

Navigating the Maze of Transitions (Part 1) **From Early Intervention...to Preschool Programs...and School-Age Services**



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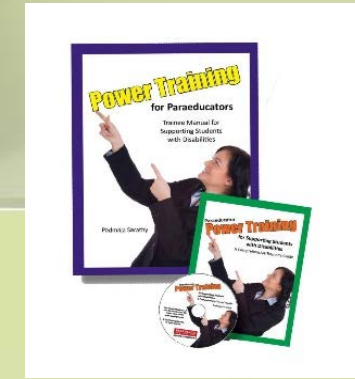
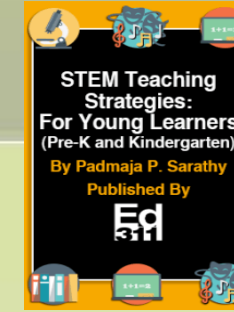
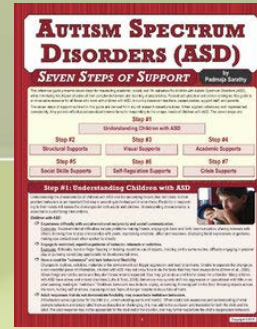
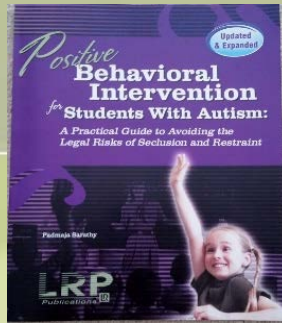


Achieving Smooth Transitions

Learning Outcomes - Webinars 1 and 2

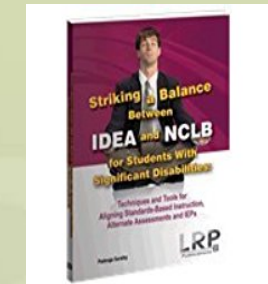
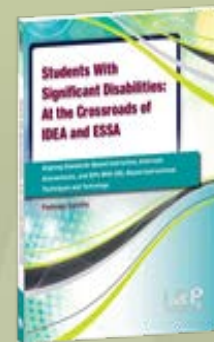
- Gain an overview of the transition process for children birth to five and the steps to achieve smooth transitions
 - What the law requires...
 - Transition from Early Intervention to Preschool Services
 - Transition from Preschool to School age Services
- Learn what must professionals must do to ensure that programs and services achieve desired child-focused and family-focused outcomes.
 - Share highlights from the 'Together We Succeed' system drawing from and applying the principles of family-centered practices
 - Identify the steps to guide families to navigate transitions for their children.

Sarathy's Publications: Books and Quick Reference Guides



Focus Areas

- Autism: Behavior Interventions, Support Strategies, Music CD - Transitions
- Early Childhood: Transition, Parent Guide and STEM Teaching Strategies
- Executive Function
- Paraeducator Training Guide and DVD
- Severe and Multiple Disabilities
- Significant Disabilities and ESSA



Out of print



Major Objectives for Service Providers

- Demystify the transition process for families:
 - Provide a roadmap of upcoming events
 - Provide highlights of early intervention and early childhood special education services
 - Players and their roles in the process: what the sending and receiving programs and families will do (and need to do) at different stages
 - Explain the associated terminology (We use a lot of jargon and acronyms)
 - Empower families to ask the right questions and seek the most relevant information
- Build trust and lasting collaborative relationship with families



Transitions During the Early Years

- Need for seamless transitions for children and their families from Early Intervention (Part C) to Preschool Program (Part B) and Preschool Program to School-age services.
- Timely access to appropriate services (comply with legal requirements)
- Policies and structures, personnel development processes, and other mechanisms must be in place to support the transition process.
- Ensure collaborative relationships between different programs, service providers and families to ensure smooth move from one system to another or among services within a program or system.
- Prepare families and children adequately for the next environment.
- Achieve positive outcomes for children and families.



Part C Services

of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- Infants and toddlers are eligible for the Part C program if they have a developmental delay or a diagnosed condition with a high probability of resulting in developmental delay. At state discretion, children who are at risk for developmental delay may also be included in the target population for the program.
- Early intervention services for each eligible child and family are based on a multidisciplinary evaluation and assessment and determined by a written Individualized Family Services Plan (IFSP) developed by a multidisciplinary team which includes the parents. Services are available to each child and his/her family as stated in the IFSP.



IDEA requirements for Early Intervention (EI) services

- Provide a range of early intervention services, depending on the identified needs of the child and the family, by qualified personnel .
- Develop the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) helping families to meet the developmental needs of the child in several areas.
- The IFSP must include a transition plan, which must specify how both child and family will make the transition to preschool services at age 3.
- The early intervention services (or the lead agency providing the EI services) must notify the local school district before child is 3 years old or reaches the age of eligibility for preschool services.
- Offer EI services in a natural environment (child's home or child-care setting) for the child to the maximum extent possible.



Part B Services of IDEA

Part B Section 619 Preschool Program

Moving from Family Focus... to Child Focus

- The Preschool Grants Program (also known as Section 619) is intended to help states that all preschool aged children (3-5 years of age) with disabilities receive special education and related services.
- For additional information and resources on both Part C and Part B services, visit **Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center** at <http://ectacenter.org/>

TEAMWORK



- A number of issues/challenges may impact achieving smooth and seamless transitions:
 - **System Issues**
 - **Staff Issues**
 - **Family Issues**
 - **Child Issues**

- **What is the major transition challenge that you encounter?**



Participant Survey

Early Childhood Transition Issues

- ❑ Experience collaboration and communication issues between sending and receiving programs
- ❑ Encounter problems in professional teaming in coordinating services to serve child
- ❑ Inadequate preparation of service providers in pursuing family and child-focused practices
- ❑ Experience problems in involving families in their child's transition
- ❑ Confront system inflexibility to meet specific family situations, concerns and needs



Transition: System Issues

- Challenges to smooth and seamless transitions due to...
 - Limited or lack of collaboration and communication between programs/service providers
 - Differences in policies, guidelines and services
 - Compliance problems in meeting timelines.
 - System inadequacies in preparing families
 - System inflexibility – practices not individualized to meet specific family situations, concerns and needs
 - Lack of resources – staff time and money



Staff Issues

Impacting Transition Success

- Knowledge and skill level of service providers/teaching staff in pursuing best-practice transition strategies
 - Need for adequate training in family-focused practices.
- Coordinating services to serve the child as a team between sending and receiving programs and within the same program.
- Understanding and responding positively to culturally and linguistically diverse families and their perceptions of disability
- Occasionally, staff may have difficulty separating from the child and the family (EI staff may have developed a strong attachment) which may impact their communication with the receiving program.



Family Concerns Related to Transition

- Families experience stress and anxiety during the transition process due to...
 - Differing policies and procedures of EI, preschool services and school-age services.
 - Insufficient information may be provided by professionals.
 - Differing eligibility requirements.
 - Differing service provisions.
 - Lack of sensitivity and responsiveness to families from diverse backgrounds. Some may feel intimidated by the IEP development process and the meeting.



Accessing EI Services A Parent Perspective

- *“I wonder how I can get any help for my son, Mohammed. He’s 23 months and not talking yet. I’m also worried about some of his behaviors. He gets upset over small things and throws the most awful tantrums. I’m not sure if this is just the ‘terrible 2s’ that everyone talks about or if there’s something wrong with him. How can I find out if my child really has a problem?”*

A parent is concerned about her child’s development but has not yet accessed any services for her child . . .



Transition to Preschool Program/Services

Another Family's Concern

Maria will be transitioning to the special education services in a few weeks when she turns 3, having participated in the EI services for more than a year. She has been diagnosed with 'Cerebral Palsy' in addition to a mild visual impairment.

Maria's family is a very concerned about the move to the preschool program from receiving services in the home setting.

- How do we help Maria and her family to achieve smooth transition?

(Adapted from Sarathy, 2005)



The Process

What Families Need to Know

- **Eligibility for EI Services:**
 - Children with a diagnosed mental or physical condition with a high probability of resulting in developmental delay;
 - Children experiencing developmental delay;
 - Children at risk of developmental delay (at the discretion of the State).
- **The Evaluation Process (and what it involves):**
 - A multi-disciplinary team will conduct the evaluation.
 - Identify child's strengths and needs.
 - Identify family's needs in supporting the child.
 - Parents are an integral part of the evaluation process.



Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices

Transition:

- Practitioners in sending and receiving programs exchange information before, during, and after transition about practices most likely to support the child's successful adjustment and positive outcomes.
- Practitioners use a variety of planned and timely strategies with the child and family before, during, and after the transition to support successful adjustment and positive outcomes for both the child and family.
- DEC Recommended Practices also include ***Teaming and Collaboration strategies and Family-centered Practices***. You can access them at: <http://www.dec-sped.org/dec-recommended-practices>.



Child Issues - Transition

- Child may have difficulties in adjusting to the new setting.
 - Difficulty in transferring skills to unfamiliar settings, activities, people and routines of a new program
 - Fears and anxieties about the new program.
 - Important gains made may be lost due to initial emotional adjustment.
- Child's current skill and functioning level may present challenges.
 - Need for survival/coping/age-appropriate social skills
 - Need for appropriate responsiveness to various instructional styles and environmental structures.
 - Skills that facilitate active engagement.
- Inadequate preparation of child for new setting



'Together We Succeed (TWS)' System

Family and Child-Focused Services

- The TWS system evolved as a response to transition issues and challenges. It was shaped by:
 - The needs of the child
 - Transition needs and expectations identified by parents, professionals, and local community.
 - The need for a cohesive and systematic approach to service delivery
 - The desire to incorporate best-practice system and strategies
 - Family and professional feedback through surveys, interviews and informal communication.



'Together We Succeed (TWS)' System Components

Five Major Components of TWS

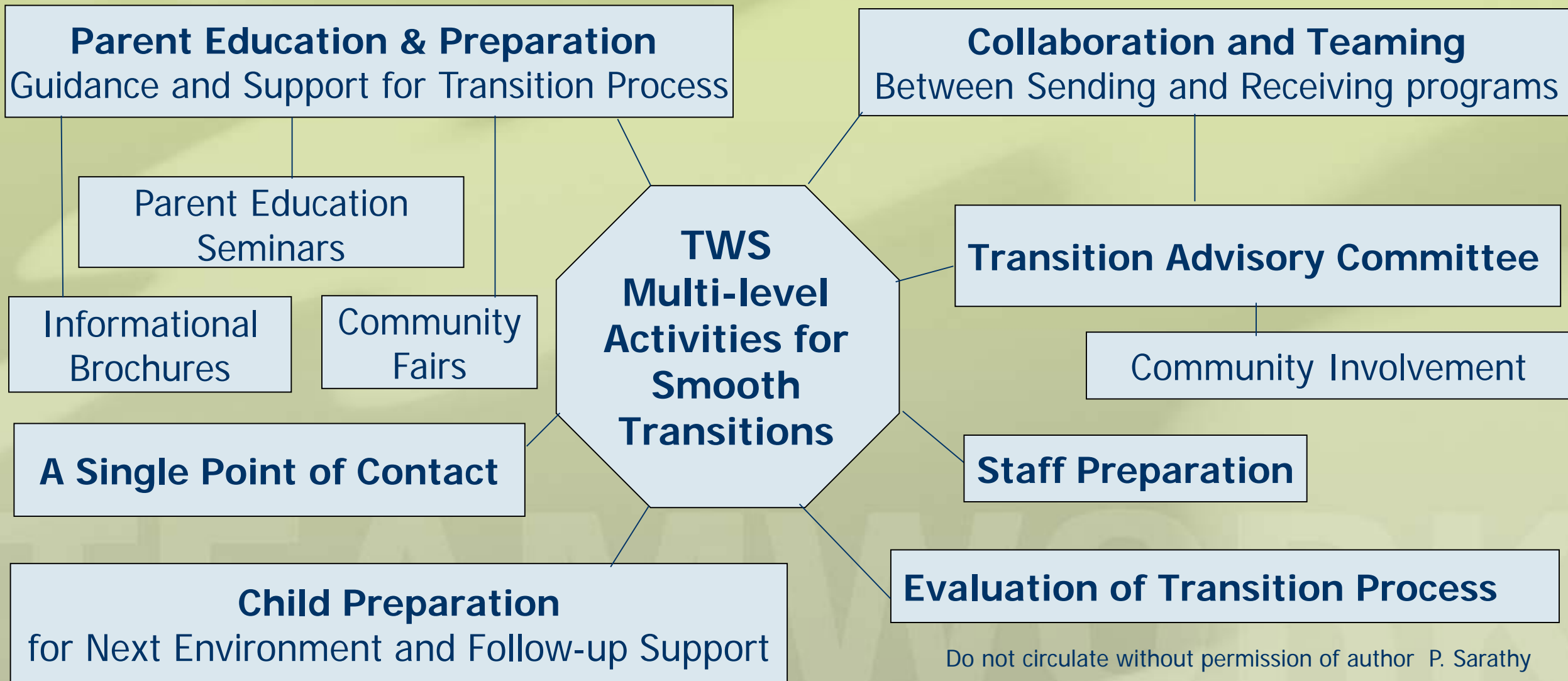
With an intense focus on the child and family needs

- Parent Education and Empowerment
- Collaborative Relationships
- Staff Preparation
- Child Preparation for the Next Environment and Follow-up Support
- Evaluation of the transition process (ongoing)
- Cultural Sensitivity



Family and Child Focused Strategies and Activities

(Adapted from Sarathy, 2005)





A Case Scenario

Anna's Transition to Preschool Services

Anna will be transitioning to the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services offered by the local school district in a few months when she turns 3, having participated in the Early Intervention (EI) services for nearly two years in the home setting.

- A brief profile...
 - Has been diagnosed with 'Downs syndrome'.
 - Has moderate cognitive and communication impairment.
 - Reaches out to people with giving a big friendly smile and waves.
 - Says 'mama' but communicates mostly with gestures and facial expressions.
 - Parents are actively involved in supporting Sara's educational outcomes.



Family's Concerns

Transition from Home-based to Preschool Services

- Anna's family has several concerns and anxieties about the impending transition process:
 - Is the new program staff going to be able to interpret her gestures and facial expressions?
 - Can they adequately meet her developmental needs?
 - How will they (parents) know what she is doing at school?
 - How can they carry over the goals at home if they were not there to observe the therapists working with Anna?
 - Is Anna going to be included with other children of her age?



Support Tools and Strategies using TWS

Beyond the Orientation Meeting

- Providing a **Welcome Packet** for families
 - A Transition Information Brochure
 - A Preschool Program Information Brochure
- Assisting families to prepare a profile of their child for the receiving program
- Explaining differences in educational services between the EI and the receiving program.
 - A **Comparison Chart showing** EI and preschool services.
- Site visits to receiving programs



Comparison of EI and Preschool Services: A Helpful Resource for Families

Early Intervention Services:	Preschool Services:
Ages Served: Birth to 3	Ages Served: 3 to 5 years of age
Eligibility for services: Developmental Delay	Eligibility for services: Developmental Delay or under one of the 13 disability category
Focus: EI services will meet the needs of the family and child	Focus: Preschool Special Education Services focus on the child and meet child's educational needs.
Type of Plan Used: IFSP During the IFSP meeting, desired final outcomes and strategies are developed based on the developmental needs of the child and the family goals for the child.	Type of Plan Used: IEP During the IEP meeting, goals and objectives are developed by the IEP team (including parents) based on the child's present level of performance, and the family concerns and goals for the child.
Early Intervention Services Delivery Model: Served at home, in child's natural environment	Preschool Services Delivery Model: Served in a center-based setting (at elementary school sites, Head Start programs, community preschools, etc.).
Cost: May vary (free or on a sliding scale)	Cost: Offered at no-cost to families (FAPE)



The Receiving Program's Role

Building Relationships: Supporting Family and Child

- Respond to family questions and concerns.
- Multiple parent participation opportunities: Invite family to Parent Education Support Seminars and other special events offered by the school district.
- Offer community education and support seminars
- Early Childhood Learning Fairs for families, community preschools and EI staff
- Support to community preschools offered by school district personnel
- Pair the family with a mentor family.

(Adapted from Sarathy, 2005)



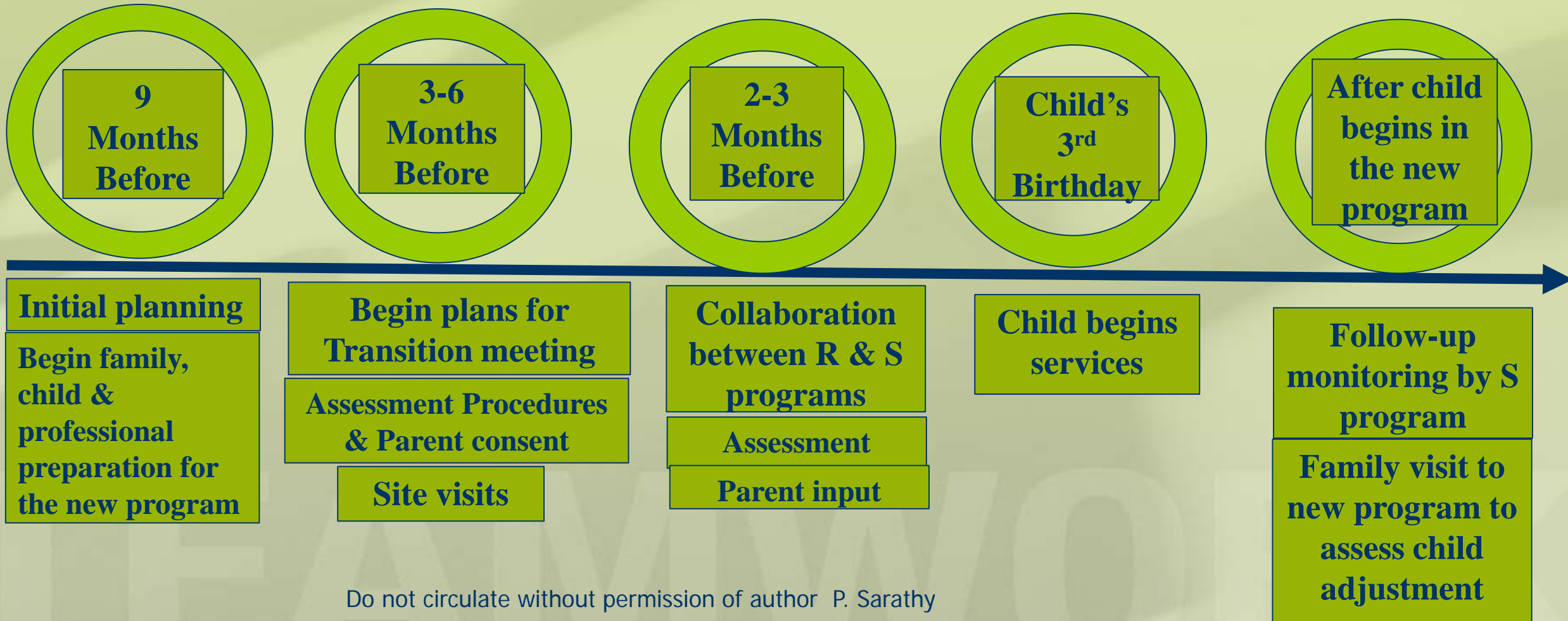
The Sending Program's Role

Providing Support to Family

- Plan a timeline -**a road map of events**- leading up to child's third birthday with the family and the receiving program.
- Provide for a language interpreter, if needed.
- Discuss with the receiving program family preferences for placement for the child.
- Record the decisions made at the conference-the transition plan and the timelines.
- Organize visits to potential programs.
- Arrange for the transfer of records at times convenient for both programs, after getting parent consent.



Timeline of Events A Roadmap





Addressing needs of Families and Children from Diverse Cultures

Developing cross-cultural competence:

- Get an awareness of one's own cultural limitations
- Develop an awareness, appreciation and respect for cultural differences.
- Acknowledge the integrity and value of all cultures.
- Recognize intercultural interactions as learning opportunities.
- Develop the ability to use cultural resources in interventions.

(Hanson & Lynch, 2011)

TEAMWORK



Questions to Consider For Service Providers During the Transition Process

- What does the transition process mean to your family? Does the family fully understand the process?
- Is your family aware of all the options for their child?
- What are the family's expectations of this transition?
- Do family members understand the terminology associated with transition?
- Does your family have social support?
- How does your family cope with stress? Are there other stressors that your family is currently experiencing?
- Are there established and effective lines of communication between the family and the practitioner?

(Adapted from Ann Connelly, 2007)



Participant Poll

Survey of Transition Activities Pursued

- Offer a Welcome Packet to families with informational brochures
- Present a comparison of EI and Preschool Special Education Services
- Provide guidance to families with Parent Education Seminars
- Have a designated person as a single point of contact to assist families
- Prepare child for next Environment and provide follow-up Support



The Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (*ECTA Center*)

- The ECTA Center offers two transition checklists:

- **Transition from Early Intervention Services to Part B Preschool Special Education Checklist**

(http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/decrp/TR-2_EI_to_Preschool_2017.pdf)

- **Transition from Preschool Special Education to Kindergarten Checklist**

(http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/decrp/TR-3_Transition_to_Kindergarten_2017.pdf)



Early Childhood Transition Resources

- All resources, charts and checklists are to be found in the following books by LRP Publications (www.lrp.com):



Together We Succeed: Building A Better System for Transitioning Preschoolers with Disabilities, LRP Publications



From Early Intervention to Preschool Programs... and School-age Services: A Parent Guide, LRP Publications.



Resources

To Assist with Early Childhood Transition

- Connelly, A., (2007). Transitions of Families from Early Intervention to Preschool Intervention for children with Disabilities, *Young Exceptional Children*, 10(3), 10-16.
- Falvey, Forest, Pearpoint & Rosenberg, (2003). 'All My Life's A Circle-Using the Tools: Circles, Maps & Paths', Inclusion Press.
- Sarathy, P., (2006). Together We Succeed': Building a Better System for Transitioning Preschoolers with Special Needs. LRP Publications.
- Sarathy, P., (2006). From Early Intervention...to Preschool Programs...and School Age Services: A Parent's Guide to Transitioning Young Children with Special Needs. LRP Publications
- Lynch & Hanson, (4th edition, 2011). Developing cross cultural competence. Paul Brookes Publishing
- Video -Transitioning from Early Intervention to Preschool, Tina's Story:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ZS3Fzpwvl8>



Helpful Web Resources

- Department of Education IDEA Part C resource: <https://idea.ed.gov/part-c/search/new.html>
- Family Guide for transition from EI to Preschool with video: <http://ectacenter.org/>
- IDEA Infant Toddler Coordinators Association 2010: <http://www.ideainfanttoddler.org/>
- National Early Childhood Transition Center: <http://www.hdi.uky.edu/nectc/NECTC/Home.aspx>
- National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center <http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/q1-44.pdf>
- OSEP Part C Guidance and Training Resources are available at: <http://www.parentcenterhub.org/legacy-partc/>
- Pacer Center offers a variety of materials to inform families of the early childhood transition process, www.pacer.org.



Successful Transitions Lead to Positive Outcomes for Children and Families.



T H A N K S

for participating in this webinar.

A special thanks to AbleNet University for hosting the webinar.

Webinar 2 (focusing on Child Preparation Activities and Evaluation of the Transition Process) will be presented on March 22nd 2018 at 11:00 AM (CDT).

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