

# Transition Practices

## *Self-Assessment*



**Beth Rous & Rena Hallam**

## Instructions

The following assessment is designed to help you assess the current state of transition practices within your agency or program. There are 21 broad practices in the assessment. These practices support the transition process for young children up to their entry into kindergarten programs.

For each practice, a set of example strategies (activities used to implement that practice) are provided as a guide to help determine the state of your use of the practice. These strategies are not all inclusive but are designed to represent ways in which other agencies and programs report having implemented the practice. The same strategy might also appear in multiple practices.

As you complete the online assessment, you will be asked to do three things.

1. Read the practice.
2. Identify strategies you may already implement in full or part. You can also add strategies or activities you implement you think represent a practice.
3. Identify the status of the practice at the agency or program level (not individual classrooms or teachers/providers).

You will choose from the following options to indicate the status of the practice.

- **Not In Place** = no strategies currently used in our agency/program to support the practice so the practice is not currently implemented.
- **Partially in Place** = some staff or some programs have implemented strategies or activities to support this practice. In other words, used by some but not by all.
- **Standard Practice** = all staff or programs implement at least one strategy to support this practice.
- **Don't Know** at this time = you don't have enough information currently to determine the status of this practice.

# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

When completing this assessment, please note the following.

An **agency** includes an organization such as Head Start, public school, child care program, early intervention.

A **program** includes a specific area of focus within a broader agency, such as the preschool or kindergarten program within the school system.

**Staff** include providers, teachers, therapists, paraeducators, social workers, services coordinators, administrators as appropriate for your agency or program.

## About You and Your Agency

What agency or program do you represent?

Person Completing the Assessment:

Date of the Assessment:

Other agency or program staff who participated in the completion of this assessment and their positions within the agency or program:

# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## Collaboration and Coordination Across Community Programs and Agencies

The following practices are those which support communication and collaboration **across different programs in your community**. These practices support transition between and among different sending and receiving agencies. There are **six** practices in this category.

**PRACTICE 1: A primary contact person for transition is identified within each program or agency.**

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Provide a designated contact person to assist families with the transition process, who does things such as, visiting the family before placement meetings, answering questions after meetings, and assisting families to advocate for needed services for their child, so as to identify & navigate the system to which their child is transitioning.
- Provide a designated staff person who serves as a liaison to work with health care providers.
- Assign a transition coordinator, according to geographical areas, to work with sending staff, receiving staff, & families at transition planning meetings.
- A designated family liaison who visits potential programs with families.
- Designated transition facilitators at all early childhood settings in our community.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

## Notes

# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## PRACTICE 2: Referral processes and timelines are clearly specified.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark **ALL** used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Develop a universal intake/referral form with personal child information (e.g., allergies, behaviors, family situations, support systems) and a system of routing it to the correct receiving agency.
- Hold a community wide “round-up.”
- Conduct joint intakes with other early childhood agencies in our community
- Designated staff conduct follow-up checks with families to verify a child’s referral to their next program.
- Develop graphic tools to help parents & other agencies better understand our referral process & timelines.
- Develop written memorandum of understanding (MOU) with other local agencies that outline steps and processes for referrals.
- Provide outreach services to other agencies and professionals so they are comfortable and knowledgeable about our programs when referring children and families for services.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

## Notes

# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## PRACTICE 3: Program eligibility processes and timelines are clearly delineated.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL those used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Accept and utilize assessments for the child and family from qualified professionals from other agencies.
- Streamline and clarify the eligibility process between early childhood agency programs.
- Coordinate assessments between agency programs to reduce unnecessary duplication.
- Specify which staff have responsibility for evaluation of children and share with families and other agency's programs.
- Develop graphic tools to help parents and other agencies better understand our evaluation process and timelines.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

## Notes

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## PRACTICE 4: Enrollment processes and timelines are clearly specified.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Designate staff to assist families with the enrollment process.
- Designate staff to help families participate in registration for local agency programs to which their child will transition.
- Develop guidelines to assist parents and other agencies understand timelines and enrollment requirements.
- Develop graphic tools to help parents and other agencies better understand our enrollment process and timelines.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program.

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

## Notes

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## PRACTICE 5: Staff know key information about a broad array of agencies & services available within the community.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Develop a resource directory for use by staff that includes information on early childhood agency programs available in the community.
- Provide transition related information and resources on the agency or program website.
- Agency staff participate in class swaps where teachers observe and teach those classes to increase understanding of sending and receiving environments.
- Provide outreach services to early childhood and medical professionals to help them feel comfortable with and knowledgeable about available agency programs when referring families.
- Staff visit and observe other agency programs in the community.
- Staff across participate in training or meetings with staff from other agency programs to discuss philosophies and approaches used by various programs.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program.

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
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## PRACTICE 6: Community-wide transition activities with timelines are identified.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Hold community wide Child Find and Health Fairs.
- Hold a community transition fair.
- Develop a Family Transition Manual to be used by all community agency programs.
- Host community wide transition forums for parents.
- Host a community wide transition website with information about all program transition activities.
- Provide community child/parent informational flyers to share information on the services agencies provide for designated age groups.
- Provide informational flyers, announcements/email messages about community-wide transition activities (e.g., transition fairs, registration days, open houses, round-ups).
- Program wide open house for parents & children at start of the new year.
- Program wide classroom visitation day.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

## Notes

# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## Program Specific Practices

The following practices are those implemented by staff **within** your agency or program to support children and families as they transition into or out of classrooms and the program. There are 10 practices in this category.

### PRACTICE 7: Staff are actively involved in the design of transition processes.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Provide support and processes for ongoing communication with individual families and program staff about transition.
- Create a transition team or committee that meets monthly to discuss transition needs, address issues and identify strategies.
- Provide a workshop for staff to on transition strategies and practices.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

## Notes

# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## PRACTICE 8: Minimize disruptions in services during transitions.

### Information is shared with parental consent as appropriate.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Provide personal information sheets containing pictures, social stories, primary reinforcers, strategies to implement/avoid, videotapes, and electronic backpacks is shared from sending to receiving staff.
- Establish a transition committee that meets regularly to discuss needs and address transition issues.
- Provide services and support to children and families to reduce gaps in services before a transition (i.e., provide summer services until school resumes).
- Provide consistency and continuity of staff, materials, instructional strategies across transitions within a program (e.g., looping).
- Create an equipment lending library (e.g., communication boards, etc.) to support families of children with special needs transitioning to new programs.
- Provide copies of reports for parents to share with receiving program staff.
- Conduct regular meetings among early childhood and school program staff in the community to share ideas, discuss challenges, & identify strategies.
- Develop interagency service agreements or MOU's with all sending and receiving agencies in the community outlining transition services and responsibilities.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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## PRACTICE g: Connections are made between curricula and child expectations across environments.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Staff have a clear understanding of the outcomes expected from a successful transition for the child and family.
- Develop a coordinated curriculum within agency/program.
- Develop a coordinated curriculum across programs in the community.
- Conduct regular meetings with sending and receiving staff to discuss continuity in the curriculum.
- Staff visit receiving programs to get a “feel” for how to better prepare children.
- Staff visit sending programs to get a “feel” for programs children have attended to support their adjustment.
- Provide administrators with early childhood training, information on developmentally appropriate practices, & experiences in early childhood settings and classrooms.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
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## PRACTICE 10: An individual transition plan is developed for each child and family.

### Information is shared with parental consent as appropriate.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Transition plans include opportunities for children and families to visit programs before the transition.
- Staff conduct home visit before and after program/school starts to support individualized needs.
- Transition plans include opportunities for a child's family to talk with receiving agency staff about the special needs of their child and/or details like meals, transportation, and special services available.
- Use a family services notebook or handbook with a section for medical information, IFSPs/IEPs, agencies, & staff names, to organize papers and introduce families to receiving agencies.
- Invite children to a play group/time for observation before they start in the program.
- Personalize transition with personal information sheet from teacher & parent to the new staff.
- Share a transition referral packet containing the information such as pictures, social stories, primary reinforcers, strategies to implement/avoid, and videotape for the specific student.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
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## PRACTICE 11: Individual child and family transition meetings are conducted

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Host a transition meeting(s) to plan transition activities for individual children.
- Service providers and teachers have dedicated time to help prepare this child's family for the transition process.
- Staff have opportunities to meet individually with child & family before the program starts.
- Receiving agency representatives are invited to attend transition meetings to support planning.
- Assign a transition coordinator to work with sending and receiving staff, and families at transition planning meetings.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## PRACTICE 12: Children have opportunities to practice skills they need in the next environment.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Staff visit potential placements to get a “feel” for where they may be sending children.
- Modify the curriculum before the children transition to prepare them for receiving environments.
- Implement strategies to help children learn skills they will need in the next environment in developmentally appropriate ways (e.g., moving from family-style meals to cafeteria-style meals.)
- Invite children to a play group/time in their next placement before they start in the program.
- Rearrange classrooms in the spring to be similar to upcoming environments.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## PRACTICE 13: Follow-up on children after transition to support adjustment to new settings.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Staff share information with child's family about how he/she is adjusting to new setting.
- Staff asks family about how they think their child is adjusting to the new setting.
- Staff from both settings work with this child's family to solve any problems or difficulties encountered with the new setting.
- Staff visit receiving programs soon after the transition to support the child's adjustment.
- Conduct an open house soon after program start to discuss children's adjustment.
- Programs conduct post-transition evaluation with families.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

**PRACTICE 14: Methods are in place to support staff-to-staff communication both within and across programs.**

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Provide cross-agency/program training and workshops to staff on effective transition practices.
- Assess communication methods staff prefer when discuss transitioning children and policies (email, phone, visits, discussion groups, open houses).
- Provide meeting time for all staff (sending and receiving; teachers, therapists, etc.) involved in transition planning for each child
- Provide release time or substitutes to help staff collaborate and plan transitions into and out of the classroom or program.
- Provide administrators with opportunities to spend time in early childhood classrooms.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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**PRACTICE 15: Sending and receiving staff share appropriate information about each child making a transition.**

**Information is shared with parental consent as appropriate.**

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Informal contacts across sending and receiving staff are encouraged and supported.
- Regular meetings between sending & receiving staff are conducted to discuss individual children's progress throughout the year.
- Written records of the child's past experiences or status are made available to receiving programs.
- Child records promptly follow him/her to the new program.
- Receiving & sending staff share information prior to transition.
- A transition referral packet specific to the child is shared with receiving staff.
- Develop and share a goal matrix to show how child goals were are addressed within the curriculum.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## PRACTICE 16: Staff roles and responsibilities for transition activities are delineated.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Develop policy and accountability processes that delineate staff roles with regard to specific transition practices.
- Support staff (e.g., release time, staff development) in gaining necessary information/ knowledge regarding their role, the process, curriculum, range of options, & resources for transition.
- Provide training to program staff on effective transition practices, program policies and transition procedures.
- Develop procedures to ensure sending and receiving program staff participate in transition planning meetings.
- Hire a permanent substitute for preschool and kindergarten classrooms so teachers can participate in in-service and transition planning.
- Provide release time for teachers to support transition planning.
- Conduct multi-level team workshops (e.g., birth-3/pre-K, K staff) on appropriate early childhood transition practices.
- Require continuing education in the area of transition.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

## Notes

# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## Family Services and Support Services

The following practices are those implemented by staff within an agency or program to support families in understanding and participating in their child's transition. There are **5** practices in this category.

### PRACTICE 17: Family needs related to transition are assessed.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Create a process for assessing individual family needs during transitions.
- Offer staff training on how to support families during transitions.
- Use native speakers in transition related trainings and meetings.
- Include families in decisions about how they want to be involved in the transition process.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## PRACTICE 18: Families actively participate in transition planning with their child.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Simplify communication and information with families regarding transitions so they are clear and to the point (e.g., address different literacy levels & languages).
- Provide a flyer or informational brochure about transition to families early in the transition process.
- Provide the family with the information about specific decisions they will need to make as part of the transition process.
- Provide families with specific information about all available placement options for their child (contact person, types of services offered, enrollment and eligibility requirements).
- Involve family members as active participants in their child's assessment.
- Hold regular meetings/socials (i.e., quarterly, monthly) for families with community program staff to plan for the transitions and address family questions.
- Provide opportunities for families to meet with the receiving program staff prior to transition, through venues such as program visits, open house, individual meetings.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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## PRACTICE 19: Families are linked with resources to help them meet their child and family needs.

### Information is shared with parental consent as appropriate.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Provide opportunities for information exchange between families of children in a program/class to support sharing of information about the transition process and their experiences.
- Connect families going through a transition with families who have already experience the transition.
- Offer a lending library of transition-related materials and information.
- Develop a family resource/support network with agencies/programs and families who have transitioned (of some commonality) who are trained to support other families.
- Offer parent advocacy groups with an advocate assigned to all programs to assist families in identifying and navigating the early childhood system.
- Encourage direct contact with Family Resource Centers in schools to support families as they transition.
- Work with families to identify their individual needs and them with a list of resources to access to support their transition.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

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## PRACTICE 20: Families participate in evaluation and assessment of their child's growth and development.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Include family members as team members in the assessment of their child, including identifying the child's interests and abilities.
- Consult with families to determine if assessment results were useful in planning transition outcomes.
- Provide families with adequate time to review assessment results and ask questions before decisions about their child's transition are made.
- Give families easy access to their child's records.
- Provide parents with developmental checklists to help them understand their child's growth and development.
- Provide families with a developmental journal of their child's growth and development.
- Provide families with a checklist to be used during program visits to help them observe and gather information about the curriculum, schedule, expectations, etc.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

# Transition Practices Self-Assessment

## PRACTICE 21: Families participate as partners in transition planning efforts.

The following are example strategies used by agencies to implement this practice. Mark ALL used by your agency or program. You can add strategies if they are not represented in the list.

- Include family members as part of the program transition team.
- Include family members as part of the community transition team.
- Hold regular meetings/socials (i.e., quarterly, monthly) for families with community program staff to plan for the transitions and address family questions.
- Families serve as co-chairs in transition events and meetings.
- Convene a workgroup of families from different backgrounds (language, educational levels) to help develop family-friendly forms.
- Schedule transition meetings at the convenience of families.
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

Based on the information you provided above, please  the overall status of the practice in your agency or program?

- Not In Place** no staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Partially in Place** some staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Standard Practice** all staff or programs currently use strategies to support this practice
- Don't Know** at this time

## Notes



# When life gives you transitions... make connections.

This assessment was created in part based on the work conducted through the Sequenced Transition to Education in the Public Schools (STEPS) and National Early Childhood Transition Center grants funded through the Office of Special Education Programs at the U.S. Department of Education.

Please share, use, or adapt this assessment to meet the needs of your program or agency.

If you share or adapt, you must give appropriate credit.

We would love to hear from you about your use of this assessment. Our mutual collaboration and learning leads to better outcomes in the world.

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Available through the Early Childhood Research and Development Initiative.  
University of Kentucky (<https://www.ecrdi.info/>).