



Trusting partnerships

Transitions are strengthened when families, ECEC services, kindergartens, schools and community partners work together with mutual respect and trust. Building open, authentic relationships creates shared understanding and supports continuity for every child.

Trust grows when partners value each other's knowledge, communicate clearly and work collaboratively to remove barriers. When trust is strong, children and families feel confident, respected and supported as they take each new learning step.

‘Meaningful relationships are the foundation for positive school-family-community belonging. Building trust when strengthening relationships is integral to forming authentic partnerships for smooth and positive transitions.’

Transitions literature review p.33



... shared purpose ... shared trust ...

‘What matters most is building genuine and trusting relationships, which is critical to supporting learners in transitions.’

Transitions literature review p.15



Knowledge and understandings

- Families know their children, and their vested interest supports engagement in their educational transitions.
- Consultation and collaboration with families enhances partnerships.
- Teaching teams and leaders have knowledge of children and families to support their transitions across settings.
- Teaching teams and leaders know and understand child development and have evidence of children's learning progress.
- Community organisations have knowledge of family and community contexts and provide insights into the strengths and vulnerabilities of the community.

How do we build and maintain trust with families, schools and ECEC services during times of transition?

How do we share information clearly and consistently to support continuity for children and families?

In what ways do we demonstrate mutual respect, shared responsibility and collaboration in transition partnerships?





Establishing an early years network

Strong partnerships grow when teaching teams and leaders from ECEC services, schools and communities come together with a shared purpose.

An *early years network* provides a space for collaboration, reflection and action – where professionals across the early years can share ideas, strengthen transitions practice and support continuity of learning across settings.

By connecting regularly, networks build trust, share knowledge and have genuine, authentic and guided discussions that help children and families feel supported through every stage of transition.



‘Creating opportunities for joint professional development pathways and inter-professional exchanges is foundational to the effective leadership of transition teams. These opportunities may include face-to-face meetings, professional conversations, and reciprocal visits.’

Transitions literature review p.26



Trusting partnerships

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative partnerships

...connect ...

...collaborate ...grow ...



How do we keep our early years network purposeful and sustainable over time?

STRATEGIES

1 Identify and connect

- Start by mapping key early years partners in your local area – ECEC services, kindergartens, schools, ECDP, family day care and community support organisations.
- Reach out with a shared invitation that highlights common goals around transitions and early learning.
- Nominate a coordinator or shared leadership team to support planning and communication.

3 Plan and meet regularly

- Schedule regular meetings (in-person or online) that encourage reflection, sharing and collaborative planning.
- Rotate hosting between ECEC services and schools to strengthen community connections.
- Use agendas that focus on transition priorities, local needs and practical actions – not just updates.

2 Create a shared purpose

- Consider: what does each partner want to get from the network?
- Co-design a clear vision and goals that align with local community priorities and shared transition outcomes.
- Ensure all voices are heard – each setting brings valuable perspectives, knowledge and experiences.
- Establish guiding principles that promote respect, inclusion and collaboration.

4 Share, reflect and grow

- Develop shared transition planning tools and processes that can be used across services and schools.
- Create genuine and authentic opportunities to collaborate on transition planning with partners.
- Document and celebrate successes to sustain engagement and acknowledge impact.
- Reflect together on what's working, what could improve and how children and families are benefitting from your collaboration.

Share professional learning

... a space to exchange knowledge, experiences and expertise across early years settings.

Reflect on practice

... collaboratively explore challenges, celebrate successes and strengthen transition practices.



Inspire and innovate

... connect to share ideas, build new understandings and grow early years pedagogy together.

Explore + extend

TRANSITIONS TOOLKIT

Transitions partnership placemat

Transition planners

Transition cards

Individual transitions guide

RESOURCES

[Early years network resource kit WA](#)

[Advancing collaboration practice fact sheets](#)

Play it forward: [Being connected](#)

- Collaborative partnerships



Partnerships between ECEC and school settings

Positive transitions are strengthened when ECEC services and schools work together with families to build shared understanding, trust and respect.

Strong partnerships create consistent messages, smooth pathways and a sense of belonging for every child. When teaching teams and leaders collaborate across settings, they support continuity of learning and wellbeing, helping children and families feel confident and connected as they move into new environments.



‘Building relationships between teachers involved in transitions promotes continuity and belonging. When teachers collaborate, transitions can be regarded as opportunities to forge partnerships and to create potential meeting places.’

Transitions literature review p.40



Trusting partnerships

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative partnerships

... where trust grows ... change flows ...



How do we initiate opportunities to collaborate with other transition partners?

STRATEGIES



Identify local ECEC services, OSHC, ECDP and schools in your community.

Consider ways to **make initial contact**, for example: a phone call, email or visit.

When connecting with staff, **consider cultural protocols** that promote a sense of cultural safety and respect.

Invite early years staff for an **informal meet and greet** and:

- explain why ongoing relationships are important for transitions
- identify areas of mutual need or interest
- discuss how the community is currently supporting children and families during transitions
- establish the frequency, location and purpose of future meetings and preferred communication methods.

Collaboratively discuss processes to support **individualised transitions** for children and families between ECEC services and schools.

Join or establish an **early years network** to share practices and professional development.

Explore + extend

TRANSITIONS TOOLKIT

Schools transitions planner
ECEC transitions planner
Individual transitions guide
Transition card:
▪ Establishing an early years network

VIDEO

[Collaborative partnerships in managing transitions between school and OSHC](#)

RESOURCES

[Continuity of learning](#)
[Positive transitions to school](#)
[Transitions between outside school hours care and school \(AERO\)](#)

Play it forward:

[Being connected](#)
▪ Collaborative partnerships



Reciprocal visits between early years staff

Reciprocal visits between early years staff create valuable opportunities to connect, share and learn from one another. By visiting each other's settings, teaching teams and leaders gain deeper insight into children's experiences, routines and ways of learning before, during and after transitions.

These visits strengthen continuity of learning, sustain effective practices, and support smoother, more confident transitions for children. They also promote a shared understanding of early years pedagogy and learning environments, helping teaching teams and leaders identify alignment and celebrate the strengths of each setting and professional.



‘Strong and supportive partnerships ... recognise the steps to create two-way benefits: sharing information, setting goals, reaching agreements, allocating clear roles, evaluating and monitoring ways of working, and providing space are each significant elements for effective partnerships and ongoing successful transitions.’

Transitions literature review p.41

Trusting partnerships

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Nurture continuity of learning



... bridging early years practice ...



How can we use what we learn from our visits to enhance transition experiences for children and families?

STRATEGIES

Daily routines and transitions

Pay attention to how children move between activities, arrive and depart to gather ideas of improving transitions.

Focus on pedagogy

Observe play-based and age-appropriate learning experiences and share how intentional teaching and explicit instruction are balanced.

Reflect on communication practices

Explore how teaching teams and leaders connect with families, share information and build trusting relationships.

Discuss curriculum connections

Identify how learning outcomes and priorities align across ECEC services and school settings.

Individualised transitions

With family consent, teaching teams and leaders observe each child, exchange insights, and focus on daily routines to facilitate smooth tailored transitions.

Explore learning environments

Look for how spaces promote independence, play, belonging and emotional safety.

Exchange transition resources

Share tools such as visual timetables, transition statements or family communication strategies.

Reflect together

Debrief after visits to discuss key insights, celebrate strengths and identify shared actions that improve transition experiences.



Explore + extend

TRANSITIONS TOOLKIT

Individual transitions guide

Transition cards:

- Continuity of curriculum and pedagogy
- Engaging in early years pedagogies
- Responsive learning environments

RESOURCES

[Supporting transitions: Continuity of learning in the early years](#)

[Consent form to share information with third parties for transition to school planning and support](#)

Play it forward: [Being connected](#)

Play it forward: [Being responsive](#)
Responsive environments

Play it forward: [Being intentional](#)

- Pedagogy
- Play-based learning



Shared transition experiences between settings

Shared transition experiences help children feel confident, connected and capable of navigating change. When children engage with familiar staff, environments and peers through transition experiences embedded across the year, they develop a sense of belonging and security that supports positive transitions.

Ongoing, shared experiences between ECEC services and schools strengthen relationships, build understanding and create continuity in children's learning and wellbeing. These connections lay the foundation for smoother, more confident transitions for every child.



‘... trust is at the foundation of all effective partnerships ... when relationships between families, communities, schools and centres are sustained, collaboration and co-design become partnerships.’

Transitions literature review p.43

Trusting partnerships

COMMITMENT
Foster a sense of belonging

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative partnerships



... shared experiences ... stronger transitions ...



What shared transition experiences do we currently offer and how can we build on these to deepen partnerships?

STRATEGIES



Building familiarity with environments

- Reciprocal visits between settings where children explore classrooms, playgrounds and shared spaces such as libraries, tuckshops or outdoor learning areas.
- Shared learning experiences facilitated by ECEC educators and teachers, such as story time, play-based learning and small group activities.
- Peer connection opportunities where younger and older children learn and play together through buddy activities.
- Opportunities for children across year levels to visit and become familiar with different classrooms and learning environments to support transitions between settings and year levels.

Learning together

- Collaborative projects such as art exhibitions, garden planting or science investigations that link early childhood and school learning.
- Shared professional learning days where ECEC services and school teams explore early years pedagogy together.
- Buddy reading or storytelling partnerships where older students visit kindy or ECEC services.
- Shared transition displays or photo books showing familiar faces, spaces and routines across both settings.



Connecting with people

- Prep teachers or school leaders visiting early learning services to read stories, join in play or share a learning experience.
- Joint family events like Under Eights Day, family fun mornings or community play sessions that bring schools and ECEC service staff, families and children together.
- Meet-the-teacher mornings for children and families before the kindy or school year begins.
- Shared celebrations such as NAIDOC week, book week or harmony day held collaboratively across settings.

Sustaining connections

- Reciprocal visits between early childhood and school staff to observe, reflect and share insights.
- Community events that include both settings, such as markets, picnics or concerts.
- Ongoing transition experiences such as classroom play sessions and shared story times, so children stay connected across the year.
- Collaborative transition programs where early years educators co-plan with schools to align messages, expectations and support plans.

Explore + extend

TRANSITIONS TOOLKIT

ECEC transitions planner

Schools transitions planner

Transition cards:

- Transition programs: More than orientation
- Reciprocal visits between early years staff
- Partnerships with families
- Partnerships with community

RESOURCES

[Supporting successful transitions – school decision-making tool](#)
[Continuity of learning](#)

Play it forward:
[Being connected](#)

- Collaborative partnerships

Partnerships with families

Strong partnerships with families are at the heart of positive transitions. When ECEC services, schools and families work together with openness and respect, children feel secure, valued and confident to embrace new learning experiences.

Building trust takes time – it grows through listening, sharing information and recognising the important role families play as their child's first teachers. By valuing family voice and perspectives, teaching teams and leaders strengthen continuity, confidence and connection for every child during times of change.

Family partnerships



Transitions literature review p.34

‘It is crucial to recognise that families are also experiencing the transition process.’

‘Trust takes time for all families ... partnerships take planning and effort and are essential for equitable and full family engagement.’

Transitions literature review p.35

...listen ...

Trusting partnerships

COMMITMENT

Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT

Honour learners' unique strengths and contexts

...respect ... collaborate ...

QA 5, 6

D 3, 9



How do I build trusting, respectful relationships with families that strengthen transitions for every child?

STRATEGIES

Start early

Reach out to families before transition points to begin building relationships and ease uncertainty.

Continue connection after transition

Follow up with families to celebrate progress and maintain trust as children settle into their new setting.

Share children's progress and successes

Provide positive, strengths-based feedback that encourages ongoing communication.

Acknowledge families as first teachers

Invite them to share their child's strengths, interests and achievements from home or early learning.

Use transition meetings

Collaborate with families, teaching teams and leaders across ECEC and school settings to share insights and plan for individual children's needs.

Create welcoming spaces

Ensure families feel comfortable visiting, asking questions and sharing information about their child.

Listen first

Take time to understand each family's hopes, priorities and perspectives about their child's learning and wellbeing.

Communicate clearly and consistently

Provide key information in accessible ways (verbal, visual, translated or digital) to support understanding.

Respect cultural knowledge and diversity

Incorporate family languages, stories and traditions into the learning environment.

Offer multiple opportunities to connect

Host family information sessions, stay-and-play mornings, or informal drop-ins to strengthen relationships.



Explore + extend

TRANSITIONS TOOLKIT

Families transitions planner

Transition cards:

- Valuing the voice of children and families
- Families as first teachers

VIDEOS

[Supporting successful transitions in the early years](#)

[Engaging families and children](#)

[Engaging families within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early education](#)

RESOURCES

[Building partnerships with families](#)

Play it forward:
[Being connected](#)

- Collaborative partnerships
- Sense of belonging



Partnerships with community

Partnerships with community services strengthen the network of support surrounding children and families. When ECEC services, schools, child health services, ECDPs, allied health providers, playgroups, CYMHSS, councils, libraries and other local organisations work together, they create connected pathways that support continuity and smooth transitions, promoting children's wellbeing and ongoing learning.

Collaborating with community partners builds shared understanding, reduces barriers and ensures children and families have access to the right supports at the right time. These relationships foster inclusion, belonging and continuity, helping every child experience a positive start in each new setting.



‘Collaborations between schools and community organisations enhance learners’ transition and participation and demonstrate to learners that their community belonging is taken seriously.’

Transitions literature review p.38

...partner ...



Trusting partnerships

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative partnerships

...link ... connect...



How do we work with local community partners to strengthen transitions for children and families?

STRATEGIES

Map your local network

Identify nearby ECEC services, schools, ECDPs, child health providers, playgroups, libraries and community organisations that support families.

Host or join community events

Participate in local activities such as Under Eight's Day, library story times or health and wellbeing expos to build visibility and connection.

Collaborate on transition activities

Co-plan transition experiences, shared learning experiences or professional networking opportunities with community partners.

Invite community voices

Include local Elders, cultural liaison officers or health professionals in planning and sharing information with families.

Initiate connections

Reach out to local partners to introduce your setting, share goals and explore ways to work together around transitions and family support.

Share information and resources

Develop simple handouts, digital flyers or local service directories to help families access community supports easily.

Create referral pathways

Work with child health services, ECDPs and family support services to ensure children and families can access the right help early.

Keep communication ongoing

Meet regularly with partners to reflect on what is working, share updates and identify new opportunities to support transitions.



Explore + extend

TRANSITIONS TOOLKIT

Community services transitions planner

Families transitions planner

Transition cards:

- Establishing an early years network
- Supported playgroups
- Interpreting early years data

VIDEOS

[Engaging the community within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander early education](#)

[Support for you and your family](#)

RESOURCES

[Children's health QLD](#)

[Play matters: Playgroups](#)

[Community hubs](#)



Partnerships with OSHC

Daily transitions don't stop at the classroom door. For many children, OSHC is part of their learning and care journey before and after school, during holidays – and for some children, even before they start school for the first time.

Strong partnerships between families, schools and OSHC teams create continuity and shared understanding of each child. Including OSHC in school transition activities – such as information sessions and transition visits – helps align routines, expectations and communication, supporting smoother transitions and a stronger sense of belonging across the day.

Trust is built through everyday communication – quick conversations, shared insights and ongoing collaboration. By recognising daily transitions as a shared responsibility, transition partners work together to support children to feel safe and settled wherever they are.



... building trust through daily transitions ...

Trusting partnerships

COMMITMENT
Build strong relationships

COMMITMENT
Strengthen collaborative partnerships



‘When OSHC leaders listen to learners and give them opportunities to make active decisions, this enables learners to exercise leadership in their transitions, making choices about what they wish to do.’

Transitions literature review p.28

QA 5, 6

D 3, 9



How could we strengthen collaboration with OSHC to create consistent and supportive before and after-school transitions?

STRATEGIES

Value OSHC as a learning partner

OSHC delivers quality programming that fosters children's wellbeing, learning and development. How could you share knowledge and practice together?

Share responsibility for children

View transitions as a shared responsibility between families, schools and OSHC, with everyone contributing to children's sense of safety and belonging.

Listen to children's voices

Balance children's interests and ideas with educator-guided experiences to create meaningful, engaging programs.

Communicate regularly and respectfully

Use daily conversations, shared notes or simple check-ins to exchange information about children's needs, interests and routines.

Connect practices and routines

Where possible, align expectations, behaviour approaches and daily routines to create consistency across school and OSHC settings.

Create child-centred environments together

Schools and OSHC services collaborate to design physical spaces that are welcoming, familiar and responsive to children's needs.



Explore + extend

TRANSITIONS TOOLKIT

ECEC transitions planner

Families transitions planner

Transition cards:

- Daily transitions
- Partnerships with families
- Partnerships between ECEC and school settings

VIDEOS

[Collaborative partnerships in managing transitions between school and OSHC](#)

RESOURCES

[Transitions between school and outside school hours care \(AERO\)](#)

[My time, our place: Framework for school age care in Australia \(ACECQA\)](#)