



Video and Picture Capture to Facilitate Successful Transmission of Child Information

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BACKGROUND

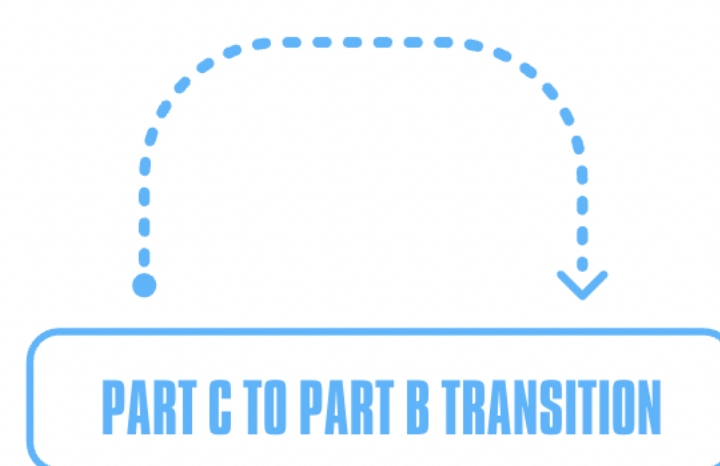
Transitions occur for children and families across their lifespan. One major transition required within IDEA is that from Part C early intervention services into Part B preschool special education services. A large component of the transition process is planning to ensure children and families feel prepared and are able to successfully adjust to the new setting (Rous, Hallam, Harbin, et al., 2007).

An inadequate transition from Part C to Part B services can lead children to experience a trial-and-error period during which the receiving provider assesses the best supports and services for the child while potentially exposing children to interventions that conflict with their prior early intervention services. Ultimately, this may lead to a regression of skills previously attained in the Part C setting. Furthermore, an unsuccessful transition can result in a child experiencing stress, anxiety, and feelings of lack of control. As a result, children's social-emotional development may be negatively affected, which may in turn impact their ability to engage in academic activities and build relationships with peers (Fabian & Dunlop, 2007).

The Council for Exceptional Children's Division for Early Childhood (2004) offers two recommendations in this regard:

- Practitioners in sending and receiving programs exchange information before, during, and after transition about practices most likely to support the child's successful adjustment and positive outcomes (TR1); and
- Practitioners in sending and receiving programs use a variety of planned and timely strategies with the child and family before, during, and after the transition to support successful adjustment and positive outcomes for both the child and the family (TR2).

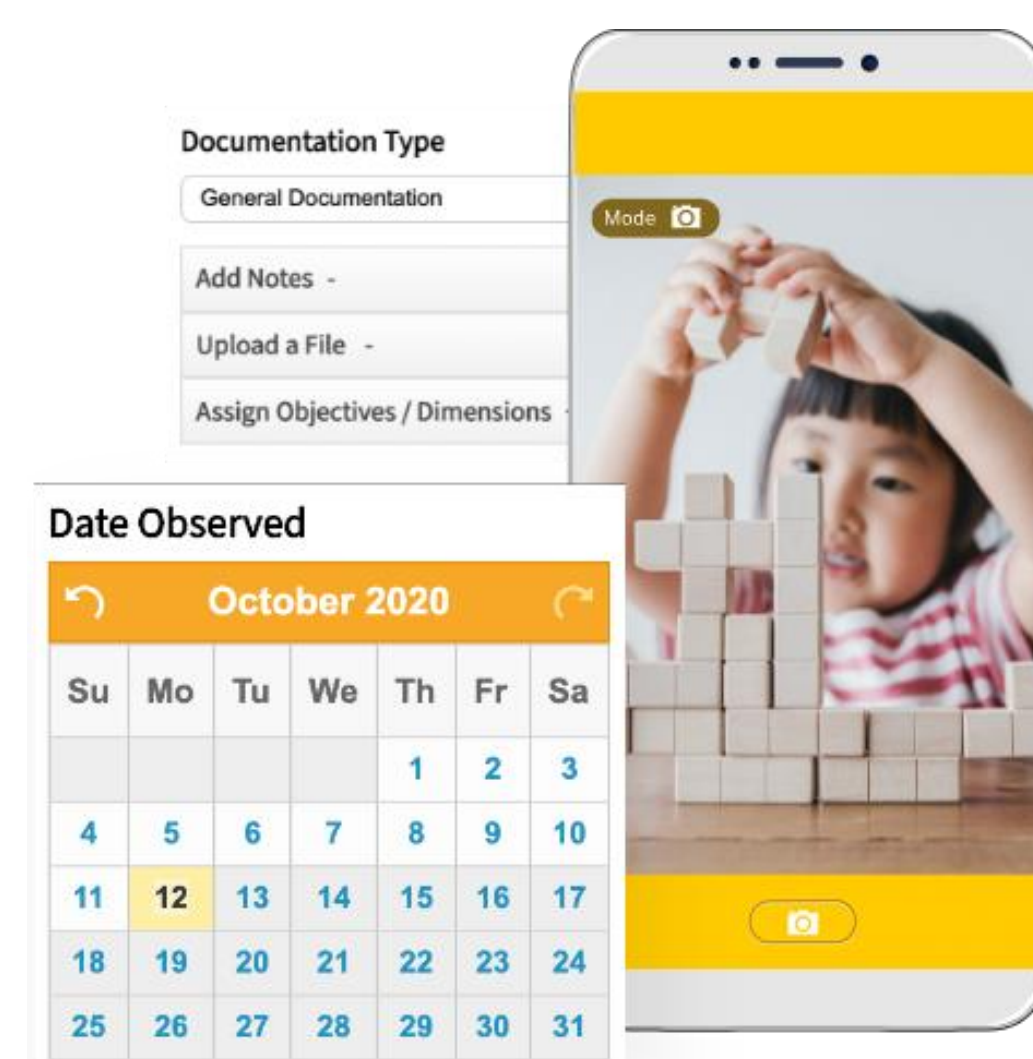
The identification of practices to support children's transitions between and among programs has become critical to support continuity of care, especially for children with or at-risk for disabilities. Thus, I was motivated to identify tools and strategies that would create a bridge between Part C early intervention and Part B preschool services and assist receiving providers in making informed decisions about intervention.



METHOD

I began with a literature review on early childhood recommended practices to learn more about areas in which there were opportunities for growth. I learned that sharing specific information about a child was a critical component in advancing child outcomes during the transition process (Rous, Myers, & Stricklin, 2007). I then examined literature on policies and practices used in transition planning and implementation; specifically related to tools and strategies to foster communication between early intervention and preschool providers, with particular interest in those that more efficiently share information related to the child's strengths, needs, preferences, and interests.

I was introduced to Teaching Strategies GOLD®, a tool with a primary intent of helping providers observe and understand child progress, plan instruction, and support child growth and development while actively engaging in capturing video and photo documentation of child learning. Notably, Delaware has invested in this tool for the preschool system. It offers the capability to share video and picture information from Part C to Part B providers, allowing receiving providers to gain insight to the whole-child during the transition process. Moreover, I examined literature on the impact the sharing of this all-encompassing video and picture information could have on family and child outcomes.



Additionally, informal expert interviews with early intervention and preschool speech-language pathologists were conducted to examine current transition policy and practices in Delaware, barriers that interfere with the collection and transmission of information across programs, and opportunities for improvement. Simultaneously, interviews with families were conducted to learn more about their experience when their child with a disability was in the process of transitioning out of Part C to Part B services. Families responded to questions regarding resources and information they received, timeliness, comfort level, and information collected on their child that was shared with the receiving provider.

FINDINGS

Video and picture capture can provide a simple, quick way for sending providers to share individualized information with receiving providers and promote more meaningful provider-provider and parent-provider communication related to the child's strengths, needs, preferences, and interests (Gauvreau, 2019). Specifically, the videos and images can inform receiving providers of the child's communication skills (all modalities) as well as prior evidence-based strategies sending providers used to support the child's learning and development (e.g., visuals), accommodations, adaptations, or modifications to the environment (e.g., communication device, classroom setup), and optimal seating and positioning for access. Video and picture information captures what children really know and can do in a naturalistic setting with distractions presumably present. Therefore, receiving providers gain information on the child's ability to generalize skills to everyday routines, which is rarely captured in assessment documentation that is based on performance during standardized conditions. This information helps to ensure that providers focus on aligning instructional practices across settings to support consistent developmental goals and outcomes identified for children (Rosenkoetter et al., 2009).

A common infrastructure for sharing information between early intervention and preschool would be immensely helpful. Teaching Strategies GOLD® is a digital tool that allows providers to capture video and photo documentation of a child's learning on an ongoing basis (Lambert, 2020). With an additional investment, early intervention providers could also gain access to GOLD® to enhance the sharing of information during the period of transition.



Families and experts alike raised concerns regarding inconsistencies in transition planning and practices across programs and districts. Families also shared that the transition process was stressful. Families had little guidance on the process itself and their input was never solicited to assist with information sharing across systems. Speech-language pathologists working in early intervention settings concluded that sharing information with preschool SLPs was challenging because the programs reside in two separate state systems with different policies, practices, and infrastructures. When introduced to collecting and sharing video and picture information, speech-language pathologists agreed this method was feasible and would be easy to implement as many already do so routinely for documentation and analysis purposes.

PRIVACY CONSIDERATIONS

Although video and picture capture provides an efficient and effective method to share information across providers, it is important to consider that sending providers must obtain a release of information from the families in order to share information with receiving providers. Confidentiality issues may arise as it is challenging to take videos and pictures that do not include any other children in a group setting. Also, not all preschool programs participate in the Delaware Stars for Early Success program which grants them access to GOLD® after meeting necessary requirements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Research is needed to investigate outcomes for children with disabilities and their families resulting from implementation of the transmission of communication skills via video and picture capture. Specifically, does this method of sharing information improve communication across providers and/or positively impact the child's adjustment to the new setting and the continuity of appropriate supports and services?

Change at the state level is seen as necessary for collaborative transition planning to be successful. Today, inconsistent child information is being shared across providers. Therefore, policymakers might consider mandating educational data systems (e.g., Teaching Strategies GOLD®) to be utilized state-wide to support consistent transmission of valuable child information across providers promoting smooth transitions for all children, families, and providers.

Furthermore, family involvement in collecting and sharing picture and video information during the transition process is recommended. The family's ability to review and reflect on their child's functional use of skills in his or her everyday environment with professionals promotes a family-centered approach and is suggested to enhance the relationship of parent and professional (Jarrett, Browne, & Wallin, 2006).

REFLECTION

Children's and families' positive transition experiences are directly related to the collection and sharing of pertinent information. It is challenging to share information about a whole-child using traditional written methods of communication; written documentation is often limited in detail and sorted by discipline. As a solution, it would be practical and efficient for sending providers to collect and share video and picture information with receiving providers displaying the child in a naturalistic environment interacting with others and working on meaningful skills; such information is not commonly gathered through standardized assessment. Video and picture capture facilitates successful transmission of information, emphasizes the child's strengths, and yields a holistic picture of the child's abilities across all disciplines.

Additionally, video and picture information facilitates interdisciplinary communication, cultivating a shared understanding of the child. The process of multiple disciplines working together helps to confirm and strengthen conclusions about the plan to further advance the child's development and learning. When receiving providers learn about the whole-child including the child's strengths, needs, and existing supports they can quickly foster child engagement and create individualized adaptations to the structure and culture of the new preschool environment.

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References available upon request.