Smooth Transitions: School Year Transitions and Preparing for Changes
Preparation Related Service Professionals and Support Staff

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Preparation for transition is critical for individuals on the spectrum. Most individuals benefit from knowing what to expect when change occurs. When transitioning from one school year to the next, it is a good idea to prepare individuals, teachers, related service professionals, and support staff prior to the transition. When students arrive on the first day, classrooms and staff should be ready to seamlessly implement and continue successful programming and strategies. This need for preparation is also necessary for similar life transitions, such as starting a new job or moving to a new community.

To prepare staff, it is important to consider how much training and experience teaching they have had with ASD and whether teams exist within your school and district to support programming. Training on autism and evidence-based practices builds a foundation of knowledge. Individual-specific information gives staff the ability to predict and respond to the needs of their new student.

- Set up a team meeting
  - Provide overview training for new staff on ASD
  - Review student strategies and IEP accommodations
  - Review medical and crisis or emergency plans – include cafeteria and other support staff in needed info (bus driver, PE teacher, etc.)
  - Establish point person and contacts (i.e. Teacher of Record)
  - Establish a regular touch point with team members (at least quarterly)
  - Clear communication method between contacts (web, email, phone)
  - Establish roles for transitioning individuals and materials
  - Include related service staff in visual schedules

- Share Individual-specific Information
  - Review All About Me or Get to Know Me Sheet to help staff get to know interests, strengths, and differences
• Share IEP-at-a-glance
• Include FBA/BIPs with staff for consistent implementation
• Include accommodations and methods of use
• Remember medical training and emergency plans
• Train staff on implementation of visuals, using actual systems
• Train staff on implementation of individualized sensory diets or activities
• Train on prompt hierarchy
• Train staff on data collection