



Practice +

Resource for supporting a successful first transition to school

Date:



Practice planning framework and practice examples of coordinated practices supporting a quality first school transition

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Name of practice		Lead organization	
Brief description			
Goal of practice			
Partners			



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Current action(s)				Key moments
Actions to be implemented Considering the four factors for success <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Role of parents- Partnership- Children with special needs- Favourable conditions Factoring in continuity	Actions	Key moments	Leads	Deadline



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EXAMPLES OF COORDINATED PRACTICES SUPPORTING A SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL TRANSITION

The following list is not exhaustive. It contains examples of practices aimed at children, parents, or both, along with partnership practices.

- Story-telling activity at the school, including a tour of the school, in particular the kindergarten classrooms.
- Kindergarten preparation camp for children, including school-transition workshops for parents.
- In-person or virtual workshop for parents of children who will be attending kindergarten, jointly organized by the community organization and the school. Stakeholders already known to the parents are welcome.
- Presentation on the Québec school system for parents.
- Neighbourhood newsletter on school-transition activities and resources for parents.
- Bus tour of local schools for families and stakeholders (including language interpreters if necessary).
- Parent-child workshop focused on developing social skills in support for starting school.
- Photo album of local schools made available to children and families.
- Resource/portfolio on starting school for children to complete with their parents. School open house activity that includes guided tours.
- “Welcome to school” event as part of a range of activities organized by the school spread over several months.
- Video of a typical kindergarten day filmed and narrated by students and sent to children registered for kindergarten.
- Posters distributed to parents in the neighbourhood reminding them to register their children for kindergarten.
- Introductory video of the school and staff sent to families and posted on the school website. An option for children with special needs: involve stakeholders who already know to the child.
- Implementation of a local inter-sector committee on the first transition to school.
- School admission/registration evening. Suggestion: give each registering child a keepsake of the evening (e.g., a picture with their parent or teacher, a certificate to celebrate their registration, a photo album, pencils).
- Facilitate support for families through the transition process by allowing community organizations to access the contact information of families enrolled at the school. Parents will have to sign a form authorizing this information to be shared at the time of registration.
- Tour of the school for children attending educational childcare services, including a visit to the kindergarten classroom.
- Have kindergarten teachers visit educational childcare centres (e.g., in the spring to meet children with special needs who will be attending their class in September.) Have educational childcare centre educators visit the school after the start of the school year to say hello and reassure the children they previously had in their childcare groups.
- Activity that brings together children from an educational childcare group with kindergarten students in the schoolyard or outside the school (picnic, sports day, etc.)
- Meet-and-greet session where school staff (principal, teachers, afterschool daycare educators) can inform parents about the start of the school year and the school’s expectations. The activity can be made more accessible with the support of interpreters from a community organization and of drop-in daycare representatives.



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- Inter-network meeting of partners involved in a successful school transition (schools and school boards, educational childcare centres, family-oriented community organizations, health and social services network, libraries).
- Make books about the transition to school for children and their families available in libraries (e.g., make a display on the topic). It would also be a good idea to have the same books available in community organizations and educational childcare centres, and even to distribute a reference list/poster to parents.
- Invite parents to come and play with their child in the school yard over the summer.
- Fun installations in the schoolyard that are accessible throughout the summer, with attractive and informative posters about the transition process for parents and children (e.g., an invitation to check out a kindergarten classroom through the windows).
- School admission/registration times that take parents' availability into account.
- Give parents documentation during admission/registration to help them prepare their child for the transition
- Invite families to the school (evenings, professional days, weekends, during classes), where future students are invited to take part in activities in the kindergarten classroom. Meanwhile, school administrators meet with parents to discuss the school's expectations, inform them about afterschool childcare, and answer questions.
- Ask for help from community workers, CLSCs, rehabilitation centres etc. in helping prepare the parents of children with special needs to register their children for school.
- Invite various school stakeholders working with the child and their parents before the school year begins. Present the child with special needs to identify their specific needs (inter-sectoral meeting). If necessary, invite representatives from cultural community associations and groups to these meetings.
- Have school staff approach parents of children outside the early childhood education network in January, during school registration, to ask them if their child attends an educational childcare service. If not, have the staff present a list of activities offered by community organizations between January and September that will better equip these parents and their children for the start of school.
- Before classes start, hold an informal event (e.g., smoothie tasting) at the afterschool childcare service with parents and children who are just starting kindergarten, teachers, and childcare service educators.
- Implement a "concept school." An early childhood consultation group in Montreal came to the conclusion that to foster a successful transition to school, it was preferable that children and their parents enter a local school before they started kindergarten and ideally before registration, regardless of whether or not the child would be attending that particular school. In other words, the important thing is to hold an activity in a school—the "concept school"—but not the specific school itself.

