Why Kindergarten Matters

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www.readyfreddy.org

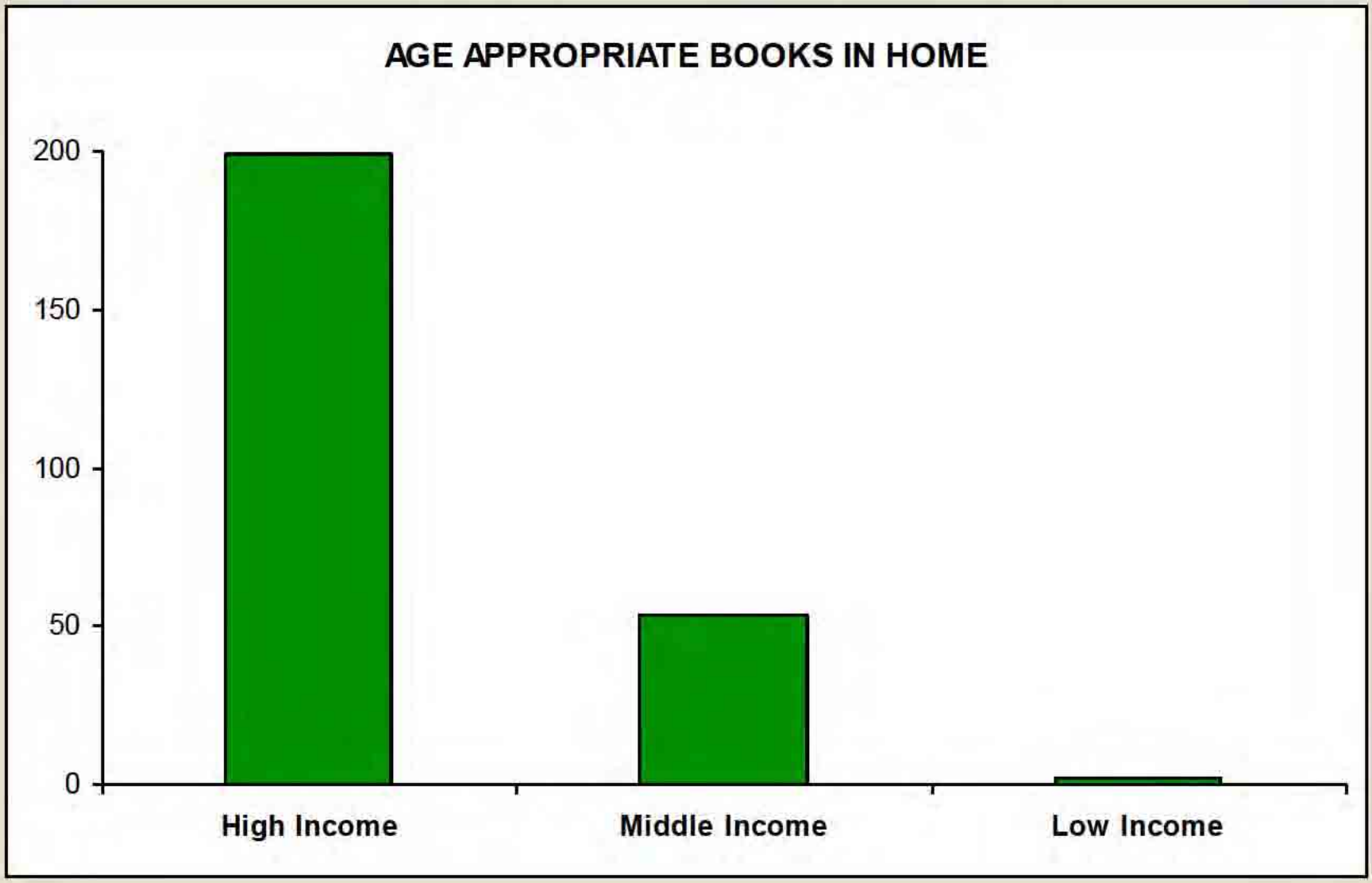
Bogs – N – Frogs

- Predicting school success
- Getting kids ready
- Transition
  - What is it and why is it so important?
  - Transition Teams
- Ready Freddy
  - Why the frog
  - Kindergarten Clubs
- Oh, Hoppy Day
  - Activities to promote healthy Kindergarten Transitions

Predicting School Success

- What ‘factors’ of a child’s early life would predict how well they do in Kindergarten?

Differences in Opportunities



Foundation for the future
High School
Middle School
Elementary School
Early Care and Education

Crumbling from beginning
High School
Middle School
Elementary School
Early Care and Education

Get Ready Freddy!

Helping parents find their role

What' a frog gotta do?

Talk, talk, talk!

Do things alone!

Notice, think, and solve!

How do you help kids learn more words?

Talk, talk, talk!

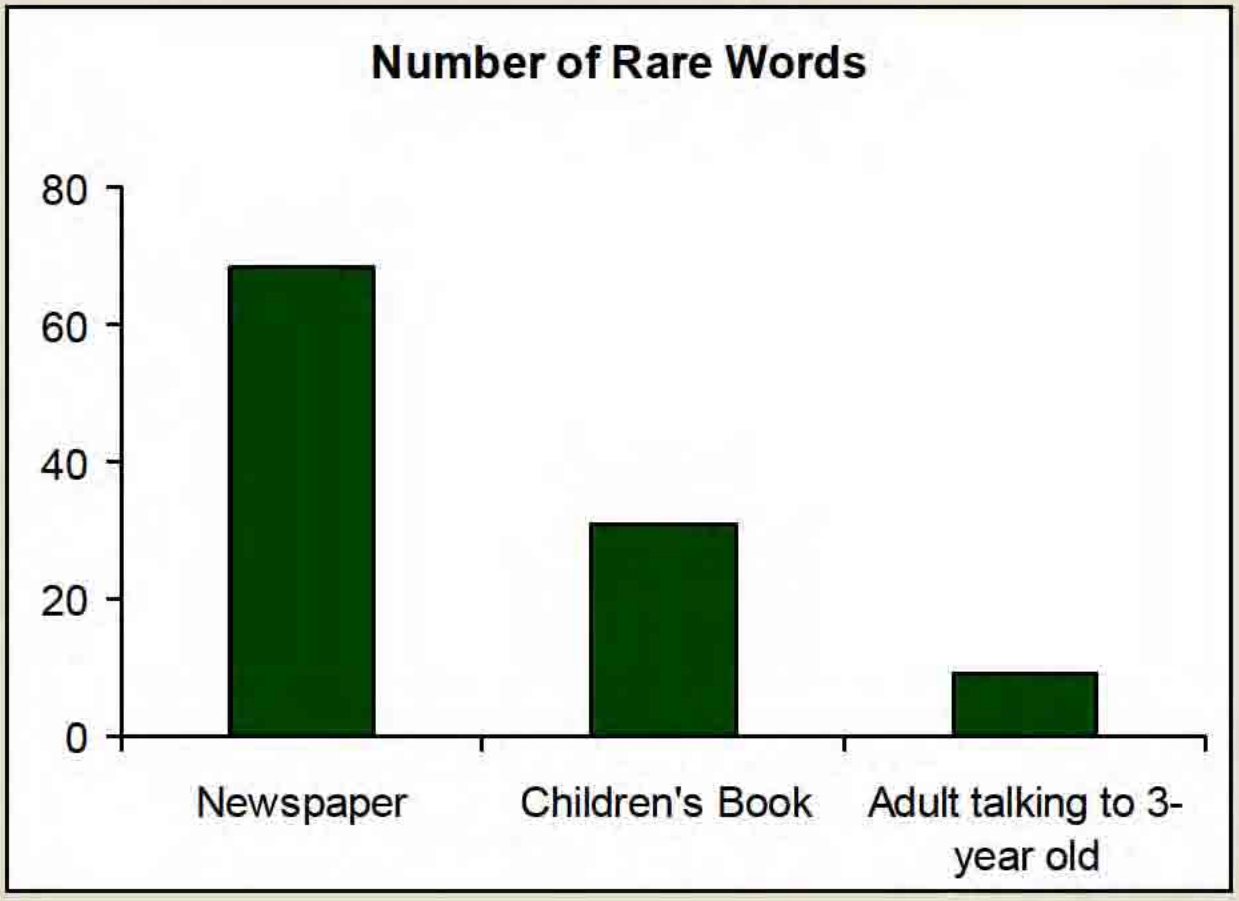
Talk, talk, talk!

- The more words a child knows at 3, the better his reading is later
- 3-year-olds whose parents went to college know more than twice as many words as other kids
- By the time they are 4, low-income kids have heard about 32 million words less than high-income kids

How else do you help kids learn more words?

Read, read, read!

Why read aloud?



How do you help kids notice, think and solve?

Respond, respond, respond!

Do things alone!

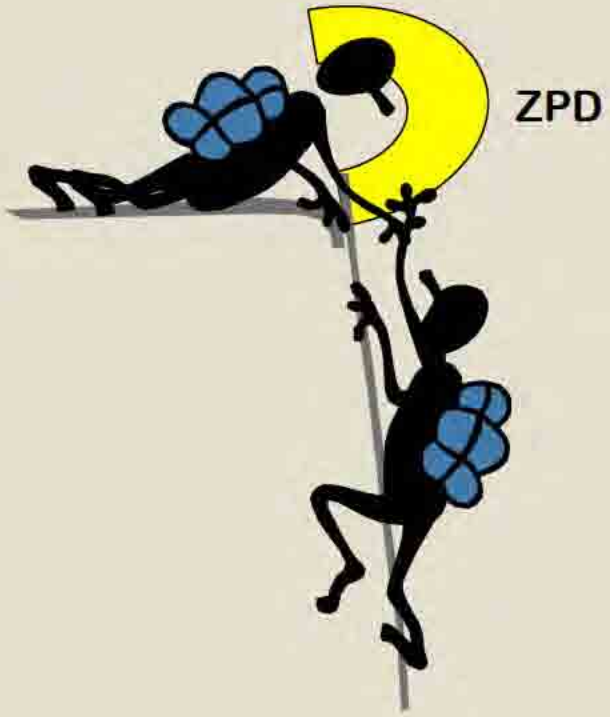
- The strange thing about independence: Children do not learn to be independent without help
- Children who have the most *responsive* parents at 2 years old, have the highest achievement scores in elementary school
- “Responsive” means to recognize needs and support learning with help

Zone of Proximal Development

Zone of proximal development

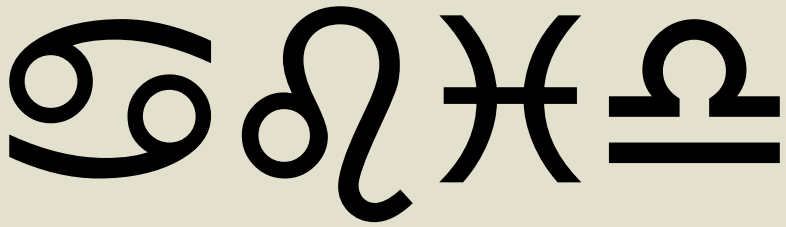
...the gap between what a child can do alone and what the child can do when helped by someone else

Too much help or too little help does NOT lead to learning!

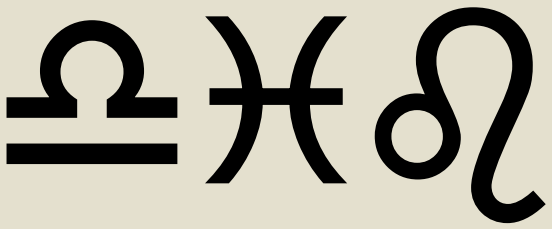


What about copying?

Write:

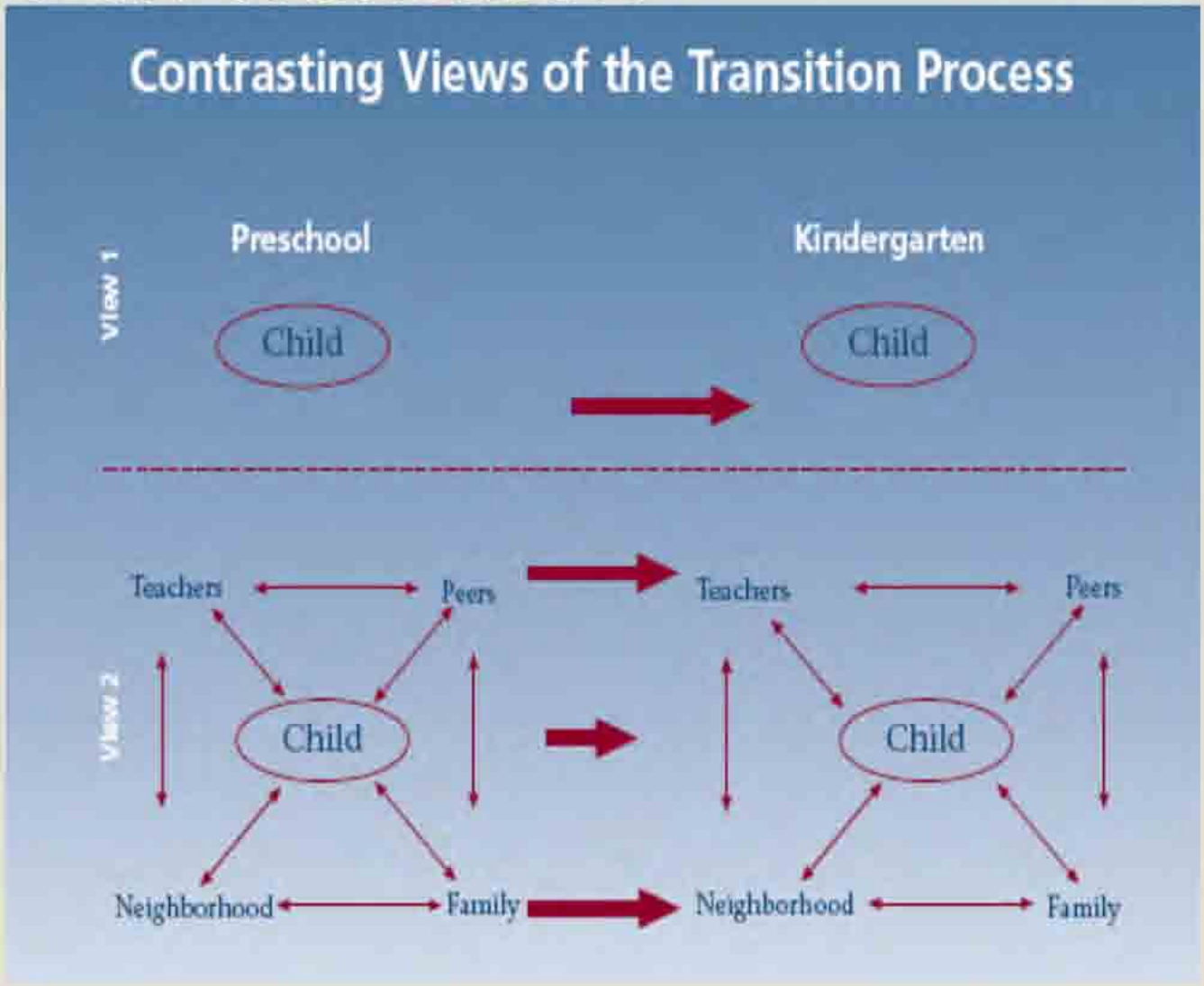


You just wrote “spot”. Now use what you learned to write “top”.



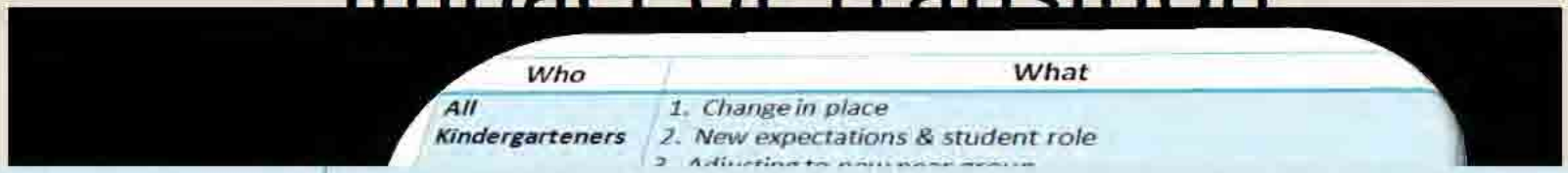
Transition
What is it and why is it so important?

Views on Transition



- National Center for Early Development and Learning

Impact of Transition



Well Transitioned and Supported **Teacher/School**	1. Increased knowledge of the children and ability to meet their individual needs 2. Increased parental and community support 3. More resources and larger network of support 4. Awareness of early childhood and family support services available in the community 5. Professionalism and pride in their efforts to reach out to young children and their families
Well Transitioned and Supported **Community**	1. Healthier children and families 2. Children and families receiving support services faster 3. Increased amount of children ready for school 4. Increased number of students completing school

Impact of Transition

Who	What
All Kindergarteners	1. Change in place 2. New expectations & student role 3. Adjusting to new peer group 4. New relationships with adults and authority figures
Well Transitioned and Supported **Kindergarteners**	1. Increased self-confidence and motivation 2. Improved relations with other children 3. Openness to new experiences 4. Early school success
Well Transitioned and Supported **Parents**	1. Increased confidence that their child will succeed 2. A sense that teachers understand their child's needs 3. A sense of pride and commitment in on-going involvement 4. Confidence in their influence on the education system
	5. Professionalism and pride in their efforts to reach out to young children and their families
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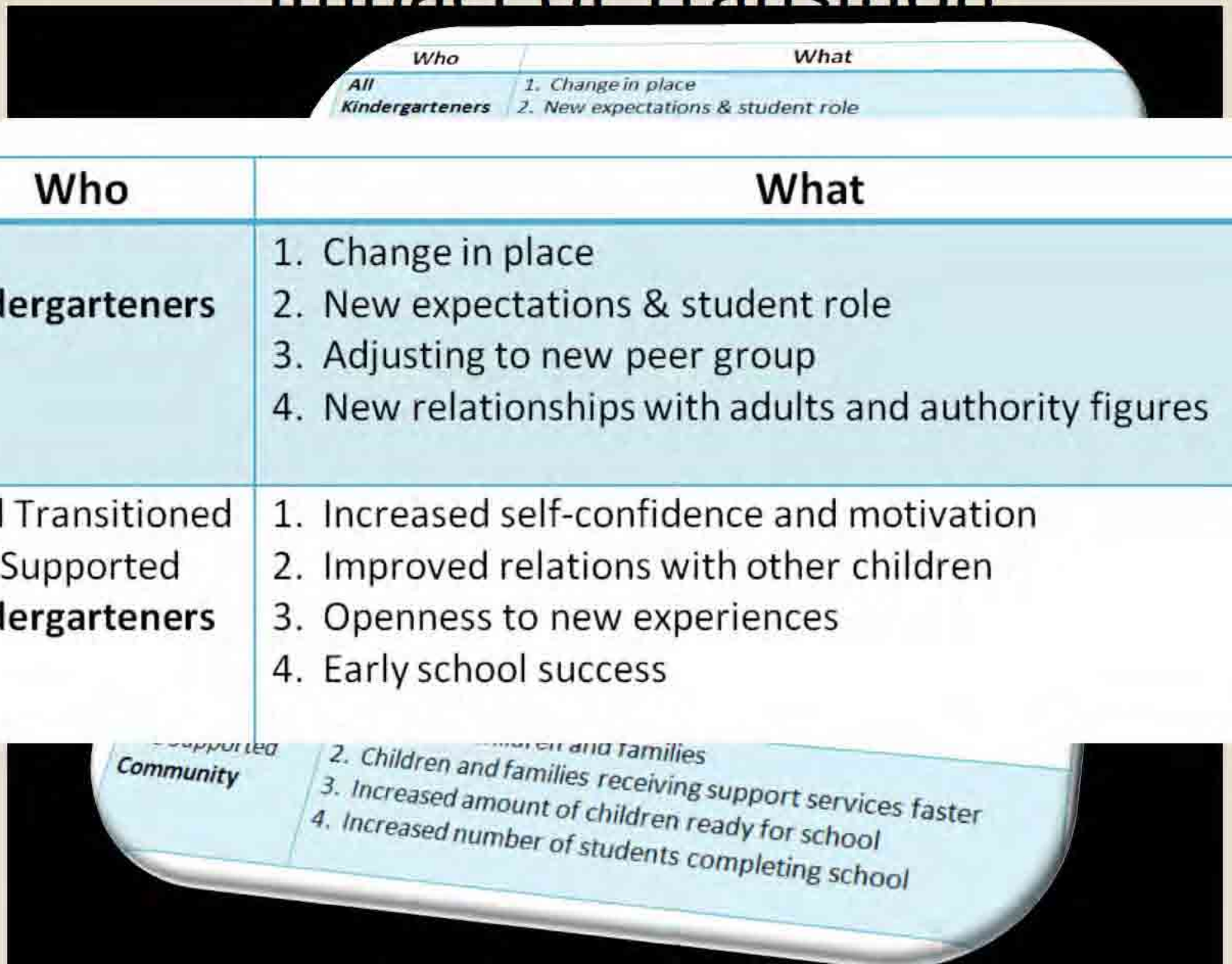
Impact of Transition



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Path to School Success

Enrollment

- Outreach
- Community Engagement

Quality Kindergarten Transition

- Relationship building
- School visits
- Prepare for new roles

Successful Start

- 1st Day Attendance
- Teacher-family partnership

Success in School

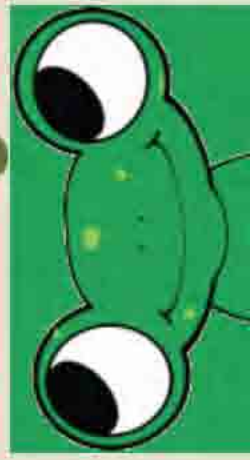
- Engaged Parents
- Ongoing attendance
- Academic Success

Let's go back further…

Factors that influence early success

- Tied to the experiences of early childhood
- Strong influence of income
- Protective factor of parent involvement

Enrollment: Did you know?



- Every year, Pittsburgh Public Schools struggles to ensure Kindergarten students are enrolled early enough to allow for transition opportunities.

School	K Enrollment (June) 2010-2011
Lowest PPS Schools	< 30 %
District Average	49 %
Intervention Schools	65 %

Enrollment: Lessons learned

- Be visible
- Be strategic
- Be concrete
- Be welcoming
- Be simple

Quality Transition: Did you Know?

- Nationally, teachers report that 48% of children beginning kindergarten struggle with the transition to school.

- 95% of the nation's kindergarten teachers endorsed the most frequently reported transition practice—talking with the child's parent **after** school starts.

Additional Problem Statements

- Nationally
  - Only 14 states mandate Kindergarten attendance
- Locally (Pittsburgh)
  - As many as 50% of entering Kindergarten students had not attended preschool
  - As few as 25% of Kindergarten students are enrolled and attend the first day of school
  - School is NOT mandated until age 8

Quality Transition

- Kindergarten transition is a <u>series</u> of events and interactions that foster ***relationships*** between rising kindergarten ***families*** and school personnel while promoting comfort in the facility and reducing anxieties for ***all***.

Successful Start: Did you know?

- Being present the first day seems to matter
  - Children who were **PRESENT** on the first day of Kindergarten missed an average of **9 days** of Kindergarten
  - Children who were **ABSENT** on the first day of Kindergarten missed an average of **18 days** of Kindergarten
    - PPS School A 2009-2010

Success in School: Did you know?

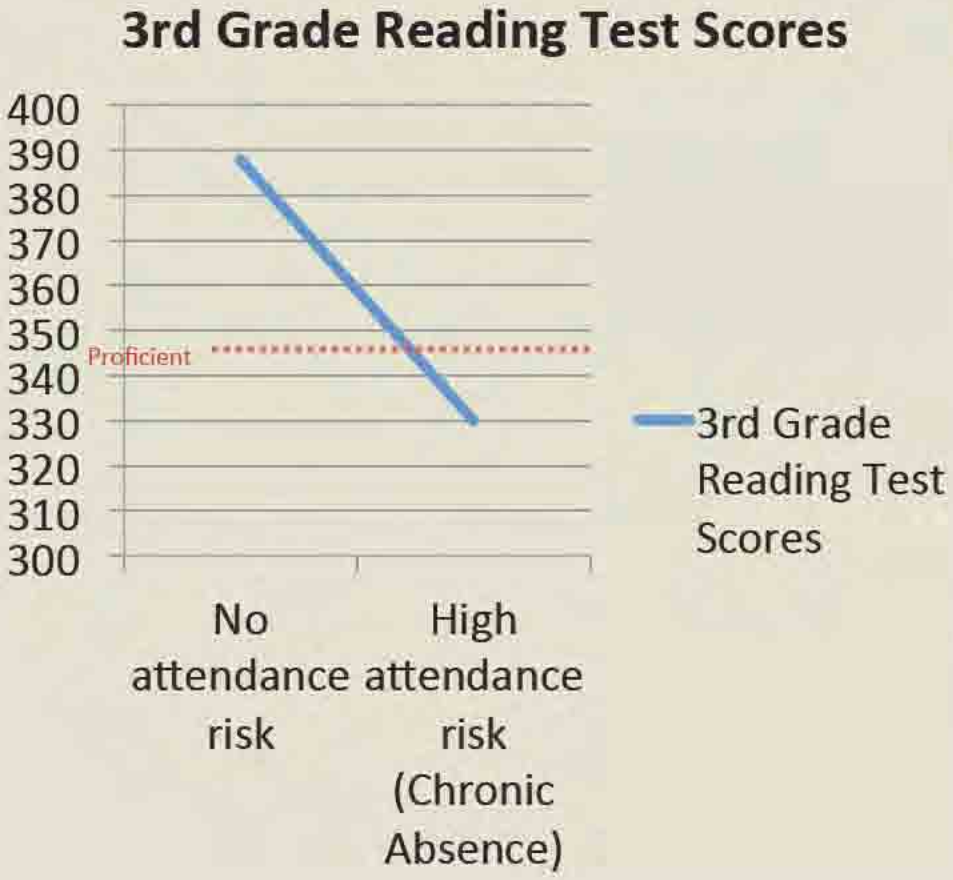
- Nationally every year, 1 in 10 kindergarten students misses a month of school
- In low income areas this ratio of chronic absence is 1 in 4
- Of those chronically absent in Kindergarten, only 17% are reading at grade level in the 3rd grade.

- www.attendanceworks.org

Longitudinally, kindergarten attendance is one of the strongest early predictors of high school drop out

Use it or Lose it

- Even the most "ready" children drop below proficiency by 3rd grade if they fail to attend in Kindergarten



* Applied Survey Research (2010)

Closing the achievement gap

"For low-income children, every month of additional schooling [Kindergarten] closes one-tenth of the gap between them and more advantaged students."

SAM WANG and SANDRA AAMODT

Why a frog???

Ready Freddy
Kindergarten Club
A Parent-Child Kindergarten Transit
Pittsburgh Fort Pitt PreK - 5
Kindergarten
(412) 665-2020
School
ted by Katie Fustich
ACRES
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL

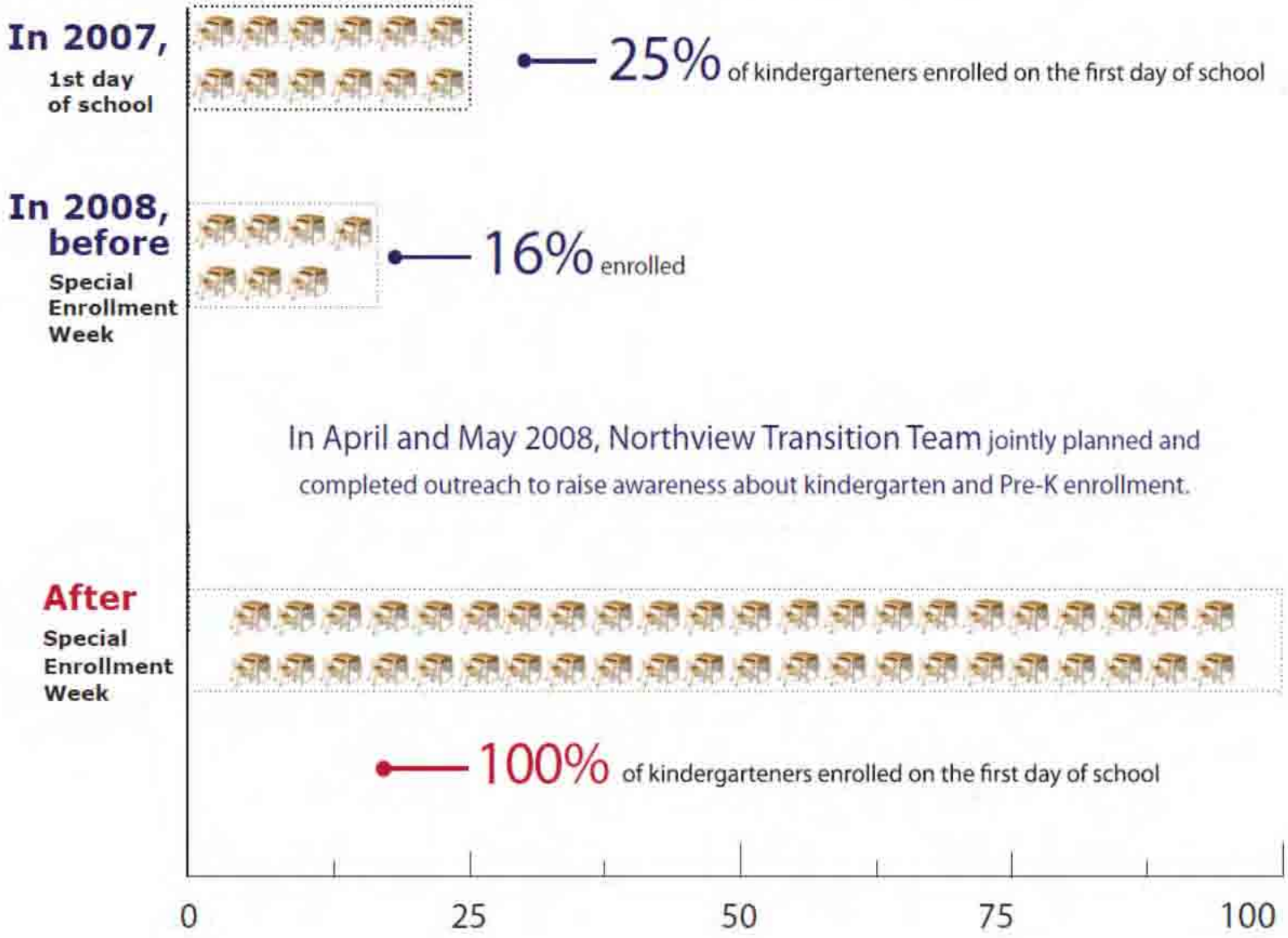
Spread the word through print

- ***Displayed giant banner announcing the week***
- ***Developed posters and flyers that were displayed in businesses and community agencies***
- ***Had flyers put on every pizza box delivered by one local pizza shop***

And prepared for Welcome

- ***New Welcome Signs***
- ***Frog "footprints" directing to the office***

School-Community-Parent Partnership Helped Increase School Enrollment at Northview ALA



What is K-Club

- ***6 Sessions*** *(x2 hours)*
  - Parent & Child
  - Parent role
  - Build supports
  - Child group experience
  - Literacy
  - Homework
- Relationship development

Curriculum at a Glance

Session	1	2	3	4	5	6
Theme/Concept	**Get Ready Freddy**	**Setting & Achieving Goals**	**Sharing & Friendship**	**Reading & Writing**	**Numbers**	**Freddy's Ready**
Introduction (15 Minutes)	*Ready Freddy* Book →					
	Importance of Transition Each child is unique, parent knows best	Working together to accomplish goals	Importance of socio-emotional dev.	More than ABCs Importance of Oral Language	More than counting	You're off! Thinking about learning
Parent-Child Activity (30 Minutes)	My Self-Portrait	"Frogs on a Log" Cooking Activity	Partner Art	Little Story Tellers	Number Card Games	"My School" Junk Sculptures
Parent Activity (30 Minutes)	Parent Icebreaker * ABC's of my child	Parent Icebreaker * School Readiness Checklist * Family Ready Checklist	Parent Icebreaker *My School Success Supports Sharing and Caring	Parent Icebreaker Letter Guessing Game Writing Tips	Parent Icebreaker I'm Thinking of a Number Game Math is All Around Us	Goal Setting Questions & Answers
Child Activity (30 Minutes)	"Freddy" Frog Toss with names Frog Colors Guessing Game Five Little Frogs Wide Mouth Frog	Frog Chant Where's my lilly pad? Lilly pad Hop Frog Colors Guessing Game Five green and speckled frogs	Who made the frog jump off of the lily pad? Frog Chant Frisky Frogs Lily Pad Hop Five green and speckled frogs	"Freddy" Frog Toss with letters Wide Mouth Frog Five Little Frogs How do you spell "frog"? Original Song: "A Frog Song"	Who made the frog jump off of the lilly pad? Frisky Frogs Where's my lilly pad? Five green and speckled frogs How many frogs?	Frog Chant Five green and speckled frogs How do you spell "hop", "pad", and "bug"? Wide Mouth Frog Original Song: "Freddy Goes to School"
Ready Readers Read (15 Minutes)	*Finklehopper Frog* by Irene Livingston	*A Frog Thing* by Eric Drachman	*It's Mine! by Leo Lionni*	*Tuesday* by David Weisner	*Frog in the Bog* by Karma	*Miss Mingo and The First Day of School* by Jamie Harper
Take Home Activity	What kind of frog are you?	Look at all I can do!	Playground Trip	Imagine!	Number-Board Game	School Scavenger Hunt

Curriculum at a Glance

Session
Theme/Conce
Introductio (15 Minutes
Parent-Chil Activity (30 Minutes)
Parent Activi (30 Minutes
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Ready Reade Read (15 Minu
Take Home Act

- **Introduction**
  - Explain the focus of the session to parents and children
- **Parent-Child Activity**
  - Encourage quality parent-child interactions and model activities that promote school readiness
- **Parent Activity**
  - Provide parents with the information they need to support children's transition to kindergarten, lay the foundation for continued involvement, and academic success
- **Child Activity**
  - Expose children to the kinds of experiences and expectations they'll encounter in kindergarten
- **Read Aloud**
  - Demonstrate how to promote children's love for books, content knowledge and vocabulary through stories
- **Take Home Activity**
  - Encourage parents to continue and practice what was discussed at home

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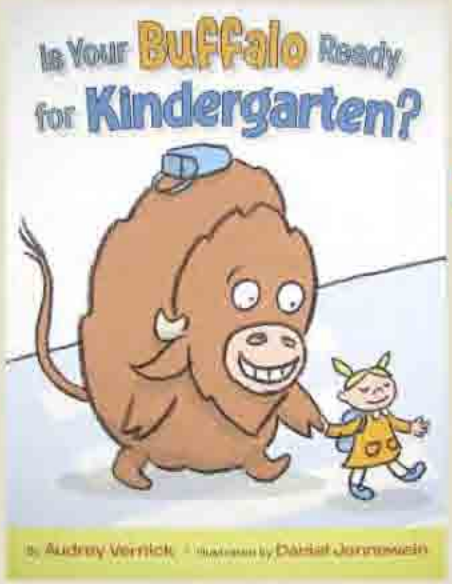
- **Purpose** of the session or activity and points to get across to parents and children

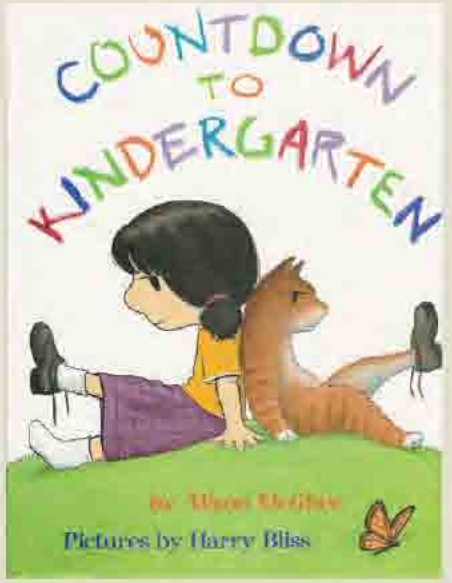
- **Questions and comments** that can help prompt parents' and children's thinking

- **Skills, attitudes, and knowledge** that the activity helps to strengthen

- **Materials** to gather and the basic procedure for the activity

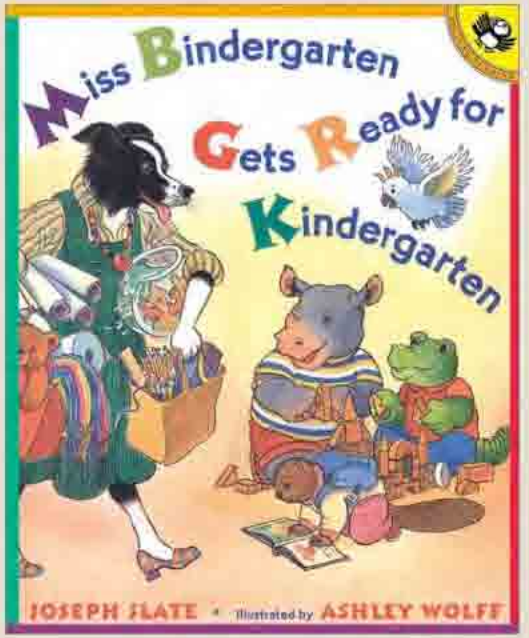
What is K-Roundup





Single Event (3 options)

- 1-1.5 Hours
- Highlighting kindergarten book
- Family activities
- Intro to homework
- Includes recruitment materials and thank you notes



First impressions: Changing critical encounters

Oh, Hoppy Day!!

Activities to promote healthy Kindergarten Transitions

Common Transition Activities

- Letter from teacher
- Tour of school
- Meet the teacher
- Meet the principal
- Tour classroom
- Kindergarten breakfast
- Summer Program

Less Common Transition Activities

- Letter from child to teacher
- Teacher home visits
- Community outreach (round up days)
- Invite ECE parents to PTO
- “All about me” books
- Newspaper listings of new K kids
- Community-wide Health-Screening/ Service Fair
- Student-to-student events

Other Creative Ideas

- Pen pals with Kindergarten class
- Transition folders on each child given to Kindergarten staff
- Parent Support/Transition Groups
- Create story/book about new school that parents can read with children
- Transition/Kindergarten book club
- Dramatic play activities/art projects to allow kids to explore feelings

Resources

- Strategies, tools, and national literature

- Samples of curricula

- Videos of events and parent voice

- Materials for families

KEEPING IN TOUCH

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