

# Building a Transition Team

Using a family's 'funds of knowledge' to support kindergarten transition for children experiencing developmental delay.

# Rationale

- \* The transition to formal schooling, for children experiencing developmental delay, requires special planning and support.
- \* During the preschool years, families develop specific skills and knowledge regarding the unique learning profiles of their children.
- \* School teams, families, and children stand to gain from a collaborative , family –centred approach to transition planning.

# Guiding Questions

- \* In what ways is it important for educators to use a family's funds of knowledge when planning for successful transition to school for young children experiencing developmental delays?
- \* In what ways can educators tap into a family's funds of knowledge in a way that is individual, respectful, thorough, and timely and which allows for continuous renewal?

# Overview

- \* Review theoretical frameworks and current literature.
- \* Meet a child and family.
- \* Consider recommended practices.
- \* Compile a menu of strategies.

# Lev Vygotsky



- \* Learning and development are social activities influenced by relationships with others
- \* Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)
- \* More Knowledgeable Other (MKO)

# Urie Bronfenbrenner

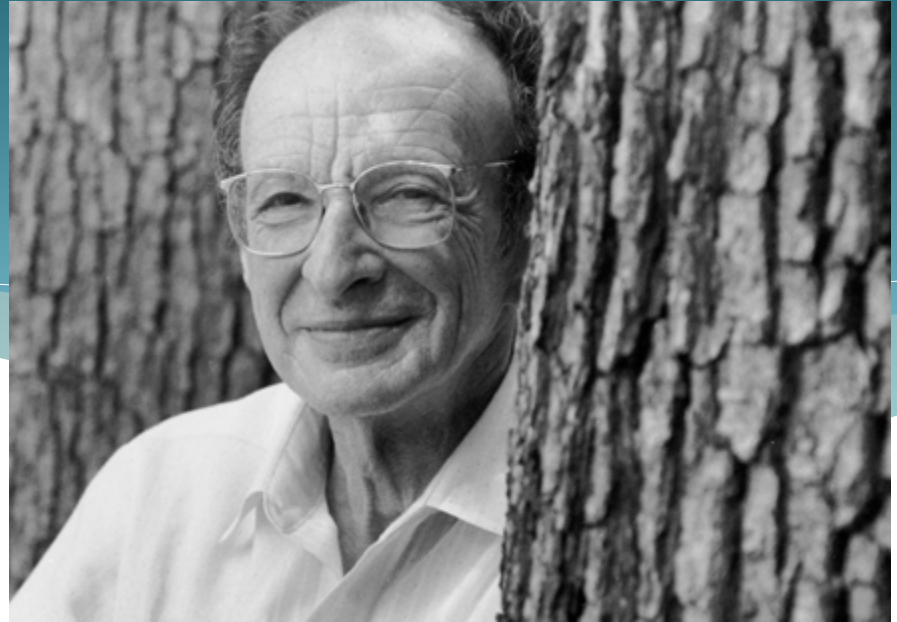


Photo retrieved from: <https://www.bctr.cornell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/homeslider-urie2.jpg>

Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory emphasizes a framework of five interrelated systems (Microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem).

A child's growth and development are influenced by the interactions and relationships of each of these systems and their changes over time.



Photo retrieved from:  
<https://education.uw.edu/sites/default/files/cme/images/Moll.jpg>

# Luis Moll

- \* The 'Funds of Knowledge' Framework (Moll et al. 1992) present a view of the home as a valuable resource to classroom teachers.
- \* Parents of young children with developmental delays have spent considerable time and energy organizing services, uncovering the unique learning profile, gathering resources, and teaching their child.
- \* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okyqK-KGJI0>

# Kindergarten Transitions

- \* Formal schooling places higher demands on young children across all domains of growth and development.
- \* Strong relationships are a resource which support student learning.
- \* Positive home-school links are an *outcome* of kindergarten transition (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000) with lasting implications and opportunities to support future school success.



# Parent Involvement

- \* Parent involvement provides direct and indirect benefits to student achievement (Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005).
- \* Barriers to school involvement: work schedules, negative past experiences, child care, transportation, communication issues.
- \* Failing to recognize barriers may lead to miss-labelling parents as uninterested or uncaring.

# Experiences for Parents

- \* Parents report partnerships created to support successful transition to kindergarten are helpful (La Paro, Kraft-Sayre & Pianta, 2003) and especially important for children who are at risk for difficult transitions (Malsch, Green & Kotharil, 2011).
- \* Partnering with families to plan transitions may help to overcome barriers, offering parents opportunities to advocate for their children and their transition needs.

# Family Concerns

- \* Parents of preschool children with disabilities reported even greater concerns for kindergarten transition than did parents of preschool children who were typically developing (McIntyre et al., 2010).
- \* They reported concerns of general kindergarten readiness, following directions, communicating needs, separating from parents, and developing classroom relationships.

# Family Issues

- \* Lower household income
- \* Higher incidence of anxiety and depression
- \* Greater stress
  
- \* Supportive transition plans for children with developmental delays will welcome parents, provide much needed information, support parents in their role as child advocate, and involve a collaborative decision making process.

# Anna

- \* 4 years old
- \* Lives on remote family farm with siblings and parents
- \* Has a diagnosis of Prader Willi Syndrome
- \* Starting Kindergarten as an early entrant

How do we access the family's funds of knowledge and use it to support transition planning?



# Menu of Transition Strategies

The Transition to Kindergarten: Menu of Strategies document accompanies the KT—CTP and offers a variety of strategies which may be used to complete the KT—CTP.

## Transition to K: Menu of Strategies

### Phase One: Creating a Collaborative Team

- PT.1** Identify one team member as the transition coordinator and key transition contact person for parents and teachers.  
  
The appointment of a key professional to coordinate transition activities and interagency communication is recommended in transition planning for children with developmental delay (Janus et al., 2007; McIntyre et al., 2010; Rosenkoetter et al., 2007; Rous et al., 2007; Villeneuve et al., 2013). Having a single point of contact simplifies communication and coordination throughout the transition process. Parents know who to contact if they have questions or concerns.
  - PT.2** Identify related services needed for kindergarten (ex. SLP, OT, Counselor) and any additional staff who will work with the child.  
  
Professionals can be gathered to the team based on those services previously accessed by the family.
  - PT.3** Acquire consent to exchange information between school and outside service agencies and gather assessments.  
  
Effective communication is necessary in delivering uninterrupted and effective support services to the family and child throughout the transition process (Janus et al., 2007; Rous et al., 2007). The more quickly information can be exchanged, the more quickly school supports can be put in place.
  - PT.4** Create a Transition to Kindergarten Collaborative Team Plan including roles and responsibilities of team members as well as transition goals.  
  
Positive home-school links are an outcome of kindergarten transition (Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2000) with lasting implications and opportunities to support future school success. Partnering with families to develop and implement transition plans offers parents opportunities to advocate for their children and their transition needs. Rosenkoetter et al. (2001) recommend the development of policies which bring transition partners together and encourage not only information sharing, but shared decision making and problem-solving.  
  
The Transition to Kindergarten Collaborative Team Planning Template is a guide for transition planning which offers advocacy opportunities for parents and emphasizes the importance of partnership in supporting transitions for children experiencing developmental delay.
- All strategies listed in this menu have been rated by parents and teachers with a very high level of importance (Beamish et al., 2014; Forest et al., 2004).*

# Phase One: Creating a Collaborative Team

## Strategies:

- \* **Identify one team member as the transition coordinator and key transition contact person for parents and teachers.**
- \* **Identify one team member as the transition coordinator and key transition contact person for parents and teachers.**
- \* **Identify related services needed for kindergarten (ex. SLP, OT, Councilor) and any additional staff who will work with the child.**



# Phase One: Creating a Collaborative Team

## **More Strategies:**

- \* Acquire consent to exchange information between school and outside service agencies and gather assessments.**
- \* Create a Transition to Kindergarten Collaborative Team Plan including roles and responsibilities of team members as well as transition goals.**

# Phase Two: Sharing Information

## Strategies:

- \* Access the family's funds of knowledge with respect to the child as a learner and as a member of family and community (ex. All About Me brochure, Parent Questionnaire, slideshow, photo album).**
- \* Provide parents with information regarding inclusion policies in our school division and province.**
- \* Relay information regarding kindergarten expectations (behaviour, independence, curriculum, philosophy).**

# Phase Two: Sharing Information

## More Strategies:

- \* **Relay information regarding that which parents can do at home to support readiness.**
- \* **Visits to receiving classroom by sending teachers, parents, and/or interventionists.**
- \* **Visits to home or sending classroom by school staff.**
- \* **Provide information and training to individuals who will work with the child**

# Phase Three: Planning for Success

## Strategies:

- \* **Identify family needs related to transition**
- \* **Determine mode of regular communication between Home and School as well as communication partners, frequency, and specific information to be shared.**
- \* **Determine method of regular progress reporting.**

# Phase Three: Planning for Success

## **More Strategies:**

- \* Identify readiness skills (yet to be developed) which will support positive transition.**
- \* Teach identified readiness skills to the child, and monitor progress.**
- \* Create a social story about the transition to school.**

# Phase Three: Planning for Success

## More Strategies:

- \* **Create individual daily schedule for the child.**
- \* **Prepare the learning environment for safe and appropriate use.**
- \* **Plan for differentiation of instruction.**

# Phase Four: Starting Kindergarten

## Strategies:

- \* **Plan for student visits to the classroom.**
- \* **Set goals for attendance.**

# Phase Five: Evaluation of transition plan

## Strategies:

- \* **Collaborative Transition Team meets to review and assess transition goals.**
- \* **Collaborative Transition Team meets to review and assess transition planning process.**



# Thank-you for your interest in Kindergarten transitions

- \* References that follow provide a guide for further reading.
- \* For more information regarding the resources presented, please email [Jacquie.gibbs@secpsd.ca](mailto:Jacquie.gibbs@secpsd.ca)

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