

Child Care & Early Education RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

Transition to Kindergarten and Child Outcomes

August and September mark the start of the school year for America's children, and for the more than 3.7 million children who the U.S. Department of Education estimates will enroll in public kindergarten this fall (Snyder, de Brey, & Dillow, 2016), this time represents a critical period of transition. Child care and early education programs and schools undertake a variety of research-based practices (Eckert, McIntyre, DiGennaro, Arbolino, Perry, & Begeny, 2008) and approaches (Patton & Wang, 2012) to facilitate children's adjustment to kindergarten. Particular attention has been paid to the transitions of children with special needs; the U.S. Department of Education funded the National Early Childhood Transition Center to examine factors that promote successful transitions for young children with disabilities and their families.

However, for typically developing children, there has been less research examining the practices and programs that support their kindergarten transitions. This **Topic of Interest** identifies the reports and journal articles in the *Research Connections* collection that offer research findings on the relationship of transition practices and programs to the developmental and school outcomes of typically developing children.

Kindergarten Transition Practices and Child Outcomes

The following studies examine the associations between kindergarten transition practices and children's kindergarten outcomes, based on original data or secondary analysis of large-scale



data sets--in particular the *Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K)* (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013) and the *National Center for Early Development and Learning (NCEDL) Multistate Study of Pre-Kindergarten* (Clifford et al., 2017), both of which can be found in the *Research Connections* data archive.

- LoCasale-Crouch, J., Mashburn, A. J., Downer, J. T., & Pianta, R. C. (2008). Pre-kindergarten teachers' use of transition practices and children's adjustment to kindergarten. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23(1), 124-139. [NCEDL]
- Schulting, A. B., Malone, P. S., & Dodge, K. A. (2005). The effect of school-based kindergarten transition policies and practices on child academic outcomes. *Developmental Psychology*, 41(6), 860-871. [ECLS-K]
- Wildenger, L. K., & McIntyre, L. (2012). Investigating the relation between kindergarten preparation and child socio-behavioral school outcomes. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 40(3), 169-176.

Evaluations of Programs to Support Kindergarten Transitions

The following kindergarten transition programs are those for which evaluations including child outcome measures have been conducted. The evaluation of the North Carolina Stars program is a randomized controlled trial. The evaluations of the other four programs employ a pretest-posttest design, which compares child developmental measures before and after participation in the program.

- **Kinder Camp program (Grand Rapids, Michigan)**
 - Phillips Wyatt Knowlton. (2012). *Kinder Camp evaluation summary*. Grand Rapids, MI: First Steps.
- **Rising Kindergarten program (Georgia)**
 - Early, D., LaForett, D. R., Kraus, S., & Hume, K. (2016). *Evaluation findings from Georgia's 2015 Rising Pre-Kindergarten Summer Transition Program*. Chapel Hill, NC: FPG Child Development Institute.
 - Early, D., Maxwell, K., LaForett, D. R., Kraus, S., & Hume, K. (2015). *Evaluation findings from Georgia's 2014 Rising Kindergarten and Rising Pre-Kindergarten Summer Transition Programs*. Atlanta, GA: Bright from the Start.
 - Early, D., Maxwell, K., LaForett, D. R., Pan, Y., Kraus, S., & Hume, K. (2014). *Evaluation findings from Georgia's 2013 Rising Kindergarten and Rising Pre-Kindergarten Summer Transition Programs*. Chapel Hill, NC: FPG Child Development Institute.
 - Maxwell, K., Kainz, K., Kraus, S., Hume, K., Ponder, B. D., & O'Callaghan, R. (2011). *Evaluation findings from Georgia's 2010 pre-k summer transition program*. Atlanta, GA: Bright From the Start.
 - Maxwell, K., Pan, Y., Kraus, S., Hume, K., Ponder, B. D., & O'Callaghan, R. (2012). *Evaluation findings from Georgia's 2011 pre-k summer transition program*.

- Atlanta, GA: Bright From the Start.
- Maxwell, K., Pan, Y., Kraus, S., Hume, K., Ponder, B. D., & O'Callaghan, R. (2013). *Evaluation findings from Georgia's 2012 pre-k summer transition program*. Atlanta, GA: Bright From the Start.
 - **Stars program (North Carolina)**
 - Berlin, L., Dunning, R. D., & Dodge, K. A. (2011). Enhancing the transition to kindergarten: A randomized trial to test the efficacy of the "Stars" summer kindergarten orientation program. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 26(2), 247-254.
 - **Stretch to Kindergarten (Mountain View, California)**
 - Manship, K., Madsen, S., Fain, G., & Mezzanotte, J. (2013). *Evaluation of the Stretch to Kindergarten program: 2012: Findings: Draft report*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research.
 - **Summer Bridge program (Marin County, California)**
 - First 5 Marin. (2006). *Summer Bridge: Key findings*. Marin County, CA: First 5 Marin.
 - jdcPartnerships. (2011). *Summer Bridge key findings report: Summer 2010*. San Rafael, CA: First 5 Marin.
 - jdcPartnerships. (2011). *Summer Bridge key findings report summer 2011*. San Rafael, CA: First 5 Marin.

Additional Resources

Explore recent additions to the *Research Connections* collection on the topic of transition to school.

References

- Clifford, R. M., Bryant, D., Burchinal, M., Barbarin, O., Early, D., Howes, C., & Winton, P. (2017). *National Center for Early Development and Learning Multistate Study of Pre-Kindergarten, 2001-2003*. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor].
- Eckert, T. L., McIntyre, L., DiGennaro, F. D., Arbolino, L. A., Perry, L. J., & Begeny, J. C. (2008). *Researching the transition to kindergarten for typically developing children: A literature review of current processes, practices, and programs*. In D. H. Molina (Ed.), *School psychology: 21st century issues and challenges* (pp. 235-252). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science Publishers.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2013). *Early Childhood Longitudinal Study [United States]: Kindergarten Class of 1998-1999*. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor].
- Patton, C., & Wang, J. (2012). *Ready for success: Creating collaborative and thoughtful transitions into kindergarten*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- Snyder, T. D., de Brey, C., & Dillow, S. A. (2016). *Digest of education statistics 2014*. (NCES 2016-006). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.

Prepared by: Daniel Ferguson
Last updated: October 2015

Research Connections is a partnership between the National Center for Children in Poverty at the Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, and the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research at the Institute for Social Research, the University of Michigan, supported by a grant from the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation in the Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, the Administration for Children and Families, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.