



Indiana Transition Initiative for Young Children and Families

The Value of Transition Local Learning Opportunities

Why have Transition Local Learning Opportunities?

Local Learning Opportunities provide families and the professional partners who serve them to look and prepare for transition from a “big picture view”. They are able to hear directly about transition options in their community, and consider how best to plan for and prepare for their child’s transition

What do families get from Local Learning Opportunities that they don’t get from a transition meeting?

Families are able to hear from a wide variety of information from a wide variety of sources, often expanding their understating of the options and possibilities for their child’s transition. Families are able to ask questions and hear multiple answers. Often families remark that one of the biggest values is hearing the questions and experiences of others. Knowing that other families are experiencing similar situations and learning about and from each other experiences provides a great deal of support and encouragement during what can be an unfamiliar experience.

If only small numbers of families attend is it worth the effort?

It is remarkable to note the ripple effect of Local Learning Opportunities. Families who attend often share information with others; be it a neighbor, relative, friend, support group or internet listserve. Sometimes this impact is immediate and still other times you are planting seeds of information that will be shared months or even years from now.

How can we get more attendance?

Having all members of the teams who support families share the value of and invitation to attend Local Learning Opportunities greatly increases the likely hood a family will attend. Information about and invitations to local learning event should be shared with ALL ongoing providers in your area, families within 18 months of transition, existing support groups and parent networks and other community partners.

Establishing a pattern by which you are committed to holding events allows for their attendance to grow, this may seem counter intuitive because by definition families are only in First Steps for a limit time but, making Local Learning Opportunities a part of your yearly culture allows all partners to promote and support families in attending.

Seek, times and locations that work for families. Partnering with libraries and/or existing support groups can increase attendance as they allow events to take place where families already visit. And don’t forget childcare, soliciting ongoing providers to volunteer to provide child care at events not only allows families without childcare option to attend it increase the likely hood that families on a providers care load will attend.

Where can we find more information?

Indiana Transition Initiative for Young Children and Families compiled samples of materials and suggestions of activities to do at such events. You can find these and many other resources to support your efforts at our website www.indianatransition.org. Additionally, our staff would be happy to assist you as you seek to bring a Transition Local Learning Opportunity to your community, don’t hesitate to contact us.