



Family Matter: Parent-Professional Partnership for Promoting Transition to First Grade

Szu-Yin Chu, Ph.D, BCBA-D; Rong-An Jhuo, Graduate Student

Department of Special Education, National Tsing Hua University, Taiwan

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Abstract

Early childhood is considered as an important stage for cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development, and this period emphasizes parental participation. Although the concepts of early intervention as well as transition are emphasized, the current topics in Taiwan focus more on policy and resource integration for those children with disabilities entering first-grade. The purpose of this study focused on parent-professional partnership for promoting transition skills for young children with disabilities to be ready for the first-grade entry. There were a total of 10 families of young children with disabilities and 21 professionals (preschool teachers and interns) that participated in this study. Researchers applied an action research method, two-sided partnership has been emphasized during the process, and the intervention program has been modified based on each family's needs. The measures and evaluation checklists have been developed to monitor children's learning progress. The social validity has been investigated to understand how the families perceived this partnership intervention. The results showed that all participating children's learning readiness goals have been improved, but each family's characteristics should be taken into consideration. This study further emphasized on including two-sided perspectives in developing transition goals.

Theoretical Framework

One of the most frequently referred theoretical frameworks on the children's transition is **Ecological/Developmental Model** proposed by Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta (2002). Within this model, transition is an experience of not only a child but also the contextual factors surrounding the child, including **family, school, and community**. Thus, to provide support and services in accordance with the child's individual needs, building positive relationship between parents and professionals is considered as a core element of this framework (Pianta & Kraft-Sayre, 2003; Rimm-Kaufman, Pianta & Cox, 2000).

Parent and Professional Partnership is considered as essential element to promote children's school readiness (Quintero & McIntyre, 2011). Understanding both sides' perspectives regarding the essential school readiness skills during transition period (Chen & Chu, 2012) will bring long-term effects of early learning practices in both home and school settings.

Methods

Participants

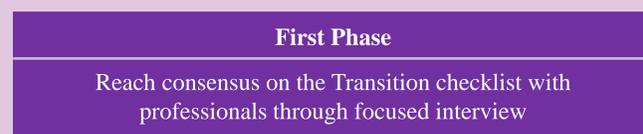
- Total 10 children with developmental delays and their families
- Settings: One non-profit preschools
- Professionals: 7 preschool teachers, 1OT, 1PT, 1ST, 1 Psychologist
- 8 interns (majored in special educations) working with participating families.

Instruments

- Transition checklist : developed at first phase of this study
- Interview questionnaire
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale (VABS)
- School Adjustment Questionnaire, SAQ
- School Readiness Questionnaire, SRQ
- Goal Attainment Rating Scale, GAS
- Teaching Fidelity Form
- Social Fidelity Form

Research Procedures

- Transition checklist : developed at first phase



Data Analysis

- **Quantitative data** included VABS, SAQ, SRQ, GAS, and social fidelity. Scores from the VABS, SAQ, and SRQ were compared according to pre- and post-intervention.
- **Qualitative data**, such as interviews, meeting notes and descriptive text questions, were coded and analyzed. Two individual researchers read transcripts of the interviews independently, then they met to compare data analysis to assess the levels of agreement.

Results

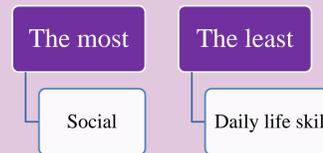
First Phase

Family and Professionals' Perspectives

| Resilience and Transition Challenge | Service and Collaboration Model | Parent Participation |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers • Preparation • Pressure and Concern • Children's skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquired and insufficient assistance • cooperation domains | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns • Strategies used |

Second Phase

- VABS



- School Adjustment Scale

| | pre | post |
|---------------|-----|------|
| Routine | 3.6 | 3.9 |
| Interpersonal | 3.7 | 4.0 |
| Learning | 3.8 | 4.0 |

- School Readiness Questionnaire

| | pre | post |
|----------------------|------|------|
| Motor Perception | 52.5 | 62.5 |
| Self-care | 55.5 | 67.3 |
| Cognitive Concept | 40 | 59 |
| Language Expression | 50 | 72.9 |
| Social Interpersonal | 37 | 52 |
| Writing and Reading | 28.9 | 38.9 |

- GAS

| | pre | post |
|----------------------|-----|------|
| Motor Perception | 0 | 1 |
| Self-care | 0 | 1 |
| Cognitive Concept | 0 | 1 |
| Language Expression | 0 | 2 |
| Social Interpersonal | 0 | 1 |
| Writing and Reading | 0 | 1 |

- Teaching Fidelity

| Domain | 2 sessions | 13 sessions |
|------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Maintain Attention | 57 | 80 |
| ABC Format | 58 | 85 |
| Teaching Skills | 55 | 82 |
| Interaction Engagement | 50 | 85 |

- Social Validity

| Participating This Study: | Families | Teachers |
|---|----------|----------|
| First Part: Understand Your Child's Strength, Needs and Abilities (4 items) | 4.5 | 4.6 |
| Second Part: Understand Your Rights and Advocate Your Rights (4 items/3itmes) | 4.2 | 4.4 |
| Third Part: Help your Child's Development and Learning (4 items/3itmes) | 4.5 | 4.2 |
| Fourth Part: Support System (3 items) | 4.5 | 4.6 |

Implications

- Intervention extend to home Settings : Provide examples to families and utilize modeling strategies.
- Consideration of developing social and interpersonal skills in preschool settings.
- The transition checklist developed in this study could be used in the preparation of transition to first grade.

References Upon Request

Contact information

Szu-Yin Chu, Ph.D., BCBA-D
Department of Special Education
National Tsing Hua University
No.521, Nanda Rd., East District, Hsinchu, Taiwan
Phone:886-3-571-5131# 73320
Fax:886-3-561-4069
Email: chusy@mx.nthu.edu.tw