Transitioning to KINDERGARTEN

Training Guidelines

- Training Guidelines
  - INTRODUCTION................................................................. PAGE 1
  - SLIDE DESCRIPTIONS.................................................... PAGE 2
- Training Guidelines PowerPoint Presentation
The **National Center for Learning Disabilities** (NCLD) improves the lives of all people with learning difficulties and disabilities by empowering parents, enabling young adults, transforming schools, and creating policy and advocacy impact.

[www.ncld.org](http://www.ncld.org)

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**OUR MISSION**

The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

[www.aft.org](http://www.aft.org)
This section of the Toolkit is for people who will be conducting workshops for early childhood educators on how to use this Toolkit. A training workshop takes about 90 minutes, and you can use the PowerPoint presentation that is included in this section.

Before conducting a training workshop, make sure to become very familiar with both the Toolkit and the presentation. Feel free to customize this guide for your particular group.

**To conduct a training workshop, you will need:**

- The training PowerPoint presentation, either on disk or printed onto transparencies.
- A screen for viewing the presentation.
- Enough chairs and table space for all of the participants. This workshop can work well for small or large groups.
- A Transitioning to Kindergarten Toolkit, blank paper and pen for each participant.
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- A large pad of paper, preferably on an easel, and markers to write with.
Slide 1

Title slide

Introduce yourself and the purpose of the workshop

Slide 2

Opening activity, step one

You can use a “walk-around" format to introduce the general concept of transitions. Before the workshop begins, place six large sheets of paper around the room, reflecting the different phases of life. Divide the group into six “transition teams” as participants enter the room. Each team will be asked to stand in front of one of the sheets of paper and have two minutes to identify transitions associated with each phase.

Slide 3

Opening activity, step two

Ask participants to follow the instructions on the slide.
Opening activity, step three

When each team has had an opportunity to visit each phase of life, have them select one transition identified on the piece of paper in front of them. Give participants 5-10 minutes to discuss the questions on the slide.

Introduction

This activity will offer participants an opportunity to focus on the transition to kindergarten. Within the same “teams” that were used for the opening activity, use a round-robin style and record memories on a large piece of paper. Information may then be used later to reinforce concepts. If the group is large, you can have individuals complete this information on forms and post somewhere in the room, so that you can integrate introductions throughout the session.

Agenda

Introduce the training workshop. This should take about five minutes.
Slide 7

About the AFT

Introduce the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) using the information on this slide. This should take about five minutes. Allow 2-3 minutes for questions.

Slide 8

About NCLD

Introduce the National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD) using the information on this slide and the next. This should take about five minutes. Allow 2-3 minutes for questions.

Slide 9

About NCLD

Introduction to NCLD, continued.
Why talk about the transition to kindergarten?

This can provide an opportunity to re-visit comments shared by participants during the opening activity of the workshop.

Transition to K is a year-long process.
- Do you know what is expected of children in the school districts your center feeds into?
- This is good for all children, but especially for children at risk.
- Ask if any of the participants are doing any type of collaboration with the school districts that their students feed into. What is being done make sure that the children have the skills that are expected of them?
- If there is a concern about a child, do participants currently have a way to communicate that to the school he or she will go to in the fall?

If I could build a transition toolkit...

This activity will give participants an opportunity to think about items that they would include in a transition toolkit.

Essential information

This is a small group activity. It provides an opportunity for participants to think about transition from the perspective of the recipient of information.
Slide 13

Essential information

- If participants are preschool teachers, ask them to think about how they currently relay important information to the kindergarten teacher.
- If participants are kindergarten teachers, ask them what kind of information they would like to receive, and how they would like to receive it.
- Remind participants to expect many different types of information. Children take different paths to kindergarten.

Slide 14

Introducing the Toolkit

Ask participants to take out the Toolkit and take a quick look through it.

Slide 15

Walking Through The Toolkit

Take a look through the table of contents with the participants, so that they can get a sense of what is in the Toolkit. Emphasize that the Toolkit has many components, and is very flexible. Some people may use some parts and not others. Tell them that you will discuss the Toolkit section by section.
School Readiness

Give participants approximately five minutes to look through the school readiness section. Emphasize that these are not tests, but useful tools.

- Discuss what is in this section. The checklist and readiness indicators are there for those that may not have a tool, or to supplement for those that already are using some type of school readiness indicator tool.
- Kindergarten Readiness Indicators Checklist: Discuss how the checklist is divided into the different categories: Expressive and Receptive Language, Approach to Learning and Cognition, Phonological Awareness and Print Knowledge, Mathematics, Social/Emotional, and Physical Development.
- Discuss how the checklist can be used in the three time periods (fall, winter, and spring).

Small Group Activity #1

Depending on time available, participants should choose one of the activities on this slide and the two that follow, or try each of them.

Small Group Activity #2

Depending on time available, participants should choose one of the activities on this slide and the two that follow, or try each of them.
Recognizing Early Signs of Difficulties With Learning

We are not looking to diagnose young children with learning disabilities! By recognizing signs that young children are struggling with early skills, we can make sure that they get the help that they need to be successful in school.

Responding With Appropriate Strategies

Children who are struggling with learning have the best chances of success when they get the help that they need. Tell participants that they can help children by noticing what is difficult for them and using appropriate strategies to help them. They should share that information with parents and kindergarten teachers.
Slide 22

What Would You Do?

This activity will give participants an opportunity to think about how to notice children who are struggling, and what can be done in an early childhood setting to help.

Slide 23

Get Ready to Read!

- Ask who is familiar with the Get Ready to Read! screening tool.
- Mark up some sample Get Ready to Read! answer sheets to reflect various skill levels, ranging from areas of concern to strong skills in each domain.
- Explain that this workshop will give a quick overview about the Get Ready to Read! screening tool. There is more in-depth training about Get Ready to Read! if they are interested in the future.
- Explain that even if they have not attended a Get Ready to Read! training, the screening tool is still very easy to use.

Slide 24

Get Ready To Read! Activity

This activity will help participants become familiar with Get Ready to Read! resources.
Slide 25

**Engaging Parents Small Group Activity**

Read the information on the slide out loud to participants. This activity will help them think about their connections with parents, and how to use the resources in the toolkit with parents.

Slide 26

**Engaging Parents Large Group Activity**

Read the information on the slide out loud to participants. This will help them plan how to present toolkit resources to parents.

Slide 27

**The Transition Affirmation Closing Activity**

Thank participants for attending the workshop.
Contact Us...

Encourage participants to go to the Get Ready to Read! Web site to sign up for the newsletter and use the free resources.