
- Insufficient TDHHs available for rural and private schools
Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- Focus group interview, 6 teachers
- Anonymous online survey to a provincial list of TODHH
- 38 responses out of 120+
- Provided descriptive information and comments about facilitators and barriers to smooth transition
- Descriptive statistics and thematic content analysis
Transition: What is the process?

- Information gathering (file review, phone calls, meetings, observations)
- Referrals for educational support (FM system, School for the Deaf)
- Contact with families prior to school entry
Transition: What is the process?

- Initial meeting prior to school entry
- Visits to new school/classroom before Kindergarten
- Information sharing with allied professionals
TDHHs: Transition Facilitators

- Advance notice and early involvement
- TDHH hired before September
- Timely set up of FM equipment
- Realistic parent expectations for services and involvement
TDHHs: Transition Barriers

- Class placement not established before school starts
- Support staff may not be in place before September
- Resistance to in-service on the part of the teacher
Transition process: Families

Method

- Family survey – 36 respondents
- Interviewed 13 families
- Interviewed parents at 4 points through the transitional year
- Thematic content analysis
Survey: Information received by parents prior to school entry

- Child’s future classroom teacher
- Kindergarten educational program
- Child’s future special education teacher/teacher...
- Individual Education Plan
- Child’s weaknesses (or needs) in academic skills
- Child’s strengths in academic skills
- Child’s weaknesses (or needs) in social skills
- Child’s strengths in social skills
- How to advocate for child’s needs in school system
- Child’s future school
- Classroom acoustics and amplification (in school)
- Child’s rights for services in school
- What parents can do to prepare a child for school
Survey: Parent concerns about child

- Child's feelings about attending school (e.g., willingness/happiness)
- Child's relationship with the classroom teacher
- Child's separation from family
- Child's level of support received from the special education teacher
- Child's independence
- Child's level of support received from the classroom teacher
- Child's behaviour in school
- Child's use of amplification
- Child's ability to communicate needs
- Child's socialization skills
- Child's relationships with peers
- Child's academic ability
- Child's ability to follow directions
- Child's ability to advocate for his/her needs

Legend:
- Many concerns
- Some concerns
- Slight concerns
- No concerns
Parents: Transition Facilitators

- School visits
- Information and guidance from EI Program
- Child’s participation in transition-to-kindergarten preparation program
- Parent-to-parent communication
- Knowledge of the school
  - Older siblings attending same school
  - Knowing services were in place
Parents: Transition Barriers

- Limited or no communication from service providers
- Lack of clear information from school
- Fulfillment of child’s educational rights
- Lack of special education services or accommodations
- Negative attitudes of school personnel
- Doubts regarding child’s school readiness
Parent Interviews

- Parents were very stressed prior to transition
- Lack of information increased stress
- Prior experience with school community decreased stress
“...even though I feel like I haven’t slept in the past week, for sure E. was fine, and his behaviour was normal, and he had no idea that kindergarten was starting and he was going somewhere new. But as a parent, I think we just over-think, and over-prepare sort of, you know, getting all this stuff ready...Even though he is transitioning, I mean, I don’t know, for their kids, ‘cause everyone’s different. But for us, we just found it was – us that was getting all worked up, and E. was enjoying his summer.”
“Elementary school didn’t know who was going to be [the] hearing resource teacher, [they] had no idea...that's okay... they're going to get it done, but okay, who will [it] be? We don't know. So...[it has] been difficult to get all the information, or because it's cut...I don't know why is the reason, but they say they... ‘We used to have a teacher, but I'm not sure that person is going to come back’. They have no idea."
“It’s your first kid going to Kindergarten, how does it all work, so I think for people with a first kid, there would be a lot more anxieties? But because I’ve put a child with needs in already, and I’ve put myself and positioned myself in – so that the school knows who we are – that has alleviated a lot of my stresses.”
Implications for Professionals

- Importance of willingness and ability to communicate with parents personally
- Understanding of the meaning of transition for the child and family
- Team work and communication are key
Implications for Families

- Prepare!
  - Learn about your child’s rights
  - Visit the school, meet the staff
  - Ask questions
  - Talk to other parents
  - Prepare your child
Resources

- AG Bell [www.listeningandspokenlanguage.org](http://www.listeningandspokenlanguage.org)
- Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center [http://ectacenter.org](http://ectacenter.org)
- Hands & Voices [www.handsandvoices.org](http://www.handsandvoices.org)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [www.idea.gov](http://www.idea.gov)
- Professional Development in Cochlear Implants
  - [http://www.chop.edu/service/cochlear-implant-program/training-education/ppci-training/ppci-training.html](http://www.chop.edu/service/cochlear-implant-program/training-education/ppci-training/ppci-training.html)
Beach Center on Disability (n.d.). *Policy advisory: Comparison of IDEA Part C and Part B*. Downloaded from: http://www.beachcenter.org/Wisdom/ParentRights/Wisdom_PolicyAdvisory1Comparison_Feb08.pdf


