Transition to Kindergarten

Transition Plan During a Period of Physical Distancing (Long Term Example)

This is an example of a transition plan to support the transition to kindergarten during a period of physical distancing, when programs have the capacity to continue with transition to kindergarten efforts remotely.

Step 1: Assess your partnership — Identify committee team members and their affiliations. Designate a leader.

Committee Members:	Affiliation:
Hannah Rudolph	school principal
Sonia Chavez	kindergarten teacher
David Lewis	parent - volunteer coach
Adriana Chavez	early childhood educator
Vishnu Arunachlem	Head Start–education manager

Designated Leader: Vishnu Arunachlem

Step 2: Identify goals — Fill in goals for your transition team below.

1. Virtually/remotely support and prepare children for kindergarten.
2. Virtually/remotely help families prepare their children for kindergarten.
3. Connect with local schools to determine strategies for virtually gathering and sharing information and aligning curriculum.
4. Determine how community organizations can support our transition efforts via touch-free methods.

Step 3: Assess what's happening now — On page 2, complete the matrix with current transition activities practiced in your community, deciding what type of connection it fosters and the focus of the activity. You may have some blank boxes.

Step 4: Identify and evaluate data on current practices — Complete the last column of the matrix with evidence you have that practices are or are not working.

Type of connection	Sharing information	Building relational supports	Fostering alignment between settings	Evaluation (Step 4)
Child–School	*Work with receiving K principals to share a video introduction along with images or a short video tour of the school. Mail or have a pick-up site for printed versions.*	*Receiving K teachers send a short video welcoming the child and share a virtual tour of the classroom.* *Receiving schools connect children to families of first graders (alumni kindergarteners.)*	*Hold a virtual meeting the school and family to assess the child's level of school readiness after a period of social isolation, so K teachers can align beginning of year expectations, classroom supports, and curriculum.*	*Children are excited about going to kindergarten and teachers feel ready to receive children with necessary supports in place.*
Family–School	*Send family a letter about K and the adjustments schools are making based on time missed from early learning programs.* *Email families with information about the expectations, procedures, and documents needed to register for kindergarten. Mail or have a pick-up site for printed registration materials.*	*Receiving school holds a virtual family orientation for incoming students before kindergarten starts, so families can get to know their children's teachers.* *Set up virtual community spaces for families headed to the same receiving school to connect and share info about the upcoming TTK.*	*ECEs email/text links to online learning sites and mail a packet of printed activities to do with children prior to their kindergarten year while in a period of social isolation.* *ECEs share a link to an "Introducing Me" packet for families to fill out and mail or bring in hand to the start of school. Or they call families, discuss the questions, and fill it out/mail it for them.*	*Families are still registering for school and report that they are feeling well-informed about kindergarten and the ways schools are adjusting expectations and curriculum based on time missed from early learning programs.*
School–School	*ECEs and receiving school teachers have a virtual meeting to discuss children's strengths and support needs.*	*Hold a virtual shared PD event where educators and school teachers can connect and discuss strategies for supporting children from a distance while schools are closed OR strategic ways to adapt expectations/curriculum for the start of the K year.*	*Program and school leaders have a virtual meeting to discuss common ways to support children after a period of physical distancing.*	*ECEs and school teachers report feeling connected to one another.* *Kindergarten teachers report feeling well-informed about where children are and what individual children's needs are when they enter school.* *ECSs repost feeling well-informed about what K teachers are expecting from children after a period of physical distancing.*
Community–School	*Community–School School makes kindergarten registration announcement in the local newspaper and via flayers posted at community centers/parks and attached to local restaurant deliveries.*	*Program and school leaders reach out to community organizations to ask for back pack and school supply donations that can be accessed by families at touch-free pick up sites.*		*Stronger community relationships result in the same or higher numbers of families registering for K before the first day of school.*

Step 5: Plan and prioritize — Reevaluate your goals, create new ones if necessary, and plan steps to take. Brainstorm up to four activities that could either address areas in need or intensify areas already focused on. Consider the type of connection, type of activity, when in the year it would occur, who needs to be involved, possible barriers, and who is responsible for follow-up.

Revised/refined activities and goals (if necessary):

1. *Provide PD for educators to increase knowledge of virtual support strategies and best practices.*

2. *Help ECSs and Educators connect to determine best ways to support children's entry to K after a period of physical distancing.*

3. *Provide families with strategies for getting children ready for school after a period of physical distancing.*

Goal addressed	Type of connection and activity	Transition activity	When does activity occur?	Who needs to be involved?	Possible barriers and solutions	Who is responsible for follow-up?
1,2,3	*Family–School (information sharing)* *Program–School (building relational supports)*	*Organize a shared PD event for ECEs and local school teachers focused on strategies and best-practices for providing virtual support during a period of physical distancing.*	*As soon as possible*	*Program/school leaders, receiving school teachers/ leaders*	*Finding the right trainers and content* *Finding funding*	*Hannah—connecting with local school leaders* *Adriana—contacting local receiving teachers* *Vishnu—selecting trainers and guiding content*
3	*School–School (fostering alignment between settings)* *Child–School (building relationships AND fostering alignment between settings)*	*Hold a virtual shared PD event where educators and school teachers can connect and discuss strategic ways to gather and share information about children's current level of school readiness after a period of social isolation and adapt expectations/ curriculum for the start of the K year.*	*As soon as possible*	*ECEs and K teachers*	*Finding a tech platform, determining training/ meeting logistics, developing content*	*Hannah—organizing meetings between program and school leaders to develop a plan* *Adriana—looking into tech platforms and virtual training logistics* *Vishnu—Draft content outline, gather helpful resources on ECLKC*

Key Resources — From these resources, pull out the key practices and activities that are feasible to do or support remotely.

- *Building Bridges Videos:* Families Engaging in the TTK, Educators Supporting the TTK, Leaders Supporting the TTK
- *Healthy Children are Ready to Learn*
- *Leadership Practices for Successful TTK*
- *Selected Children's Books About Kindergarten*
- *Supporting Children who are DLLs*
- *Supporting Children with IEPs*
- *Transition Resources for Families*
- *Transition to Kindergarten: Partnering With Families and Schools simulation*
- *TTK Activity Calendar for Families*
- *Your Child Is Going to Kindergarten: Making the Move Together*

Guiding Questions — Consider these questions when planning and using resources to support children and families' transition to K during or soon after a period of physical distancing.

- Which practices/activities can I do remotely?
- How can I be creative about getting information to families?
  - » Phone / Teleconference
  - » Email
  - » Social media/community platforms
  - » Printed materials - via pick-up sites/mail
  - » Community outreach

- Which practices will have the greatest impact on strengthening relationships?
  - » Between program and school leaders?
  - » Between children/families and their new school/teacher?
  - » Between early childhood educators and school teachers?

- Which practices will have the greatest impact on the success of
  - » ALL children and families?
  - » Children who are DLLs?
  - » Children with IEPs?

- What information can be shared with families, schools, and Head Start educators that will have the greatest impact on teacher's readiness to receive and support children at the start of school?