

# RESEARCH

# Brief



## Summary of Findings from the Research on Child-Focused Transition

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This document is a summary of key findings from a review of the child-focused literature related to early childhood transition conducted through the National Early Childhood Transition Center (NECTC; Rosenkoetter, Schroeder, Rous, Hains, Shaw, & McCormick, 2009). Findings are included for practices supported by a large/moderate extent of evidence using the following criteria: 1) supported by more than one large scale study; 2) reported as having participants who were representative of the population of the country; and 3) when aggregated, included a total sample size of 350 or greater. For each finding, supporting references are provided.

A full report of the findings is available on the NECTC website. The citation for the report is: Rosenkoetter, S., Schroeder, C., Rous, B., Hains, A., Shaw, J. & McCormick, K. (2009). *A review of research in early childhood transition: Child and family studies*. (Technical Report #5). Lexington: University of Kentucky, Human Development Institute, National Early Childhood Transition Center.

**1. High quality child care and developmentally appropriate preschool and kindergarten classrooms are associated with better academic and social outcomes (cognition, work habits, initiative, self-direction; literacy, problem-solving, social adjustment) in the next environments for children who are developing typically and for low income, minority, and urban children.**

Huffman, L. R., & Speer, P. W. (2000). Academic performance among at-risk children: The role of developmentally appropriate practices. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 15*, 167-184.

Mantzicopoulos, P. (2003a). Academic and school adjustment outcomes following placement in a developmental first-grade program. *The Journal of Educational Research, 97*(2), 90-105.

Mantzicopoulos, P. (2005). Conflictual relationships between kindergarten children and their teachers: Associations with child and classroom context variables. *Journal of Social Psychology, 43*, 425-442.

Marcon, R.A. (2002). Moving up the grades: Relationship between preschool model and later school success. *Early Childhood Research & Practice, 4*, 26.

Peisner-Feinberg, E., Burchinal, M. R., Clifford, R. M., Culkin, M. L., Howes, C., Kagan, S. L., et al. (2001). The relation of preschool child-care quality to children's cognitive and social developmental trajectories through second grade. *Child Development, 72*, 1534-1553.

**2. Ecological factors, including socioeconomic status/income level family risk factors, quality of the neighborhood and parent school involvement and satisfaction are associated with higher academic achievement and more positive social outcomes through early elementary grades for both children who are developing typically and those who are at risk.**

Greenberg, M. T., Lengua, L. J., Coie, J. D., & Pinderhughes, E. E. (1999). Predicting developmental outcomes at school entry using a multiple-risk model: Four American communities. *Developmental Psychology, 35*, 403-417.

Mistry, R. S., Biesanz, J. C., Taylor, L. C., Burchinal, M., & Cox, M. J. (2004). Family income and its relation to preschool children's adjustment for families in the NICHD study of early child care. *Developmental Psychology, 40*, 727-745.

Mantzicopoulos, P. (2003b). Flunking kindergarten after Head Start: An inquiry into the contribution of contextual and individual variables. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 95*, 268-278.

**3. A close, positive teacher-child relationship during transition to and in the next environment is associated with better cognitive outcomes for children who are developing typically and for those at risk and with decreased externalizing behavior/positive social relationships for typically developing children.**

Mantzicopoulos, P. (2005). Conflictual relationships between kindergarten children and their teachers: Associations with child and classroom context variables. *Journal of Social Psychology, 43*, 425-442.

Peisner-Feinberg, E., Burchinal, M. R., Clifford, R. M., Culkin, M. L., Howes, C., Kagan, S. L., et al. (2001). The relation of preschool child-care quality to children's cognitive and social developmental trajectories through second grade. *Child Development, 72*, 1534-1553.

Silver, R. B., Measelle, J. R., Armstrong, J. M., & Essex, M. J. (2004). Trajectories of classroom externalizing behavior: Contributions of child characteristics, family characteristics, and the teacher-child relationship during the school transition. *Journal of School Psychology, 43*, 39-60.

**4. Preschool and kindergarten teachers and their principals or directors view social development and social communication skills (e.g., expresses wants, takes turns, follows directions) as being more important for school readiness than academic skills.**

Lin, H., Lawrence, F. R., & Gorrell, J. (2003). Kindergarten teachers' views of children's readiness for school. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 18*, 225-237.

Wesley, P. W., & Buysse, V. (2003). Making meaning of school readiness in schools and communities. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 18*, 351-375.

**5. A match between the sending and receiving environments is related to more successful transitions both for children who are developing typically and those with developmental delays while teaching skills for requirements in the next environment is associated with more successful adjustment and positive outcomes after transition for young children with disabilities/developmental delay or who are at risk for school failure.**

Chun, W. (2003). A study of children's difficulties in transition to school in Hong Kong. *Early Child Development and Care, 83-96*.

Kemp, C. (2003). Investigating the transition of young children with intellectual disabilities to mainstream classes: An Australian perspective. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education, 50*, 403-433.

Kemp, C., & Carter, M. (2000). Demonstration of classroom survival skills in kindergarten: A five-year transition study of children with intellectual disabilities. *Educational Psychology, 20*, 393-411.

LeAger, C., & Shapiro, E. (1995). Template matching as a strategy for assessment of and intervention for preschool students with disabilities. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 2*, 187-218.

Rule, S., Fiechtl, B. J., & Innocenti, M. S. (1990). Preparation for transition to mainstreamed post-preschool environments: Development of a survival skills curriculum. *Topics in Early Childhood Special Education, 9*, 78-90.

Troup, K., & Malone, D. M. (2002). Ecological characteristics of inclusive kindergarten programs: Transitioning preschool children with developmental concerns into school. *Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities, 14*, 339-352.



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