
Title	Presentation 2: Transition in the early years
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Presentation 2: Transition in the Early Years

At the time of this talk, ²Yang Xueyan was a research fellow at the Centre for Research in Child Development at the National Institute of Education, Singapore. She was involved in research projects on early childhood intervention programs, inclusive education, and transition to primary and special schools in Singapore.

In this presentation, Dr Yang Xueyan shared about “Transition from Preschool to Primary School: Challenges and Facilitators”.

Transition from preschool to primary school is important especially for children with developmental needs. Successful transition can have long term impacts on a child’s learning and development, and helping them to prepare for this transition can ease the anxiety that children may have. Key changes experienced in transition from preschool to primary school include:

- » Small to large class
- » Small to large school
- » New friends
- » 1–2 teachers to several teachers
- » New schedule
- » New uniform
- » New location
- » Higher expectations of independence, group learning behaviors, etc.
- » Learning focus (learning through play, to structured formal education)

Understanding Transition

The Tran-SEN project was conducted to understand the transition and development of children with developmental needs who have moved from preschool/EIPIC (Early Intervention Programme for Infants & Children) to primary or special schools in Singapore.



Children were followed over 3 years, and parents and teachers of these children were interviewed about their transition experience and practices (what helped and what didn’t help in this process). 14 children’s parents and teachers were interviewed when the children were in their first year of formal schooling in primary schools.

Ultimately, transition is successful when the receiving school and teachers are prepared to receive the child and when the child adapts well.

Findings from the Study

From this study, primary school teachers were found to desire transition support in the form of 1) information on child (diagnosis, behavior, history, etc.) and more information (from kindergarten) about how children behave, studied, and so on and effective and best practice with child; and 2) partnership with parents, parents to be open, willing to disclose special educational needs (SEN), and to work with primary school teachers.

From the findings of this qualitative study, Yang recommended that the following transition practices that are most relevant for personnel from the preschool sector:

- » Communication and partnership between preschools and early intervention teams (e.g., by sharing goals and advice for family);
- » Encourage parents to disclose SEN and reach out to primary schools beforehand, by helping school and teachers prepare to receive child;
- » Encourage parents to work with primary schools by providing information about child (e.g., how to work with child, child’s interests, etc.) to the multiple teachers and allied educators involved; and
- » Informational support from preschools, that is, providing an overview of how the child was like during preschool and how teachers worked with the child.

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