



How to Prepare for Your Child's Transition from Head Start to Elementary School



As your child's advocate...

1. Ask your child's Special Education teacher or Speech Pathologist about the transition process for children with IEPs.
2. Discuss the transition process, including the upcoming IEP meeting or regional center eligibility decision, with your Head Start teacher, social service support staff and/ or the Site Supervisor. Make sure they have the date so that one of them can attend.
3. Think about your child's strengths. Identify what you think your child needs to learn in order to develop new skills and abilities. Write down your thoughts. Bring questions, concerns and input with you to the school district transition planning meeting.
 - Questions to ask may include:
 - a. Does my child have to attend a specific school?
 - b. How will the school know about my child's IEP?
 - c. Will I be able to meet with the teacher before school starts to make sure my child's needs will be met and services will be provided?
 - d. Who do I contact if there is a problem with my child's services? All school districts have a Special Education Ombudsperson as well as a Community Advisory Council for Special Education that assists with this.
4. If your child will be re-assessed, schedule assessments when your child is at his/her best.
5. Follow up with assessment appointments as scheduled. Delay in assessments may cause delays in starting your child's services. Be familiar with the Assessment Plan, including proposed assessments and who will be conducting them.
6. Keep records. Keep a notebook with your documents related to transition planning, assessments, assessment reports, IEP planning, names of contact people, program information and preschool information.
7. Gather information. Learn about program options available in your community.
8. Ask questions. If something seems clear at the time of the meeting and later does not, call your Special Education teacher, Speech Pathologist or relevant school district representative. They will be happy to answer your questions or locate the person who can answer them.

As a family...

1. Prepare your child and family for the transition. Develop a plan of what needs to be done and who will do it.
2. Organize your thoughts. How will a transition to a new setting fit into your life? What are your resources? Are there other family responsibilities and commitments? What are your preferences and priorities?
3. Contact parent-to-parent support resources such as your local Exceptional Family Resource Center. The family resource center offers parent to parent services, support groups, information and IFSP/IEP support provided by parents of children with special needs.
4. Contact other resources from the Disabilities Resource list as needed.

