



Transition at Age Three

SESSION

9

Facilitator's Script



3 hours total



5 minutes

Transition at Age Three Introduction and Overview

Welcome to our session, "Transition at Age Three." My name is _____ . I represent the voice of _____ (family, early intervention, early care and education). Facilitating with me today are _____ (name/voice) and _____ (name/voice).

Facilitators briefly introduce themselves and describe the unique background and experiences they bring to this session.

Today, we will be focusing on the transition at age 3 experienced by children with disabilities and their families. Young children with disabilities and their families experience a number of transitions throughout the child's early years. Transitions involve change, and people respond to change in different ways. They may have ambivalent feelings about the change—perhaps excitement for something new or worry about the unknown. Many families report that the transition and changes when their child turns 3 can be both exciting and challenging.



Add participant introductions/openers, as needed.

Review the Learning Outcomes and Agenda.

See Facilitators' Guide.

Learning Outcomes



Handout #1: Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes for this session are:

- ◆ *Participants will discuss the process of transition and how it changes relationships among children, families, and staff.*
- ◆ *Participants will consider roles and responsibilities for facilitating smooth transitions of young children with Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) at age 3 and their families.*
- ◆ *Participants will discuss strategies to better coordinate transition activities in their programs and communities, before, during, and after transition at age 3 for children with disabilities and their families.*

Agenda

Agree on Ground Rules

Lecturette: Transition

Bridging the Systems, Part 1

- View DVD: *Transition at Age 3, Part 1*
- Large-Group Discussion

Bridging the Systems, Part 2

- View DVD: *Transition at Age 3, Part 2*
- Large-Group Discussion

Before, During, and After the Transition at Age Three

- Small-Group Activity
- Large-Group Share-Back

Wrap-Up

Reflections/Continuous Improvement



5–10 minutes

Agree on Ground Rules

Transition from birth-to-3 programs into preschool can be complex for families and service providers. We want to acknowledge this and make this session a safe place to explore these important issues. Let's think about this as we develop the ground rules for this session.

See Facilitator's Guide.

Chart and post ground rules.



15 minutes

Lecturette: Transition

During the first 5 years of a child's life, families of children with disabilities make many transitions among programs, services and providers. Families have learned about their child and his or her disabilities; formed relationships with service providers; ended some of these relationships as needs changed; and begun new relationships with other service providers, programs, and/or services.

Many children and families in early care and education programs experience a transition when the child turns 3. This may involve a change in child care providers or settings, or a move from Early Head Start to Head Start. Some systems have procedures in place to ensure smooth transitions between programs (for example, Early Head Start to Head Start).

Families whose children have Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) through early intervention (Part C) are entitled to a transition plan to facilitate access to other services when the child turns 3. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regulations include transition as 1 of the areas that must be addressed in the IFSP. Some children with IFSPs will qualify for preschool special education services, while others will not require that level of intervention. The transition at age 3 can set the tone for future interactions between families and the receiving preschool programs, including the school system (Turnbull and Turnbull, 1986), so it is particularly important to take steps to ensure a smooth process.

Changes in programs and services when the child turns 3 may create mixed feelings for the child, the family, and the service providers. The purpose of this session is to consider how we can make this transition process as smooth as possible for toddlers with disabilities and their families.

Consider the primary people in the transition process for a child at age 3: the child, family members, and service providers from early intervention, early care and education, and future preschool programs, and how they can work together to create smooth transitions.



What are some of the considerations for children with disabilities as they transition at age 3?



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *Each child's unique strengths, learning styles, and special needs, as well as family context, must be considered in transition planning.*
- ◆ *Changes in services for the child and family at age 3 will occur because of the different eligibility and system requirements.*
- ◆ *Transition plans support the growth and development of the child without loss of or interruptions in needed services.*
- ◆ *Opportunities should be provided for children to become familiar and comfortable with the new services and settings as part of the transition.*



What are some of the considerations for families of children with disabilities in planning for transition?



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *Families need information, resources, and support to make informed decisions about services for their child when the child turns 3.*
- ◆ *While infant/toddler and preschool programs recognize the child must be viewed in the context of his/her family, preschool special education (Part B) services typically are more child focused, while early intervention (Part C) services have a stronger focus on the family.*
- ◆ *For families whose children qualify for preschool special education, changes in services at age 3 will occur as a result of the differences in philosophy and legislative intent of early intervention (Part C) and preschool special education (Part B).*
- ◆ *Families need to prepare for transition and incorporate their priorities and preferences for their child into the planning process.*

Let's think about the service providers' roles and responsibilities in transition.



What do you need to keep in mind to facilitate collaboration among service providers?



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *Young children with disabilities who receive early intervention services may also be served by other infant and toddler early care and education service providers who need to be involved in transition.*
- ◆ *When the child turns 3, it is important for the service providers from early intervention and the infant and toddler programs serving the child and family to communicate and coordinate plans with providers from receiving preschool programs, including preschool special education, as needed.*
- ◆ *Interagency agreements that address transition and the roles and responsibilities of each partner are important structures to support positive transitions for children with disabilities and their families.*
- ◆ *Transition agreements might also include a coordination of services with other programs serving young children with disabilities and their families (for example, medical, social service, and mental health).*
- ◆ *Interagency agreements and transition plans should clearly specify the procedures to be followed by service providers throughout each program. These procedures must be understood and implemented by everyone involved.*
- ◆ *Programs should provide joint training for service providers and families to clarify roles and responsibilities for a smooth transition.*



35 minutes total



20 minutes

Bridging the Systems, Part 1

View DVD: *Transition at Age 3, Part 1*

The DVD you are about to see, *Transition at Age 3*, was produced by the Hilton/Early Head Start Training Program and is the story of the transition experiences of families and providers in one Early Head Start/Head Start program. The purpose of the DVD is to share information from the perspectives of families and the early care and education, early intervention, and preschool service providers about transition when a child with a disability turns 3. This DVD is designed to be viewed in 2 parts. After viewing the first part, we will discuss it and then move onto the second part.



Handout #2: Acknowledgements: *Transition at Age 3*

Handout #3: Guided Viewing: *Transition at Age 3, Part 1*

Please take out the Guided Viewing Handout #3. As you watch this DVD, think about the following questions. You may take notes on your handout.

- ◆ *What are the issues for families in the transition process?*
- ◆ *What are the issues for service providers in early care and education programs? Early intervention programs? Preschool special education? Other preschool programs?*
- ◆ *What strategies support collaboration during the transition process?*



Start DVD: *Transition at Age 3: Part 1* (18 minutes)

This part begins with the title, “Transition at Age 3,” and includes the following segments: “Transition—Bridging the Systems,” “Alex,” and “Developing the Individualized Education Plan.” Stop the tape when you see the title, “Early Head Start to Head Start.”



15 minutes

Large-Group Discussion



Chart responses to the questions in this large-group discussion. Allow 5 minutes per question.



What are the issues for families in the transition process?



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *Families need information and support to prepare for changes.*
- ◆ *Positive relationships with providers need to be established.*
- ◆ *Transitions affect the entire family, not just the child with a disability.*
- ◆ *Families can benefit from family-to-family support during transition.*



What are the issues for service providers in early care and education programs?

- ...in early intervention programs?*
- ...in preschool special education?*
- ...in other preschool programs?*



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *Systems operate under different regulations and guidelines and have different requirements for eligibility and enrollment.*
- ◆ *For young children with disabilities, early intervention (Part C) and preschool special education (Part B) eligibility requirements differ:*

Under early intervention (Part C) services:

The Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) addresses services to support the child's and the family's needs.

Services are provided in natural environments, settings that are natural or normal for the child's age-peers who have no disability. This may include the home, neighborhood, or community settings

Under preschool special education (Part B):

The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) addresses the educational needs of the child.

Services are provided in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). LRE is where the child would receive educational services with supports to the maximum extent that is appropriate with his peers who do not have disabilities.

Service providers must have a clear understanding of the rules, regulations, and system requirements of the transition process to effectively support children with disabilities and families during this important time.



What strategies support collaboration during the transition process?



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *Relationship-building among all community partners involved in transition is important to ensure a smooth and positive transition process.*
- ◆ *Service providers can help families understand differences among the various systems.*
- ◆ *Service providers can inform families about their rights and responsibilities so they can make informed choices.*
- ◆ *Transition IFSP meetings must take place no later than 90 days before—and with parent’s consent as early as 9 months before—the child’s third birthday. Transition plans also include steps to exit from the early intervention program and to access preschool services.*
- ◆ *If a child is being considered for preschool special education services, families may invite early intervention service providers and other individuals involved with their child to the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) meeting.*



35 minutes total



20 minutes

Bridging the Systems, Part 2

View DVD: *Transition at Age 3, Part 2*

In the next segment of the DVD, we will hear stories about transition from one Early Head Start to their Head Start Program. Transition procedures may need to be reviewed or revised even when the two programs are part of the same agency. In the case of children moving from Early Head Start to Head Start, it is important to remember that they must re-qualify financially to move into Head Start.



Have you had experiences with transitions between programs in the same agency when a child turns 3?

What were your experiences?



Take 2–3 responses.

Before we look at the second part of the DVD, entitled “Early Head Start to Head Start,” we want to thank the people of the Fresno Economic Opportunity Head Start Program in Fresno, California, for their willingness to share their challenges and the way they resolved their issues related to this transition at age 3 for 2 children and their families. We are grateful to learn from their experiences.



Handout #4: Guided Viewing: *Transition at Age 3, Part 2*

Transition at Age Three

Please take out the Guided Viewing Handout #5. As you are watching this segment of the DVD, think about the following questions. You may take notes on your handout.

- ♦ *What questions were raised about the transition of a child from Early Head Start to Head Start?*
- ♦ *What are some of the emotional considerations for children, families, and service providers in the transition process?*
- ♦ *What are some implications for early care and education service providers?*



Start DVD: *Transition at Age 3, Part 2* (11 minutes)

Begin the DVD at the segment entitled, “Early Head Start to Head Start.” This second part also includes the following segments: “Andrea,” “Start Early,” “Handle All Issues,” and “Letting Go.” The DVD ends after the segment “Letting Go.”



15 minutes



Large-Group Discussion

What questions were raised about the transition of a child from Early Head Start to Head Start?



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *Families' wishes should lead the transition process.*
- ◆ *Service providers must educate families about the transition process in a nonjudgmental way.*
- ◆ *When children have an IFSP, they are required to transition on their third birthday.*
- ◆ *Programs need to have a written transition plan that is clear and achievable, whether or not the programs are part of the same agency.*
- ◆ *When difficulties arise, service providers need to handle issues up front, put personal issues aside, and compromise.*
- ◆ *The transition process should be continuously evaluated from all perspectives, especially from the perspective of the family.*



What are some of the emotional considerations for children, families, and service providers in the transition process?



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *People respond to change in different ways.*
- ◆ *Children, families, and service providers who have built strong relationships may be emotional as they let go of the familiar and move on to new services.*
- ◆ *Service providers need to prepare families for these changes.*
- ◆ *Early care and education programs should have supports in place to assist children, families, and service providers as these changes occur.*



What are some implications for early care and education service providers?



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group:

- ◆ *Although there may not be specific regulations regarding transition procedures for early care and education staff, they need to be informed about any changes to the child's services.*
- ◆ *Service providers need to maintain ongoing communication in order to facilitate coordination of services.*
- ◆ *Service providers need to prepare families for change and offer opportunities for parent-parent support.*



65 minutes total



35 minutes



Before, During, and After the Transition at Age Three

Small-Group Activity

Handout #5: Transition Activities: Before, During, and After the Transition at Age Three

In the DVD we just watched and in our discussions, we've seen and discussed some of the challenges for families and service providers when a child with a disability transitions to new services or programs at age 3. We've also heard ideas for coordinating services and facilitating smooth transitions. In this next activity, you will have the opportunity to generate ideas for what would be an ideal transition process for a child with a disability and his or her family at age 3. You will also think about what you already have in place and how to implement this transition process in your own program and community.

Please take out Transition Activities: Before, During and After the Transition at Age Three Handout #5. There are 3 pages, 1 page for the activities **before** the transition, 1 page for the activities **during** transition, and a third page for the activities **after** the transition.

The first column on each page is where you can brainstorm and list specific transition activities to create a smooth transition. The second column is where you will note what you are already doing to implement the activities listed in the first column. In the final column, record what needs to happen to accomplish this activity in your community.

As we work through the handout, let's consider 1 transition activity before the child's transition at age 3.

One activity in the left column might be to consider how you would share your observations of the child's strengths and continuing developmental needs as part of the transition process.

In the middle column, we might list activities such as regular community meetings of the childcare providers and families of children who are transitioning, in which their observations of the child's development and needs are shared with the IFSP and/or IEP team members.

Then, in the next column, what else would need to take place in your community to make that happen? An example might be that the childcare providers would be consistently invited to the IFSP and IEP meetings to provide input on the child's development and needs and to support the family.



Break into small groups. Assign the "before," "during," or "after" pages to each group.

We are going to break into small groups and take 30 minutes to discuss transition activities: before, during, or after the child's transition at age 3. Think about the children and families you serve in your program and community as you consider how to create a smooth transition process. Be prepared to share back your ideal transition activities and one thing you could do in your community to implement a smooth transition process.

- 1) *Brainstorm and list the activities that should happen in an ideal transition process before, during, or after the child's transition at age 3.*
- 2) *Note what is currently in place or what you are already doing.*
- 3) *Describe what needs to happen to assure smooth transitions in your community. How do you make your ideal system a reality?*



30 minutes

Large-Group Share-Back

Each group has 4–5 minutes to share back its ideal transition activities and 1 thing its members could do to implement a smooth transition process.

Let's start with activities before the transition at age 3. Who would like to begin?



Chart responses. If more than one group worked on the same area, ask them to add new ideas before moving on to discussing activities that occur during and after the transition.



Add any of the following key points not mentioned by the group; before the transition:

- ◆ *Meet with family members, early care and education staff, early intervention, and other relevant people to plan the transition process.*
- ◆ *Meet with the team that will be evaluating the child for his/her program.*
- ◆ *Discuss the family's priorities and preferences for programs for their child and provide information on transition timelines, processes, and community service options.*
- ◆ *Investigate and visit options for early care and education in your community.*

**During the transition:**

- ◆ *Discuss the child's strengths and developmental needs from the observations and assessments of the family and service provider.*
- ◆ *Discuss the child's eligibility for various preschool services and program options.*
- ◆ *Provide the information, resources, and supports needed for the child and family.*
- ◆ *Ensure clear understanding and coordination of the transition and follow-up plan for the child and family.*

**After the transition:**

- ◆ *Establish clear communication with families, with sending service providers and programs, and with receiving service providers and programs.*
- ◆ *Identify contact people and a process to follow if concerns arise.*
- ◆ *Check back with families to ensure the transition process has been effectively implemented.*



5 minutes

Wrap-Up

Today we looked at important aspects of transition.

- ◆ *With each transition, the child's family members will develop new relationships, establish new schedules, and adjust to new demands and expectations for their child and for themselves.*
- ◆ *Planning and communication will enable the child, family, and service providers involved to see the transition as an opportunity for a wonderful new beginning.*
- ◆ *Transition planning includes support for families so they can be informed decision makers and guide the transition process.*
- ◆ *Interagency relationships are key for effective transition planning.*
- ◆ *Coordinating a positive, supportive transition for the child at age 3 and his or her family takes thoughtful planning, time, and ongoing effort.*



Are there any questions or comments about the training today?



Review Learning Outcomes.

See Facilitators' Guide.



10 minutes

Reflections/Continuous Improvement

We would like to give you an opportunity to think about how this session applies to your work. Please take a few minutes and list 2–3 strategies you can start to use right away.



Gather Continuous Improvement feedback.

See Facilitator's Guide.

Your suggestions for improvements help us to make our sessions responsive to your needs as learners. We'd like to hear about what worked for you in this session and what could be done to facilitate your learning.



Divide a piece of chart paper into 2 columns, as shown. Entitle 1 column **"What worked?"** and the other column **"Suggestions for improvement."**

What worked?	Suggestions for improvement

Chart participants' comments without rebuttal or discussion. Facilitators can act on these suggestions, as appropriate, in future training sessions.





What worked for you today?

What suggestions for improvement do you have?

Thank you for your participation today.

End training session

References:

Turnbull, A. and Turnbull, III, H. (1986). *Families, Professionals, and Exceptionality: A Special Partnership*. Columbus, OH: Merrill Publishing Co.

National Early Childhood Transition Center, www.ihdi.uky.edu/nectc/

Office of Special Education Programs, www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/

Office of Head Start, www.acf.hhs.gov

Resource:

National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC),
www.nectac.org