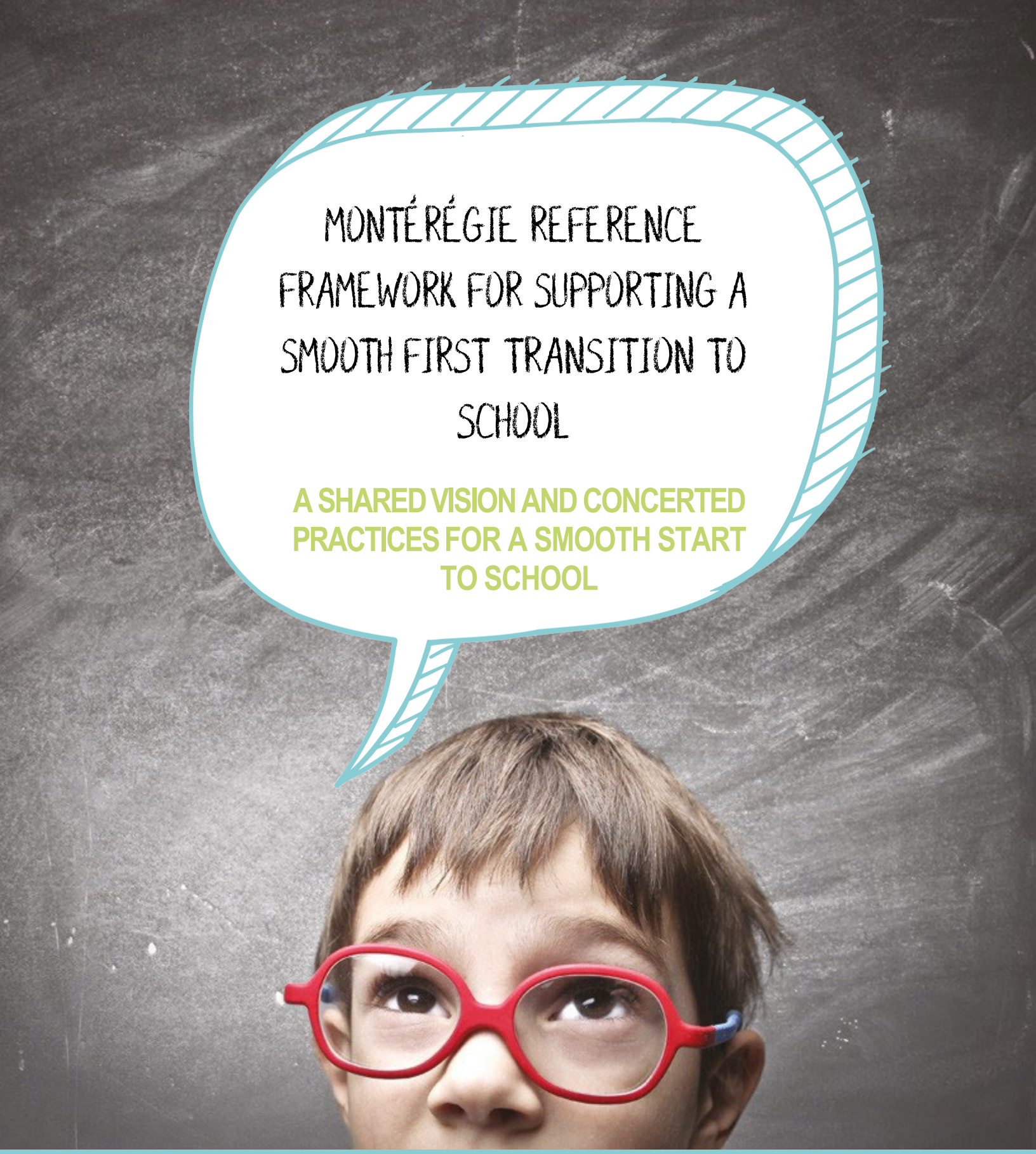
MONTÉRÉGIE REFERENCE FRAMEWORK FOR SUPPORTING A SMOOTH FIRST TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

A SHARED VISION AND CONCERTED PRACTICES FOR A SMOOTH START TO SCHOOL



REVISED VERSION: 2022

OPÉRATION COLIBRI
COOPÉRATIVE RÉGIONALE DE DÉVELOPPEMENT PROFESSIONNEL MONTÉRÉGIE - ESTRIE
AVENIR D'ENFANTS DES COMMUNAUTÉS ENGAGÉES
Québec

Project carried out by: the Comité régional Opération Colibri (CROC) and the Coopérative régionale de développement pédagogique (CRDP) - Table des services éducatifs de la Montérégie

Produced by: Groupe de travail régional en transition scolaire (GTR-TS)
- Amélie Laroche, Project Manager, Comité régional Opération Colibri
- Julie Bickerstaff, Coordination Support Officer, Comité régional Opération Colibri

With the financial support of: Avenir d'Enfants
Research: Carmen Schaefer, Malorie Toussaint-Lachance, Amélie Laroche
Writing: Amélie Laroche
Editirial support: Nadir Oliveira Dias
Work supervision: Julie Bickerstaff
Linguistic revision and page layout: Manon Lévesque
Graphic design: Marie-Andrée Bricault, Pascale Migneault, Patrick Charpentier, Martine Langis

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the members of the GTR-TS who contributed to the development of this Reference Framework:
- France Brousseau, Pivot Worker, École en santé, CISSS de la Montérégie-Centre
- Sonia Corriveau, Contributor, Maison de la famille La Parentr'aide
- Dominique Fontaine, Director, Maison de la famille Valoise
- Élodie Gaucher, Director, CPE Les Lutins
- Chantal Hamel, Preschool Education Advisor, Service Passe-Partout, CSS du Val-des-Cerfs
- Brigitte Harton, Psychoeducator, CSS de la Vallée-des-Tisserands
- Isabelle Lavigne, Director, CPE au Pied de l'Échelle
- Sylvie Melsbach, Partnership and Playground Support, RCPEM
- Isabelle Papineau, Head of Programs 0–5 years and 6–17 years, CISSS de la Montérégie-Ouest
- Maggie St-Georges, Support and Regional Liaison Officer, Avenir d'enfants
- Malorie T.-Lachance, Planning, Programming and Research Officer, Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie (Montérégie Public Health Directorate)

The contributing members who participated in the consultation phase:
- Brigitte Campbell, Preschool Teacher, École de la Passerelle (CSS des Patriotes)
- Sylvie Bazinet, Coordinator of the Passe-Partout Program (CSS de Saint-Hyacinthe)
- Stéphanie Dubois, Principal, École Notre-Dame (CSS de Saint-Hyacinthe)
- Annie Bélisle, Educational Consultant in Preschool Education (CSS du Val-des-Cerfs)
- Danièle Girard, Vice-Principal, École de la Chantignole (CSS du Val-des-Cerfs)

We would also like to thank Stéphanie Desmarais and Catherine Benoît, Assistant Directors of the educational resources department in 2018 and 2022 respectively (CSS Marie-Victorin), and Alain Tardif, Assistant Director of Educational Services for Youth (CSS Val-des-Cerfs), for having co-managed the project and served as the link with the Table des services éducatifs de la Montérégie.

We would also like to extend a special thank you to Carmen Schaefer (Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie) for knowledge brokering, and Judith Archambault (Public Health Resident, Université de Sherbrooke) for carrying out the needs assessment, which formed the foundation of the working group's efforts.

Reproduction or downloading is authorized, without modifications of any kind, for personal or public use, for non-commercial purposes, with source attribution: GROUPE DE TRAVAIL RÉGIONAL EN TRANSITION SCOLAIRE. (2022). Cadre de référence montérégien pour soutenir une première transition harmonieuse vers l'école — Une vision partagée et des pratiques concertées pour une entrée scolaire de qualité (unofficial translation: Montérégie Reference Framework to Support a Smooth First Transition to School — A Shared Vision and Concerted Practices for a Quality School Entry) Longueuil, Montérégie Public Health Directorate, 36 p.

This document is available in electronic format on :

- Public Health Extranet, Comité régional Opération Colibri page, Section 8 · Products and Tools http://extranet.santemonteregie.qc.ca/sante-publique/promotion-prevention/petite-enfance/comite-reg-colibri.fr.html
- The Carrefour pédagogique Montérégie-Estrie, "Agir tôt" section · First School Transition http://carrefourmonteregie.ca/agir-tot-11/premiere-transition-scolaire-81

Legal Deposit – 4th Quarter 2022
Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec, 2022
Library and Archives Canada, 2022
ISBN 978-2-550-93042-6 (PDF Version)

In this document, masculine or feminine pronouns are used without any intended discrimination and solely for the purpose of simplifying the text.

Table of contents

1 Preamble 5
1.1 Why a Montérégie Reference Framework? 5
1.2 How was this Reference Framework developed? 6
1.3 Who is this Reference Framework intended for? 7
1.4 Principles 8
1.5 Objective 8
2 School transition foundations 9
2.1 The first school transition 9
2.2 Theoretical model 11
2.3 Conceptual framework of a smooth transition 12
3 Foundations of the Montérégie Reference Framework 14
3.1 Findings and issues 14
3.2 Guidelines 15
4 Foundations for guiding action 20
4.1 Intersectoral cooperation 20
4.2 Transition plan 22
4.3 Adjustment of practices 23
4.4 Promising practices 27
4.5 Conditions for success 31
4.6. Challenges and obstacles 32
4.7. Recommendations 33
Conclusion 34
NOTES AND REFERENCES 36

List of figures

FIGURE 1 - CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK 13
FIGURE 2 – KEY ELEMENTS FOR ACTION IN A TRANSITION 20
FIGURE 3-GOVERNANCE OF CONSULTATION IN A SCHOOL TRANSITION 22
FIGURE 4 – DETERMINING FACTORS 24
FIGURE 5 – INDICATORS 25

List of acronyms

AE	Avenir d'enfants
CISSS	Centre intégré de santé et de services sociaux (Integrated health and social services centre)
CPE	Centre de la petite enfance (early childhood centre)
CRDP	Coopérative régionale de développement pédagogique
CROC	Comité regional Opération Colibri
CSS	School Service Center
DRMF	Regional Directorate of the Ministère de la Famille
DSPu	Direction de santé publique (public health directorate)
GTR-TS	Groupe de travail regional sur la transition scolaire (regional working group on school transition)
MELS	Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport
MFA	Ministère de la Famille et des Ainés
MSSS	Ministère de la Santé et des Service sociaux
OCF	Organismes communautaires Famille
PI-PSII	Intervention Plan – Individualized and Intersectoral Service Plan
RCPEM	Regroupement des centres de la petite enfance de la Montérégie
TSEM	Table des services éducatifs de la Montérégie (Montérégie educational services)

Preamble

1.1 Why a Montérégie Reference Framework?

Throughout Québec, many efforts have been made in recent years to promote coordination and collaboration among the various groups involved in the first school transition. In Montérégie, several coordinating bodies have been promoting different practices to support this stage in the lives of children and their parents for a number of years now.

Certain concerns were raised during discussions leading up to the development of the strategic plan for the Comité régional Opération Colibri (CROC), a regional consultation body for early childhood in the Montérégie region. On that occasion, regional partners, incuding the Direction de santé publique (DSPu) de la Montérégie, the Direction régionale du Ministère de la Famille (DRMF), the Regroupement des centres de la petite enfance de la Montérégie (RCPEM), the three Centres intégrés de la Santé et des Services sociaux (CISSS), the school services centres (CSS) and Avenir d'enfants (AE), as well as local stakeholders in the Montérégie region, identified various issues, including the following: **although school transition collaboration practices exist in certain communities, continuity of interventions during the transition to school is far from guaranteed and needs to be improved.**

In order to translate this challenge into action, in its 2016-2017 action plan, the CROC set itself the objective, among others, of identifying and disseminating promising and effective collaboration practices that promote greater complementarity between the resources of the school network and those of social and health services, community services, and educational childcare services. With this in mind, various activities were carried out, including a consultation with the authors of the *Guide pour soutenir une première transition scolaire de qualité* (Guide to supporting a quality first transition to school)[2], the development of a portrait of actions supported by local early childhood consultation groups on the transition to school, and a needs assessment[3] conducted among 75 respondents in the Montérégie region: 17 local early childhood consultation tables (online survey), 5 CSS (semi-structured interviews) and 53 early childhood centers (CPE) (online survey). This guide highlighted that, in terms of the first transition to school:

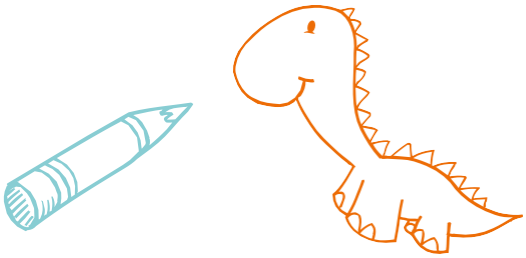
- Although there is a shared desire for better collaboration between networks to ensure a smooth start to school, this varies greatly from one community to another.
- Knowledge about best practices and effective approaches still needs to be developed.
- The roles of the various partners need to be defined and recognized in order to improve the complementarity of interventions.
- Awareness and recognition of the various partners must be promoted.
- Identifying a local governance model that facilitates continuity of school transition interventions and can be adapted to the characteristics of each community would be useful for communities.

In addition, the stakeholder consultation process confirmed that support for the CROC was desired and revealed a consensus on the need for regional action with a view to :

- Disseminating and promoting the best strategies
- Facilitating local-regional alignment;
- Promoting the development of dedicated forums for school transition at the local level.

At the same time, the Table des services éducatifs de la Montérégie (TSEM), a member of the Coopérative régionale de développement pédagogique (CRDP), has also identified the first school transition as a regional priority for action, based on the needs analysis conducted annually in each of the SSCs.

This shared challenge led to the creation of a partnership that developed a regional project aimed at laying the foundations for local-regional consultation on school transition by proposing tools that will help strengthen networking and establish conditions to support the school environment and its intersectoral partners in early childhood in implementing strategies to promote a smooth first school transition.



1.2 How was this Reference Framework developed?

In order to carry out the work, local and regional cross-sectoral partners were mobilized within a regional working group on school transition (GTR-TS)[4] whose mandate is to achieve the following objectives:

- Foster a shared vision of a smooth and successful transition to school;
- Clarify and communicate the roles of the various stakeholders involved;
- Support the implementation of effective interventions related to promising practices;
- Foster a positive and consistent narrative around school entry;
- Identify and share inspiring courses of action ;
- Promote alignment and continuity between the different networks;
- Strengthen collaboration and coordination at both local and broader levels in connection with the first school transition.

Prior to the work of the GTR-TS, a knowledge brokerage exercise was carried out by the DSPu of Montérégie in order to identify best practices in school transition. The reference document *Transitional Interventions Toward Kindergarten: Compliance with Promising Practices* (Schaefer, 2018, unpublished document) therefore guided and informed the work undertaken by the GTR-TS.

Drawing on this literature review of best practices, as well as work conducted across Québec, the GTR-TS developed this *Reference Framework* to support local stakeholders in implementing interventions that promote a high-quality first school transition based on best practices and evidence. The framework aims to establish a common language among stakeholders in the school system, early childhood education and care services, family community organizations, municipalities, and social and health services. In doing so, it seeks to better **support parents and their children** in the process of entering school and to help families successfully experience this first school transition.[5]

Finally, as a complement to the Reference Framework, **a toolkit** has been developed to explore certain topics in greater depth and to provide concrete strategies and means for putting into practice the concepts presented in the Reference Framework.

These include memory aids and tools to support reflection and decision-making regarding key moments in the transition period (e.g., registration, welcoming, gradual entry, etc.), group formation, collaboration and communication with families, as well as tools to help parents support their child's transition to kindergarten. The toolkit also contains a placemat for children, a process to guide the development of a transition plan within the different settings involved, and examples of interventions carried out in Montérégie and elsewhere in Québec. By clicking on the toolbox image in the text, you can access the complementary documents that are available.

1.3 Who is this Reference Framework intended for?

There are numerous programs, activity collections, and tools developed by local and regional consultative bodies throughout Quebec. **The purpose of this Reference Framework is not to replace these existing documents and projects, but rather to provide guidelines and benchmarks for implementing practices that promote a high-quality initial transition or for reviewing the approaches taken and tools used.** This document is therefore intended to serve as a reference tool presenting the foundations, parameters, and promising practices in school transition, in order to ensure a common vision shared by the communities concerned and complementarity of the roles of the various stakeholders. Although it is not desirable for everyone to adhere to a single model of school transition practices, certain common guidelines will promote the effectiveness of interventions[6].This Reference Framework is therefore primarily intended for the following stakeholders.

Educational environments

CSS

- School service center managers
- Development officers for the first transition
- Preschool education advisors
- Preschool education advisors (Passe-Partout program)

Schools

- Preschool elementary administration
- Preschool teachers
- Professionals (special education teachers, psychoeducators, ect.)
- School daycare supervisors and teachers

- Other stakeholders, professionals, or administrators from the school or CSS with a mandate related to the first school transition.

Educational childcare settings

- Managers
- Educators
- Educational advisors
- Special education teachers
- Supervisors of home-based daycare services

Health and social services environments

- Public health managers and professionals - Child and youth population
- Managers and professionals in the disability programs department
- Healthy School Program Managers
- Managers and professionals in youth program management – Early childhood and/or youth services
- Community organizers responsible for early childhood issues

Community environments

- Managers and practitioners in family community organizations
- Managers and practitioners in family community organizations

Municipal environments

- Family policy officers
- Social development manager
- Recreational activity and day camp managers

It is also intended for any partner involved in the first school transition who wishes to participate in local, supra-local, or regional consultation on the subject. Although parents, their role, and their needs are central to this Reference Framework, it is not addressed to them. Other communication tools specifically designed for parents already exist, and some are included in the toolbox.

Finally, this Reference Framework has been developed based on a population-based approach. It is therefore designed to offer an approach that is suitable for all parents and children, with the need, however, to vary the intensity of interventions according to the needs of the family, in line with the principles of proportionate universalism[7]. **In fact, it is important to remain vigilant, as it is recognized that the most vulnerable children are the least likely to benefit from interventions related to school transition, even though they are the ones who would benefit the most.** Therefore, in order to meet the needs of children living in vulnerable situations or with special needs, it is essential to make the necessary adjustments in terms of methods and intensity, as well as to reduce or eliminate barriers to access that prevent families with greater needs from utilizing interventions. **Given that studies recognize that these children are more sensitive to the negative consequences of a poorly managed transition, it is all the more important to focus on this issue in order to reduce educational inequalities.** Special support for children and parents, as well numerous and personalized transitional interventions, can help give every child entering school an equal chance of educational success. In this sense, the planning and implementation of school transition interventions should be considered not only for the purposes of academic and educational success but also to reduce socioeconomic inequalities.[8,9]

1.4 Principles

This Reference Framework is also based on the principles presented in the *Guide pour soutenir une première transition scolaire de qualité*[2] (Guide to Support a Quality First School Transition) whose content was developed jointly by the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS), the Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés (MFA), and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) du Québec :

Principle 1
Recognition of the **primary role of parents** as the primary guardians of their children's education;

Principle 2
Sharing responsibility for the quality of the transition among stakeholders involved in collaborative practices;

Principle 3
The ongoing **planning, organizing and evaluation** of transitional activities;

Principle 4
Recognition of time and implementation of the necessary resources;

Principle 5
Involving everyone who knows the child and **tailoring** transitional practices;

Principle 6
The **acknowledgement that starting school is crucial** to a child's development.

1.5 Objective

The purpose of this initiative and the creation of this Reference Framework is to **promote and support the implementation of an intersectoral action plan for the first school transition in each school service center territory, in consultation with all relevant partners and tailored to the needs of the community and families. This is so that each organization concerned (e.g., schools, SGÉE, etc.) is able to ensure the well-being of children and their parents in the transition process to kindergarten, through a harmonious and high-quality first school transition.**

School transition foundations

2.1 The first school transition

An important milestone in the life of a child and their family, the first school transition refers to starting school. An issue of growing concern to those working directly or indirectly to ensure children's educational success, starting preschool at age 4 or 5 is the first in a long series of school transitions and plays a decisive role in a child's development, as it marks their official entry into the school system, where they will spend several years. This transition also marks the beginning of the relationship that develops between the child, their family, and the educational institution.[10]

"Children experience a significant transition when they move from their family environment or educational daycare to the larger, more institutional, and more 'standardized' environment of school."[11] In fact, the first transition to school presents several challenges, because whether the child has attended daycare or spent their early childhood at home, they and their family will have to adapt to several significant changes: a new physical environment, new classmates, new adult authority figures, new rules, new expected behaviors, new skills to develop, etc. Consequently, this is a major milestone that marks the end of early childhood and brings with it a physical separation between parents and children, a major step in the child's process of autonomy and individualization, which involves a degree of grief for the parents and requires a great deal of adaptation on their part.

These significant changes can present opportunities for growth, but they can also involve a number of difficulties. This stage therefore requires significant adaptation and can be a major source of stress for both children and parents: "In general, the term transition refers to the tension between change and stability, to adapting to new challenges while maintaining tried and tested ways of doing things (Rimm-Kaufman et Pianta, 2000). Drawing on various researchers, Ruel defines transitions as a process accompanied by transformations or disruptions in practices, relationships, or representations of individuals (Ruel, 2009, p. 20). "Every transition is marked by discontinuity between the previous situation and the new situation.[11]"

In this sense, the *Guide pour soutenir une première transition scolaire de qualité*[2] defines the school transition as the period that allows children to gradually adjust to their new physical, social, and human environment. It refers to a long-term process that is not limited to the days before and after starting kindergarten. Some authors even estimate that it lasts up to two years and encompasses the year before and the year after starting kindergarten (Ruel, 2009). Furthermore, it should not be forgotten that **kindergarten itself is a period of transition between early childhood and compulsory schooling**.[11] Thus, as soon as the first transition to school is complete, a new transition process will begin, which will also require a great deal of adaptability.

The first transition to school is all the more important because it **has been shown that experiences during this period can positively or negatively influence a child's attitude toward school.** "Indeed, according to Rimm-Kaufman and Pianta (2000), the transition to school is a period of vulnerability during which small changes can have a disproportionately large effect on the rest of a child's schooling. During this transition, the attitudes, skills, and behaviors that are formed influence the child's development and educational success (Jacques and Deslandes, 2004)[11]." Thus, the importance of the first school transition is significant, since the impacts, whether positive or negative, are major for the child's development and the rest of their school career.

Indeed, **a difficult transition, i.e., a transition that leads to adjustment problems for the child and their family, can undermine the child's achievements and contribute to the development of academic and behavioral difficulties**, which is a risk factor for dropping out of school, in addition to harming the child's well-being and mental health. Conversely, if it is handled well, **the first transition will have a real impact on the child's motivation and commitment to school**, and will therefore, by extension, have an impact on perseverance and academic success. Furthermore, the first school transition is not only associated with present and future academic success, but also serves as a foundation for future transitions: the child and their family will feel more capable of succeeding in other transitions, as they will have already acquired the necessary skills and developed their ability to adapt.[2]

In most cases, the transition to school goes fairly smoothly. However, it is estimated that between 8% and 21% of children experience difficulties adapting when they start school. Furthermore, Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2000) mention that, according to teachers' perceptions, approximately 48% of children show difficulties adapting when they start school.[12]

When a child has difficulty adapting, signs of stress, anxiety, and even distress may be observed. Here are a few examples:

- Sleep problems (fatigue);
- The child cries regularly;
- The child isolates themselves and withdraws;
- Aggressive behavior and behavioral problems appear;
- Loss of skills or regression;
- Decreased self-confidence and self-esteem.

These signs may not appear at the beginning of the school year, as some children tend to internalize their emotions. But sooner or later, if the child is going through a difficult transition, some of these signs will appear.

It is important to note that the transition can be difficult not only for children, but also for parents, teachers, and other people in the child's life. These difficulties in adapting will also have consequences for the child, such as:

- Difficulties in guiding and supporting the child;
- Stress or anxiety that may be transferred to the child;
- Difficulties building relationships (parent-teacher/teacher-student);
- Difficulties in classroom management.

Certain factors may increase a child's risk of experiencing a difficult transition:

- Coming from a socioeconomically disadvantaged family;
- Coming from a family that has recently immigrated or whose mother tongue is not English;
- Being under the age of 5 years and 9 months;
- Being male;
- Having special needs or a disability;
- Having a physical or mental health problem;
- Having a parent with a physical or mental health problem;
- Having experienced several stressful life events;
- Growing up in a lower-quality environment.

We talk about a **high-quality** transition when children, parents, and the various stakeholders involved in the transition are equipped, supported, and feel capable of navigating this **stage harmoniously**. Beyond the child's adjustment to their new environments, we are talking here about the **mutual adjustment** of the child's different living environments in order to promote **their success and well-being** from the very beginning of their schooling. In order for the transition to be as harmonious as possible, the child, their family, the school (including the school daycare service), and the community must therefore **interact and adapt to each other** in order to mitigate the effect of the various factors of discontinuity related to attending this new living environment that is school[12].

As such, in order to promote a smooth transition for the child and their parents, the various people involved in the child's life must implement and participate in **various practices** aimed at providing the child and their family with **reference points that will serve as anchors** during the transition, with the goal of promoting a **sense of continuity.**

A smooth transition will enable the child to[2]:

- Feel a sense of well-being and security in their new school environment;
- Develop positive attitudes and emotions towards school and learning;
- Develop a sense of confidence in their academic success.

A smooth transition also ensures that the child experiences :

- Continuity in the educational experience, supporting the pursuit of their optimal development;
- Recognition of their abilities;
- The development of positive social relationships with staff and other children.

2.2 Theoretical model

Thus, contrary to what is sometimes believed, successful transition to school does not depend solely on the child's level of development of various skills and their degree of readiness to learn. In fact, skills acquired before starting kindergarten account for less than 25% of the variance in kindergarten academic performance[12]. **The level of development of these skills cannot, therefore, alone influence the success or failure of the first school transition.** The approach focused on preparing children for learning is therefore limited by the fact that it does not recognize the influence of contextual factors, whose contribution to a successful transition is considered to be equally important[8]. **In order to explain a child's adaptation to kindergarten and school daycare, it is therefore also important to consider two other dimensions:**

- **The dynamic component**, which corresponds to the changes experienced during the transition period by all stakeholders (parents, teachers, etc.);
- **The ecological component**, which refers to the various environments (family, childcare, school, community, etc.) in which the child grows up, as well as the different people involved in the child's life (parents, teachers, educators, etc.

Therefore, according to the dynamic and ecological approach adopted for this work, a smooth transition will depend on three main factors:

- **The child's ability to adapt**, which depends on several factors and is prepared well before they start school, including promoting the development of social, behavioral, and cognitive skills;
- **The involvement of parents and their ability to support their child,** which depends on several factors, some of which we can influence and some of which we cannot, such as the characteristics of the family environment, parenting skills, the quality of the parent-child relationship, and their beliefs and perceptions about their role;
- **The ability of different environments to meet the needs of the child, their parents, and the various stakeholders**, which depends on collaboration between the various stakeholders to identify and implement transitional interventions that promote mutual adaptation with a view to continuity.

The smooth transition to school therefore depends not only on the child's ability to adapt to their new environment, but above all on the ability of the various environments to meet the needs of the children, their families, and other stakeholders[30]. **The various stakeholders must therefore work together to promote a smooth transition that takes into account the needs of children and parents**.

While successful school entry depends on these three main factors, it is important to be cautious with the first one, which relates more to the child's overall development than to preparation for the first school transition. Furthermore, it is essential to distinguish between the concepts of preparation for the transition to school and preparation for school: "We define transition to school initiatives as those that **seek to create links between different actors or to intensify certain interventions with the child and his or her family during the months preceding kindergarten enrollment until those following the start of the school year**.[6]" Whereas school readiness often refers more to the overall development of the child, "a comprehensive process involving the development [of the child] in different interrelated areas (motor, social, emotional, cognitive, language) and which is chiefly the result of the child's interactions with their environment.[6]"

In connection with this work, we are therefore dealing solely with the concept of transition to school and not with preparation for school. The interventions presented here are designed to **influence the adaptability of different living environments and their ability to meet the needs of children and their parents in a process of continuity**, rather than to prepare children for school or learning by promoting the development of their skills and abilities, a **process that must be initiated well before the child enters school and in close collaboration with the family environment, with a view to the child's overall and optimal development rather than the acquisition of academic skills.**

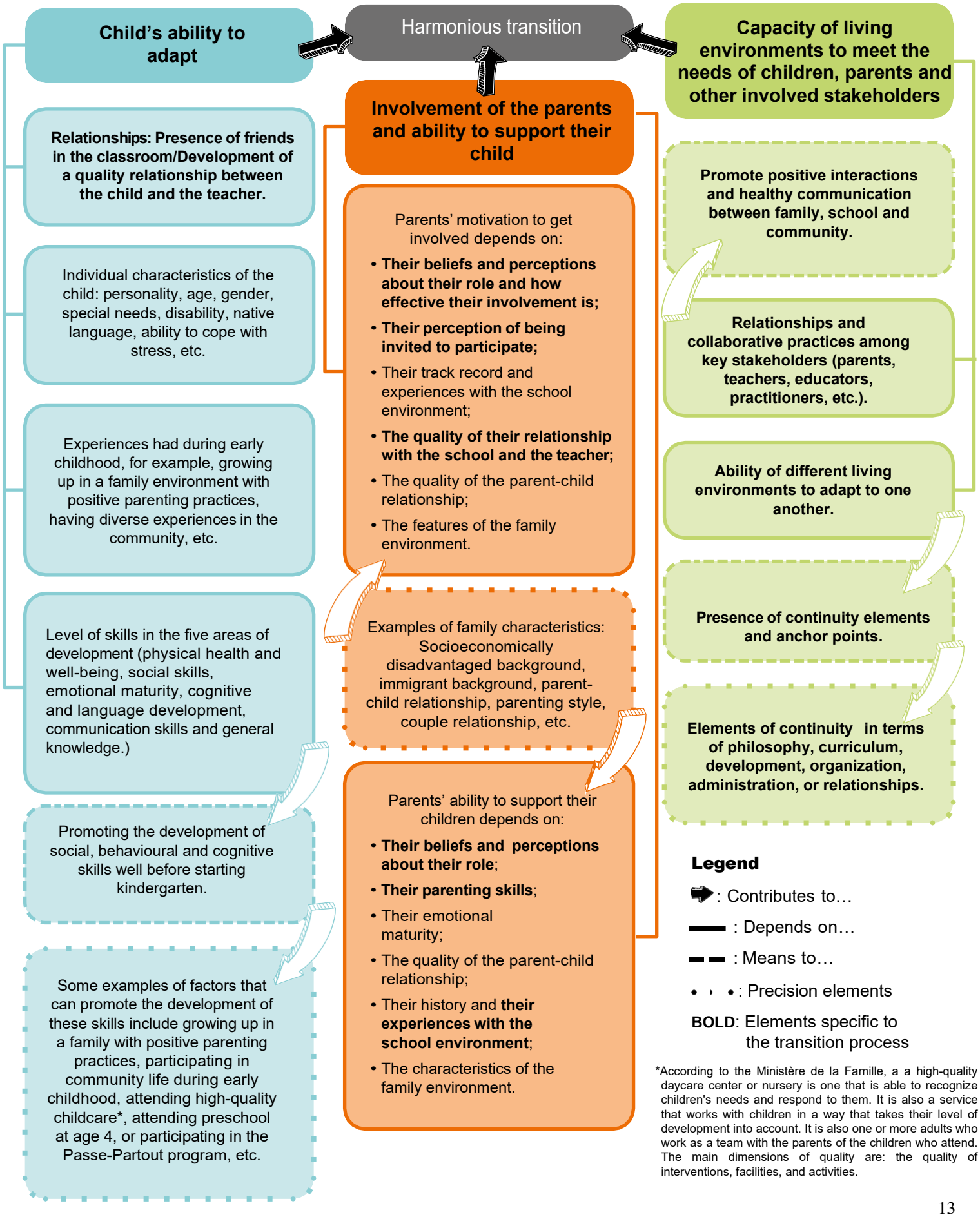
In this sense, according to the dynamic and ecological approach adopted for the development of this Montérégie Reference Framework, the first school transition is defined as follows:

"The period before, during, and after starting school, during which the child, their family, the school, and the community interact and adapt to each other in order to establish factors of continuity that mitigate the effects of the changes experienced, with the aim of contributing to the child's educational success and well-being from the moment they start school."

2.3 Conceptual framework of a smooth transition

The theoretical model presented above, the various concepts outlined in the literature review conducted by the Montégérie DSPu, and the contributions of GTR-TS members have enabled the development of the following conceptual diagram to visualize the factors influencing the first school transition and contributing to its quality.

FIGURE 1 - CONCEPTUAL DIAGRAM



*According to the Ministère de la Famille, a a high-quality daycare center or nursery is one that is able to recognize children's needs and respond to them. It is also a service that works with children in a way that takes their level of development into account. It is also one or more adults who work as a team with the parents of the children who attend. The main dimensions of quality are: the quality of interventions, facilities, and activities.

Foundations of the Montérégie Reference Framework

3.1 Findings and Issues

Following the needs assessment, literature review, and committee work, the following findings were issued by the GTR-TS:

- **Even under the best conditions**, starting school **remains a stressful event** for many children and parents;
- Throughout Montérégie and Québec, there are **several practices and tools** related to the transition to school, but their use **varies greatly**;
- School transition practices are **not often concerted or aligned between different environments and stakeholders** (schools, educational daycare services, community organizations, social and health services, etc.);
- **Few transition practices involve school daycare**, even though this is an equally important adjustment for children and parents;
- **Since most school transition interventions are carried out in educational childcare services**, more specifically in CPEs, these practices do not reach all children affected by the transition to school, nor the majority of the most vulnerable children;
- Practices in transition between educational childcare services and school **have a limited impact** since they generally take place in collaboration with the nearby school, whereas **not all children** in educational childcare services **will actually attend that school**;
- **Several** communication practices and tools exist between early childhood education services, the health and social services network, and schools, but their objectives, use, and effectiveness vary, and **few of them have been evaluated**;
- Since interventions are often **not coordinated within the territory** of a CSS, **it is difficult to adequately meet the needs** of the various partners and to **combine practices**, both for educational childcare services and family community organizations, as well as for schools;
- It is difficult to reach the **most vulnerable** children and families (those from disadvantaged backgrounds or immigrant families), and the transitional practices designed to reach them **do not meet their needs.**
- **The Passe-Partout Program** offers several transitional interventions based on promising practices; however, **only 16% of children in the Montérégie region participate in them**, and the program may be modified following its evaluation, which will be available shortly.[14]

These various findings have resulted in six issues concerning practices surrounding the first school transition to ne identified:

- Reaching all children: not only those who attend subsidized educational childcare services, but also those who attend private childcare services, whether subsidized or not, those who attend family childcare services, and those who do not attend any childcare services;
- Make room for parents by placing them at the center of the process concerning their child, valuing their role, and reinforcing their sense of competence;
- Reach out to children and families who are more vulnerable to experiencing a difficult first transition to school and adapt practices to their needs.
- Distinguish between the concepts of school readiness and transition to school.
- Develop and structure collaborative practices that will align interventions.
- Plan, implement, and evaluate interventions in line with promising practices and optimal implementation conditions.

3.2 Guidelines

Based on these observations and challenges, the Montérégie partners who collaborated on the development of this Reference Framework identified eight guidelines for laying the foundations for a smooth initial school transition. These guidelines are at the heart of this Reference Framework:

1) Recognize that the **child** *is central to the school transition and respect their* **uniqueness**, *their* **stage of développement** *et ses* **besoins**.

Reminiscent of one of the basic principles of Quebec's Early Childhood Education Program, this precept should not end when children transition from educational daycare to school. Equally valid for children of all ages, recognizing and respecting each child's individuality will help them adapt to their environment. "Regular communication with parents and daily observation of children are key tools for getting to know each child's unique qualities. Individualized gestures also enliven the special emotional relationship that children develop with the adults who care for them. By gaining a good understanding of each child, recognizing their strengths and unique characteristics, and respecting their pace, adults can support them more effectively.[15]"

Furthermore, the Conseil québécois de l'éducation (2012) (Quebec education council) states that: "The environment must meet children's needs for attachment and stimulation. The role of the adults around them is, in particular, to offer them emotional security, to present them with challenges that are appropriate to their abilities and interests, and to guide them in their learning.[11]"

Finally, this principle is also reflected in Quebec's preschool education program, which mentions the need to take into account the specific characteristics of each child: "Children arrive at school with their own baggage, reflecting their personal and family history as well as their sociocultural background. This must be taken into account and their strengths in each area of development must be built upon[10]." It also mentions that these specific characteristics of each child must be reflected in the daily activities offered to them, i.e., "in accordance with their level of understanding, needs, interests, and culture [...] so that they can develop skills and learn within their zone of proximal development, i.e., between their current level of development (what they are capable of doing on their own) and their potential level of development (what they are capable of accomplishing with the help of more skilled peers or an adult). In this way, potential difficulties are prevented and the child is able to experience success.[10] "

Respecting each child's uniqueness, stage of development, and needs helps create a safe, caring, and inclusive environment, as recommended by Quebec's preschool education training program. "Providing a caring environment means being concerned about the well-being, safety, and health of each child. It means viewing them without judgment, being attentive to their needs, and believing in them and their ability to learn. families to feel accepted and respected. It recognizes that before they start school, children already have their own cultural repertoire of experiences, skills, and knowledge."[10]

2) Take into account the transition that is also being experienced by **the parent** *and* **implement strategies** *to reduce stress factors as much as possible and promote the family's well-being.*

According to studies, "Children are more sensitive than adults to stress caused by changes in their lives. This is partly because their brains are still developing and they have difficulty imagining upcoming events in advance. To describe the elements that cause stress, studies use the French acronym "CINE", which stands for Control, Unpredictability, Novelty, and Ego (or self-esteem) Threat. Starting kindergarten is an event that contains all the ingredients of this recipe for stress[21]! Considering the negative impacts of stress on well-being and learning, it is therefore essential to limit stress and respond to children's developmental needs during periods of transition: the need for security, connectedness, self-esteem, etc. (Chouinard, 2009).[11]

As the primary people responsible for their child's education, parents are the ones best placed to support and guide them through this important stage. However, in order for parents to do so effectively, the right conditions must be in place.

They must have access to information, know what to expect, and feel reassured themselves. **The quality of the transition process experienced by parents will inevitably influence the quality of the transition process experienced by their children.**

According to Rosenkoetter and Rosenkoetter (1993), “Starting school is not only an experience for children—it also marks an important milestone for parents and other family members. It has a significant impact on family routines and relationships[16].” **It is therefore essential to recognize that parents have their own needs that must be met in order for the transition to be a smooth one for the family.**

Indeed, as Cormier (2003) points out, "In the transition from home to school, parents are not only a potential source of support; they have their own needs. They, too, must cope with a new experience, changes in their physical and relational environments, rules, and a different way of functioning than what they knew when their child was in daycare. Relationships with teachers are not daily; they are more distant. Some parents complain that they don't know what their children are doing during the day. In many cases, teachers only contact parents when there is a problem. The lack of opportunities to talk to the teacher in the first few weeks after the start of classes and the difficulty in reaching them when needed are obstacles to a smooth transition. Contact is more frequent between parents and school daycare educators, if the child attends, but they are unaware of what is happening in the classroom[16]. In this sense, researcher Julie Ruel, associate professor in the Department of Education Sciences at the Université du Québec en Outaouais, who participated in the evaluation of the Guide pour soutenir une première transition de qualité (Guide to Supporting a Quality First Transition), uses the term “emotional weaning” to describe this experience of parents in her presentation on March 1, 2018: *Starting kindergarten: a transition that needs to be planned!*

Accordingly, the better equipped parents are to navigate this transition positively, the better they will be able to support their children. "Studies indicate that when parents and children know what to expect, children adapt more easily to school and both parents and children experience less anxiety. Including parents in the process of planning for school entry helps to build links between the home and the education system[16]." It is therefore important to **put in place transitional interventions that aim to make the transition to school smoother for parents as well, so that they feel that their family and their child are ready for the first day of school.** “A respectful and empathetic attitude toward parents and an ability to recognize their skills and those of their child are essential on the part of school staff. Establishing personalized relationships, communicating regularly, and highlighting the child's successes rather than only contacting families when things go wrong helps to build trust[11].” In addition, the school must be open to families so that they feel welcome. A warm welcome from all school staff will put parents and children at ease and create a positive bond that will benefit the child's entire school career. “The factors for success in the school-family relationship during the transition would be a warm welcome from teachers, more opportunities to meet and build trust, messages expressing that parental involvement is desired and valued, and the communication of relevant information (Deslandes et Jacques, 2004).[11]”

However, care should be taken with communications sent to parents: quantity does not necessarily equate to quality. Many parents report difficulties in understanding the various information they receive from the school. The language used is sometimes difficult to understand, even for highly educated parents. The content communicated does not necessarily correspond to what parents would like to have access to, or it does not reach them at the right time or in the best way. Add to this the barrier of language or poor reading skills, and the information provided by the school can quickly become completely inaccessible to parents. In terms of communication with parents, schools should therefore pay particular attention to carefully planning the messages to be conveyed: which ones, when, and how.

3) Consider that the transition also occurs within the framework **of school childcare services** *and plan* **transitional interventions** *to this effect.*

Most kindergarten children also attend school daycare, whether in the morning, at lunchtime, or in the evening, and often for all three periods of the day. Most kindergarten children spend almost as much time there as they do in class. The transition they experience there is therefore just as important. However, it has been observed that transitional interventions for school daycare are almost non-existent. Yet, in addition to requiring a transition period for mutual adaptation between children, parents, and daycare educators, daycare also represents an excellent opportunity for transitional interventions. "School daycare services receive students outside of school hours: in the morning, at lunchtime, and at the end of the day. Since children spend many hours there, it is an ideal place to facilitate the transition to school, especially at the beginning of the school year, during the gradual entry period. Daycare services offer educational services in an intensive socialization setting. [...] Several settings add resources in the form of special education technicians, who play an important role in implementing techniques to ensure a smooth transition from early childhood to school life. Schools in which information is exchanged through multidisciplinary teams achieve better integration of students into school life.[17]"

4) Consider that **teachers** *are also going through a period of transition and plan interventions that will enable them* **to be actively involved in the process**.

Like parents and children, teachers are also going through a period of transition, during which they must get to know their new students and their parents, as well as adjust to a new group dynamic. And just as the quality of the transition experienced by the parent influences that of their child, the transition as experienced by the teacher also has an impact on how the children in her class will experience their transition to school. Supporting the teacher's transition process therefore means working to ensure a smoother s beneficial impact because18: "Meaningful transition practices implemented by the teacher, as well as the teacher's attitudes toward academic and social demands, are factors that can influence student adjustment" (Alexander and Entwisle. (1988); LoCasale-Crouch et al. (2008); Pianta, (1997)). In addition, studies show that: "The number of transition practices implemented by preschool teachers can influence students' socio-academic adjustment, as a greater number of transition practices implemented at the beginning of preschool is associated with better results at the end of the year."

On the other hand, the **quality of the relationship that the child develops with their teacher contributes to better social and academic adaptation, both in the short and long term**: "While studies show that children from disadvantaged backgrounds adapt less well to school than others, positive relationships with the teacher can act as a protective factor (Burchinal et al., cited in Tobbell and O'Donnell, 2005). Furthermore, when these relationships are positive despite the child's behavioral problems, the risk of these problems persisting is lower. Conversely, negative relationships between the kindergarten teacher and the child could have a long-term influence on the child's academic and behavioural outcomes (Hamre et Pianta, 2001).[11]

5) Make the **school environment the anchor point** *for promoting intersectoral cooperation around the first school transition, with a view to* **complementarity, continuity and openness to the community**.

As mentioned above, transition is a long-term process that can take up to two years, and preschool itself is a period of transition between early childhood and formal schooling. Thus: "**The school transition should not involve a change in the educational approach for children aged 0 to 5. It should be based on an approach of overall child development rather than early schooling.**[17]"

In order to promote educational continuity, consultation between all stakeholders involved with the child from each of their living environments is necessary. In this sense, given that regardless of their early childhood experiences, school is the place where all children converge when they enter kindergarten, it should **serve as an anchor point to ensure coordination between all stakeholders and environments involved in the transition to school.** The school environment must therefore act as a mobilizing agent and invite intersectoral partners to work together on the issue of the first school transition: "A school that is ready to welcome children is a school that, from an ecosystem perspective, connects families, educational childcare services, the community, and the school17." Openness to collaboration and intersectoral partnerships will enable schools to leverage the various resources and expertise that can contribute to the well-being and educational success of students.

6) Recognize the **expertise** *of early childhood educators and* **their major role** *in the school transition process.*

Early childhood education services play a key role in children's educational journey and must be recognized as such. The people who work in these services are early childhood education professionals and essential partners in ensuring a successful transition to school[17]. By being in contact not only with children from a very young age, but also with their parents, early childhood educator enjoy a very special relationship with them and can greatly influence the transition process to school through their interventions and attitudes in this regard. "**Early childhood educators are the first link in the educational continuum. By working with children long before they start school and drawing on their educational program and the various tools available, they play an important role in bringing young children into the world of school.** [...] Coordinating the first school transition from school allows all children to be reached, but in no way calls into question the importance and role of early childhood educators in this regard. On the contrary, formalizing coordination and accompanying measures promotes recognition of their status as essential partners in the school environment from an educational continuum perspective, from early childhood to adulthood.[17]"

In addition, having worked with children for several years, childcare staff, along with parents, are best placed to provide a comprehensive picture of the characteristics of each child entering school. It is therefore in the school's best interest to rely on this expertise, which provides a much more accurate picture than the few minutes of observation that the school can spend with a child before they start school. **This is therefore a major contribution from the early childhood sector that deserves to be recognized and taken into account by the school system.** Furthermore, when the Passe-Partout program is available, the information that can be provided by the program's practitioners is equally valuable, as is the special bond they have been able to build with the child and their family before they officially start kindergarten. Schools would therefore be well advised to take advantage of this.

7) Involve community and municipal stakeholders and implement collaborative strategies that will enable **all children** *affected by the first school transition,* **regardless of their early childhood background.**

In Quebec, nearly three out of four children attend an educational daycare center during early childhood. After the family, it is the living environment that has the greatest influence on their development[19]. However, while collaboration with educational childcare services makes it possible to reach the majority of children affected by the school transition, this collaboration must go beyond early childhood centers (CPEs) alone. In fact, in 2017, in Montérégie, of the nearly 56,000 childcare spaces available, 30% were in CPEs, 33% in family daycare settings, 17% in subsidized daycare centers, and 21% in non-subsidized daycare centers[14]. Since the majority of transitional interventions are currently carried out in CPEs, it is important to extend collaboration to other types of childcare services in order to ensure that we reach as many children as possible.

In addition, in order to reach as many children as possible, regardless of whether or not they attend an educational childcare service and regardless of the geographical location of that service in relation to the school they will be attending when they start school, directly reaching out to the parents and children concerned by involving community organizations and municipalities can be a winning strategy. Community stakeholders, such as family community organizations (FCOs), community organizations dedicated to supporting education, Indigenous friendship centers, cultural organizations, the business community, and municipalities, are true partners that offer services that contribute to children's overall development. They help break the isolation of parents and children, ensure recognition and, in some cases, strengthen parenting skills, which are important levers for facilitating school entry and supporting children's educational success[20]." Whether through their means of communication, their activities and recreational offerings, the events organized, actions taken as part of family policy initiatives, or places available to people such as libraries or community centres, municipalities and community organizations have many opportunities to get involved in the first school transition, and they can certainly help make it more harmonious by creating environments conducive to a quality first school transition.

8) **Implement specific strategies and intervention methods** *to reach children who are most vulnerable to experiencing a difficult first school transition and better meet their specific needs.*

Children who are at risk of experiencing difficulties during the transition are similar to those who arrive at kindergarten with at least one developmental vulnerability factor, which tend to be proportionally more common among boys or children from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, immigrant families, or families whose language of use is not French. Parents of children with disabilities or immigrant parents whose children speak little French may be particularly concerned about their child's integration into the classroom. **The school must be sensitive to these realities.** It must also devote special energy to reaching out to parents who are most distant from the school culture and who do not spontaneously attend regular activities, as well as those who speak little of the language of instruction.[11]"

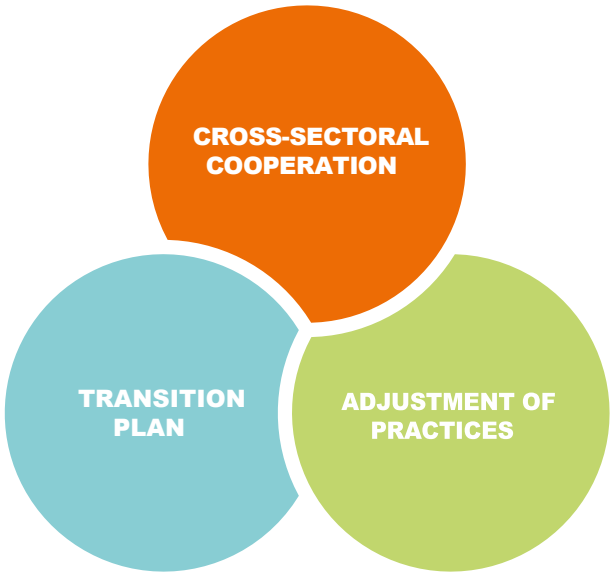
In addition to generally being less exposed to transitional interventions, it appears that children from disadvantaged families are also less likely to be reached by interventions that are generally less intensive (e.g., open house visits to the school).[7] Some of the factors explaining this phenomenon relate to the family and the school environment. **Indeed, parental involvement in transitional interventions is one of the crucial factors in a successful transition to kindergarten.** However, parents from socioeconomically disadvantaged families tend to be less involved than more affluent parents. A combination of socioeconomic difficulties that negatively affect parenting, work schedules that are incompatible with school hours, a lack of understanding of school expectations or indifference toward school, neglect of children or their learning, and low levels of parental education are among the explanatory factors reported.[22]

Foundations for guiding action

In order for the various stakeholders involved with the child and their family during the transition to school to act effectively in promoting a smooth initial transition to school, the literature reviewed identifies three essential elements: intersectoral consultation, the implementation of a transition plan (planning, implementation, and evaluation), and the adjustment of practices.

These three equally important elements can be implemented simultaneously or gradually, with none taking precedence over the others. Depending on the context of each organization, it is entirely possible that a moment of intersectoral consultation will be the catalyst for developing a school transition action plan, which will lead to adjustments in the practices of those who will implement it. Conversely, adjusting practices in response to certain identified needs may also initiate the development of a transition plan, which in turn will create a need to consult with other relevant organizations in order to coordinate interventions.

FIGURE 2 - KEY ELEMENTS FOR ACTION IN A SCHOOL TRANSITION



4.1 Intersectoral cooperation

In order to ensure the continuity required for the child's well-being and the pursuit of optimal development during the first school transition, it is important that the environments involved with children during this transition to school put in place **effective mechanisms that allow for complementary action and coordination of interventions.**

Consequently, the transition process is based on **consultation and collaboration** among the various key stakeholders involved. Managers, professionals, and educators in educational childcare services, school administrators, preschool teachers, Passe-Partout program counselors, school childcare service managers, special education teachers, managers and staff of community organizations or social and health services, parents, etc.: **all have a role to play in the transition process and must be involved in it to ensure its quality.**

As a result, **a governance structure** must be put in place to support cross-sectoral cooperation and enable each stakeholder to play their role, **according to their expertise, with a view to continuity.**

Thus, in Montérégie, in addition to regional intersectoral consultation, we recommend the establishment of a territorial intersectoral committee for the first school transition. As suggested in the Guide pour soutenir une première transition scolaire de qualité[2] (Guide to Supporting a Quality First School Transition)[2], this committee's main mandate is to establish planning guidelines and promote the importance of quality transitions to, among others, early childhood education and care directors and schools. According to the proposed governance structure, a territorial coordinator (e.g., development officer for the first school transition) is responsible for promoting and developing partnerships involving key stakeholders who will participate in the territorial consultation body and for facilitating meetings to discuss these stakeholders' priorities and concerns regarding territorial transitional interventions.

Considering that, regardless of their early childhood experiences, the school environment is the place where all children converge when they start school, it is recommended that it act as an anchor point to ensure coordination between all stakeholders and environments concerned. Thus, the school service center must act as a mobilizing agent and invite intersectoral partners to work together on the issue of the first school transition. However, although in this context the school environment must act as a mobilizing agent to facilitate intersectoral work, its role cannot in any way replace that of other networks. **It is therefore important to recognize and leverage**

the expertise of each of the environments and stakeholders involved in the child's school transition within this collaboration and to ensure adequate representation and sharing of roles and responsibilities.

In this sense, it is also necessary to hold discussion groups, ad hoc meetings, or consultation sessions with round tables and various groups or committees to connect with all the groups of stakeholders involved in the school transition in the region. These meetings not only provide an opportunity to gather concerns, learn about actions already taken, and identify needs, but also to share information about the work of the regional consultation process on school transition and to encourage the mobilization and contribution of the various stakeholders in the many initiatives carried out in the region. It is strongly recommended to liaise with existing bodies that enable stakeholders from different backgrounds to be reached for these consultations.

Since regional and territorial intersectoral bodies do not allow all stakeholders to consult with each other, **it is also important to ensure local intersectoral consultation to enable them to collaborate and coordinate their interventions. However, a single model for local intersectoral consultation on school transition cannot be applied to the entire Montérégie region**, or even to an entire CSS territory. There are therefore several strategies representing different levels of commitment, depending on the reality, needs, and context of schools and other early childhood organizations within a locality.

As a result, local intersectoral consultation can take different forms. For example, in certain favorable contexts, consultation may take **the form of an intersectoral committee**, based on the same model as the territorial committee. However, it is important to be cautious when choosing this strategy, since realistically, it cannot be implemented in all localities within a territory and requires a considerable investment of time. This formula is particularly relevant for well-defined local territories with significant issues and needs, where there are often already intersectoral partners working together on various topics. It may also be appropriate when consultation structures bringing together the relevant actors already exist within a community. Depending on the context, consultation with the relevant partners in the same local area may also take **the form of one or two annual meetings** with the aim, for example, of developing a shared vision, adopting promising practices, identifying ways to contribute to the implementation of the territorial transition plan, and sharing the local action plans of each organization in order to coordinate interventions and promote continuity, etc. Finally, **local communities that already have an intersectoral consultation structure bringing together all the partners involved in the first school transition may also decide to formally add this topic** to their annual plans and meeting agendas in order to ensure that there is sufficient space for sharing issues and aligning the action plans of the various organizations.

No formula is better than another; context and needs will determine the most appropriate approach for each organization.

Furthermore, in order to ensure optimal alignment between these different stakeholders, the willingness to act and the mobilization of partners are not sufficient. Excellent communication and a shared vision and understanding of the first school transition, its components, and promising interventions in this area are essential. Therefore, all stakeholders involved in a consultation on the first school transition should first participate, together, in a knowledge-sharing and awareness-raising session (forum, conference, etc.) on the issues, roles and responsibilities, and best practices related to school transition. It is also the role of the regional coordinator (e.g., development officer for the first school transition) to ensure that the various partners involved in the consultation have a shared vision and understanding of the school transition, including through activities for knowledge appropriation and transfer.

On the next page, you will find an illustration representing the governance model, inspired by the literature but adapted by the GTR-TS to our Quebec context.[1]

FIGURE 3 - GOVERNANCE OF CONSULTATION IN A SCHOOL TRANSITION

Child and family

- They are at the core of the process involving the transition to school.
- The process must take their needs into account and respond to them.

Local committees, intersectoral meetings, or other local consultations

- Structures and numbers vary depending on the region.
- Responsible for developing or sharing local transition plans.

Intersectoral territorial committees

- One per school service center territory.
- Responsible for developing, implementing, and evaluating a territorial transition plan.
- Supported by the school community, coordinated by a development officer for the first school transition, and composed of representatives from all relevant networks.

Regional consultation bodies

- Operation Colibri Regional Committee (CROC).
- Montérégie Educational Services Table (CRDP).
- Regional Authority for School Success and Educational Achievement (IRCM).
- Regional Working Group on School Transition (GTR-TS).
- Community of Practice for Development Officers for the First School Transition (COP).

National context

- Strategy for children aged 0-8: Everything for our children.
- Educational program of the Ministère de la Famille.
- Quebec preschool education program.

4.2 Transition plan

A successful transition is necessarily a planned transition. "Such planning will ensure the implementation of concerted actions **to promote educational continuity** between the child's different living environments.[27]"

As a result, developed through a process of co-construction with stakeholders from various backgrounds involved in children's first school transition, the transition plan will provide an overview of the current situation in the region and the measures to be implemented in order to ensure that the first transition is as smooth as possible for children and their parents.

To this end, the literature reviewed shows that the **development, implementation, and evaluation of a transition plan should be carried out at both the regional and local levels.**

As mentioned above, at the territorial level, this mandate will be entrusted to the intersectoral committee for the first school transition, supported by the territory's school service center and coordinated by its development officer for the first school transition. At the local level, it is up to each organization involved in the child's transition to school to develop, implement, and evaluate its own transition plan. As presented in the previous section, governance at the local level can take many forms,

depending on the realities, context, and needs of each community. Consequently, some local organizations, whether intersectoral or within the same network, may decide to join forces to develop a joint transition plan when the context is conducive to doing so.

Finally, the school's transition plan must also provide for the modulation of certain interventions according to the needs that may differ for some parents and children. For example, for children from vulnerable families or children with special needs, interventions will need to be more intensive, more frequent, and more personalized. In some cases, it may also be necessary to implement a personalized transition plan for children and families with greater needs.[11]

4.3 Adjustment of practices

Central to the transition is the adjustment of practices related to transitional interventions that the community wishes to implement in order to mitigate factors of discontinuity and meet the needs of children, parents, and the various stakeholders involved in the school transition. According to studies, families' feelings of readiness for school are greatly influenced by parents' perceptions that the school is ready to welcome their child. This perception varies depending on the number of transition practices in place in schools, as perceived by parents[24]. The main challenge of transitional interventions is essentially focused on adapting to change from an educational continuity perspective, i.e., ensuring "a continuation of the child's educational experience." **In this way, the continuity factors present in the child's experiences provide them with reference points, with new experiences becoming an extension of previous ones.**

Continuity factors can be as follows[13]:

- Philosophical (related to teaching methods);
- Curricular (related to learning outcomes);
- Developmental (adapted to the child's degree of development);
- Physical (similarities in physical environments);
- Organizational (similarities in schedules and adult/child ratios);
- Administrative (similarities in policies and procedures between environments);
- Relational (relationships with parents, other adults and other children).

To this end, transitional interventions primarily pursue two objectives[8,23,31]:

- **Establishing, maintaining and improving meaningful communication and relationships between key stakeholders:** parents and children; parents and the school (teachers/support staff/administrators); parents and community and institutional resources; children and the school (teachers/support staff/administrators); children and peers; the school and community and institutional resources; the school (teachers/administrators) and educational child care services.
- **Acting on determining factors that can positively or negatively influence the smooth transition to school.** *(Note that taken individually, these factors cannot determine the quality of the transition, but a combination of these factors can have a considerable influence).*

FIGURE 4 - DETERMINING FACTORS

PERSONAL FACTORS RELATED TO THE CHILD

- Child's attitudes toward school.
- Level of family involvement in school.
- Positive social experiences prior to entering kindergarten.
- Child’s skills and adaptability.

FAMILY FACTORS

- Level of parental involvement in school life.
- Positive parenting practices.
- Parenting skills and adaptability.
- Quality of the parent-child relationship.
- Realistic parental expectations that are consistent with the missions and programs of childcare services and schools.

SOCIAL FACTORS

- Attendance at a high-quality educational childcare service.
- Access to environments (places, activities, etc.) that promote the child's overall development.
- Access to community and institutional resources for parents and children.
- Quality of peer relationships.

SCHOOL FACTORS

- Quality of the teacher-student relationship.
- Teaching practices adapted to the child's stage of development.
- Positive educational practices and a cooperative classroom environment.
- Classroom organization that provides reference points for the child (layout, activities, etc.).
- Emphasis on the role of parents in school.
- The ability of school staff to engage in positive interpersonal interactions with parents.
- Training in the area of transition for the entire school team concerned.
- Importance given to transition practices (number of practices).
- Access to conditions that facilitate transition work: time, human and financial resources, flexible work organization, list of students obtained in advance, etc.).
- Support provided to students with difficulties or special needs.
- Attitudes toward socioeconomically disadvantaged children.

Certain observable indicators help us determine whether the transitional interventions put in place are achieving the expected results in terms of quality transition. However, it is important to understand that this is by no means a checklist of criteria, but rather indicators that allow us to know whether the interventions carried out are effective or not. These indicators can be substituted for one another, as the goal is not to achieve them all, since some of them may sometimes be temporarily impossible to achieve due to uncontrollable factors.

Above all, the goal is not to have all students meet all of these indicators, but rather to have the majority of students meet most of them. Indeed, despite all the interventions that will be put in place, some children remain more vulnerable to adjustment difficulties, and in these cases it is important to be sensitive to this and to put in place appropriate support to limit any possible negative impacts.

FIGURE 5 - INDICATORS

CHILDREN

- Better knowledge of the premises and the teacher.
- Familiarization with how the school operates.
- Retention of acquired skills (behaviour/learning).
- Sense of well-being and security in the new environment that is school.
- Recognition of their abilities.
- Positive attitudes and emotions toward school and learning.
- Harmonious relationships with staff, teachers, and other children.
- Feeling of confidence in their academic success.
- Development of new academic and social skills (continued development) in the new environment, according to their strengths and limitations.
- Overcomes stress-related symptoms (crying, withdrawal, tantrums, nausea) after a few weeks.

PARENTS

- Parents feel secure about school and the start of the school year.
- Sense of competence and satisfaction.
- Creation of bonds with the school and its team.
- Sharing of ideas for action to facilitate the start of the school year or related to the child's general functioning.
- Positive attitudes toward school and their child's learning.
- Active involvement in the child's educational journey.
- Participation in decisions concerning their child.
- Development of good communication with teachers and other stakeholders.
- For parents of children with special needs: development of skills to advocate for responses tailored to their child's needs, making them more competent to deal with future periods of transition.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

- Knowledge of the child and their characteristics.
- Establishment of a harmonious relationship with parents before the start of the school year.
- Development of collaborative relationships with early childhood education teachers, community resources, and institutions.
- Presence in the classroom of an atmosphere of respect and an environment that values individual differences and cultural diversity.
- Use of a range of varied experiences appropriate to child development.
- Elements of continuity in the classroom and at school related to the child's previous living environment.
- Implementation of a coordinated transition plan and various ongoing transitional practices (timeline).
- Prompt and appropriate support for students in difficulty.
- Establishment of conditions in the school that facilitate the implementation of transitional practices.
- Ability to reach out to families in more vulnerable communities.

COMMUNITY AND INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

- Knowledge of the child and their characteristics.
- Establishing relationships with parents before the start of the school year.
- Developing expertise in collaboration with childcare workers and teachers.
- Providing support by creating positive transition experiences through greater cooperation and coordination between different service providers.
- Ability to reach out to families in more vulnerable communities.

With this in mind, a successful transition to kindergarten is characterized by (Ramey and Ramey, 1999)[11]:

- A positive attitude on the part of the child toward learning, school, the teacher, and peers;
- The maintenance of previously acquired skills and the development of new academic and social skills;
- Parents' positive attitude toward school and learning, and their active involvement in the child's school experience;
- Teachers who provide developmentally appropriate experiences and create a classroom environment that promotes individual differences and cultural diversity;
- A community that provides support for positive transition experiences (collaboration, coordination).

4.4 Promising practices

The knowledge brokering carried out by the Montérégie DSPu to produce the reference document Interventions transitionnelles vers la maternelle. Conformité aux pratiques prometteuses[1] (Transitional Interventions for Kindergarten: Compliance with Promising Practices) identified certain promising practices concerning transitional interventions that promote a high-quality first school transition. **The implementation of such practices therefore contributes to the achievement of the results mentioned above.**

However, despite consensus on the relevance of implementing these interventions, the need to plan universal transitional interventions tailored to the characteristics of children and their parents complicates the identification of best practices. Indeed, based on current knowledge, transitional interventions are more often described in terms of promising practices, i.e., "those that have the potential (or promise) to become best practices." Although based on solid theoretical foundations, promising practices differ from best practices in terms of the quality of evidence, among other things, as these practices would benefit from further rigorous study to improve the data we have on them.[25]

Furthermore, as part of this literature review, international studies were used to identify promising practices, some of which may be more difficult to apply to our Quebec context or may require adaptation to realities that may differ from those in which the study was conducted. It is therefore important to keep in mind that this is a neutral review of the literature and that the members of the GTR-TS have not interpreted it.

The promising practices presented are mostly general concepts, leaving it up to each community to identify and develop the interventions that are most appropriate for its context, resources and needs. However, for concrete examples and ideas for action, you can consult the toolkit.

4.4.1 General practices

- Develop collaborative links between schools in the same area in terms of transitional interventions. Develop a joint curriculum that respects the specific characteristics and needs of each school.
- Establish or maintain relationships and interactions between the school, educational childcare services, families, municipalities, and community and health and social services network resources during the transition to kindergarten.
- Establish collaboration between early childhood educators and kindergarten teachers (or at least between the school and the educational childcare service) in order to exchange information about children, their level of development, and educational and teaching programs.
- Implement interventions based on a timeline established before, during, and after the start of kindergarten, which is divided into five periods: before admission to school (August to December); upon admission to school (January-February); after admission but before the start of school (March to June); around the start of the school year (July to September); after the start of the school year (October-November): the selection and implementation of interventions before the start of the school year are of crucial importance. In this way, if the teacher's relationship with the parents develops before the start of the school year and adjustment problems are then identified, the parents and the teacher will be able to discuss them on the basis of an already established relationship of trust.[29] In addition, they will provide parents and children with points of reference that will reduce their anxiety before, during, and after starting school.
- Establish environments conducive to a smooth and high-quality transition to school:
  - Make books and tools about going back to school available to preschoolers (e.g., in community organizations, at the library, in medical waiting rooms, etc.);
  - Set up support groups for parenting skills, assistance with starting school, etc.;
  - Set up parent-child activities in neighborhood schools;
  - Encourage parents to promote the overall development of their preschool-aged children and to stimulate their desire to learn;
  - Inform families about the services available in the community (library, family center, educational services and workshops, health and social services, etc.);
  - Organize parties or activities related to the first day of school.
  - Include the transition to kindergarten in messages promoting education that are disseminated to citizens.
  - Create socialization spaces for young families that allow for activities for parent-child dyads (neighborhood parties, library activities, park games adapted for toddlers, etc.).
- Reassure parents and children by listening to their questions and needs, and adapt interventions accordingly.
- Invite parents to participate in various transitional activities.
- Take into account children's developmental levels, learning through play, and gender-differentiated approaches when designing activities and interventions.

4.4.2 Pre-admission practices

- Disseminate information (in simplified and accessible language) using various communication channels (municipalities, health and social services network, OCF, SGÉE, etc.).
- Promote and publicize the various programs and registration periods (Passe-Partout, 4-year-old kindergarten, 5-year-old kindergarten, etc.).
- Develop or select a tool for establishing the characteristics and needs of the child and their family (portfolio or questionnaire describing the child's strengths, achievements, preferences, and way of functioning) and agree, with the various stakeholders concerned in the same area, on the procedures for providing relevant information to highlight the specific needs of children upon admission.

4.4.3 Practices upon admission

- Implement, in collaboration with the entire school team, an admission process so that the child and their family feel welcome as soon as they arrive at school upon admission:
  - * Provide warm, attractive, and welcoming facilities;
  - * Encourage children to attend;
  - * Ensure a welcoming approach from all staff (secretaries, janitors, teachers, support staff, school administration, etc.).
- Facilitate admission:
  - * Set admission times that take into account parents' availability.
  - * Offer support to parents during the preschool admission process.
  - * Distribute the dates and times for neighborhood school admissions to various networks (health and social services, municipal, OCF, SGÉE, etc.).
- Provide parents with documentation upon admission to help them prepare their child for this transition (how the school, kindergarten, and daycare operate, invitations to transition activities, advice on how to support their child, etc.).

4.4.4 Practices following admission but before the start of the school year

- Assess the needs of the child and their family:
  - Invite parents to describe their child's characteristics and needs (strengths, skills, preferences, learning style, interests, challenges, etc.).
  - Allow parents, the SGÉE educator, and other professionals working with the child to share information about the child with the kindergarten teacher.
  - Comply with the information-sharing clauses established across sectors in the territory.
  - Identify the specific needs of children encountered in clinical or private settings and identify ways to meet those needs.
- Organize information sessions (presentation of how the school works, services, internal and external resources, presentation of the school team; regular teachers, specialist teachers, the principal's office, etc.).
- Plan visits for the child or parent to the school; however, be careful not to view these visits as opportunities for school staff to "evaluate" children with a view to forming future groups. **Observing children for such a short period of time, in an unfamiliar and exceptional context, cannot be considered representative or relevant for providing the information expected by the school.** Whenever possible, it is recommended to use information provided by the early childhood education center, the parent, Passe-Partout program workers, a community organization, or the health and social services network, as these are the people who know the child best and are in the best position to provide a complete picture;
  - Prepare a guided tour of the school (classrooms, daycare, playground, cafeteria, etc.) with the child and parent in the spring.
  - Organize an open house during which students give parents and children a tour of the school.
  - Invite parents to come and play with their children in the schoolyard during the summer.
  - Invite parents and children to activities in the classroom or at school.
  - Invite future students attending educational daycare centers to come see the school's end-of-year performance or that of the daycare students.
- Develop peer relationships:
  - Develop relationships between children from the same early childhood education center who will be attending the same kindergarten class;
  - Create or strengthen relationships between children who will be starting school and their parents through weekend and summer activities (for both families who attend a childcare center and those who do not);
  - Develop relationships between children who do not attend the same childcare center but who will be attending the same kindergarten class;
  - Ensure that each child has at least one friend in the class;
  - Develop relationships or pairing between children in childcare centers and those who are already in kindergarten or at a higher level of elementary school (during activities, etc.).
- Organize activities in child care centers or community organizations, allowing children and their parents to understand what is coming up:
  - Experiment with kindergarten routines and activities: visit a school, play games at the school playground, or recreate parts of the kindergarten routine (e.g., lunchbox lunch, etc.).
  - Incorporate certain school routines and behaviors.
  - Include opportunities to talk about school in SGÉE program planning (e.g., create a school photo album and explore it with the children, tell stories about school, etc.).
  - Organize information evenings, conferences, or distribute information about starting school.
  - Hold an activity to mark the end of daycare and the transition to school.
- Hold individual meetings between the teacher, parents, and child.
- Have kindergarten support staff visit early childhood education centers.
- Invite preschool teachers to visit early childhood education centers and vice versa.
- Suggest that parents do fun activities with their children that encourage their interest in learning and school.

4.4.5 Practices around the start of the school year and beyond

- Implement a gradual start to school: reduce attendance time on the first few days to allow for smaller groups, thereby promoting contact between the teacher and the child and giving them the opportunity to adapt more easily.
- Plan an integration day at the after-school care center.
- Recommend and offer the option of using a transitional object for all children (children bring an object (chosen by the child and their parents) from home to school until the child no longer feels the need for it).
- Visit by the teacher to the child's home, before and after starting kindergarten.
- Establish regular contact (by phone, in writing, or face-to-face) between the teacher and the parents:
  - Arrange meetings between the teacher and parents, with or without the child, during the first few days of kindergarten to share information about the child and their habits and discuss the new school environment;
- Meet regularly with parents at school to discuss the teacher's expectations and the challenges of the transition;
  - Frequently invite parents to participate in various school activities.
  - Hold the first parent-teacher meeting for preschool students during the pedagogical days preceding the start of the school year (this helps to reassure parents).
- Establish links between parents and resources available at the school.
- Support parents so that they feel supported and competent in their new role as parents of schoolchildren.
- Set up a forum for parent-teacher exchanges aimed at involving parents in school life.
- Pair kindergarten children with older children (mentoring).
- Develop a quality relationship between the teacher and the student.
- Maintain informal links between the SGÉE educator and children now in kindergarten (intervention following the return to school).

4.5 Conditions for success

Even if **the measures implemented are consistent with recommended practices**, for them to be truly effective, it is important to also consider certain criteria to ensure a smooth transition to school:

- Encourage parental involvement;
- Take early action to promote the child's overall and optimal development;
- Respect the child's individual characteristics, pace, and level of development;
- Take action on several levels, using a variety of strategies;
- Take concerted action, in partnership with all stakeholders;
- Share a common vision and understanding;
- Implement actions that are intensive, continuous, flexible, and achievable;
- Plan and evaluate practices.

It should be noted, however, that no single intervention can fulfill all of the listed conditions for effectiveness. It is the combination of everything that is done with the child and his or her family, at school, and in the community that contributes to the implementation of practices recognized as effective.[26]

4.6 Challenges and obstacles

Although this Reference Framework presents all the factors necessary for a successful transition, as well as numerous ways to promote a smooth initial school transition, such as coordinating consultation with the school environment, the appointment of a person responsible for the file in school service centers and the various organizations concerned, the planning, implementation, and evaluation of a coordinated school transition action plan adapted to the needs of the environment, as well as the involvement of parents and teachers, several challenges remain. Among other things, the literature and members of the GTR-TS have identified the following challenges:

As well as:

- Teachers receiving student lists late;
- Difficulty identifying file holders in schools and various local organizations;
- Parents' expectations that are unrealistic or inconsistent with the missions and programs of childcare services and schools, particularly preschool education;
- The interruption, upon starting school, of certain services offered to students with difficulties (e.g., public speech therapy follow-ups).

The lack of:

- Human, financial, material, and organizational resources;
- Recognized time for teachers to carry out transition activities, particularly during the period after admission but before the start of the school year, and for SGÉE educators to complete profiles of children starting school;
- Recognition of the importance of the time teachers need to devote to establishing trusting relationships with parents;
- Links between children's living and learning environments;
- Continuity between early childhood education services and kindergarten, as well as the lack of information available to teachers about what has been done in the daycare centers attended by their students;
- Knowledge of educators and teachers about the content of the educational program applied in the other network;
- Coordination and continuity between practices within the school itself, for example, between the school daycare service and teaching staff, or between Passe-Partout service workers and preschool teachers;
- Links or coordination between the various partners outside the school;
- Knowledge among stakeholders about the reality of their counterparts in other sectors, which hinders mutual recognition, collaboration, coordination, and ultimately continuity;
- Common vision and understanding among the various stakeholders who need to coordinate with each other.

However, it should be noted that many stakeholders successfully rise to the challenge each year, despite the presence of these obstacles, which can vary in intensity from one environment to another, and even from one year to the next. It is nevertheless important to be aware of these obstacles and to ensure that interventions are sufficiently intensive and continuous, as a variety of activities are needed to meet the diverse needs of children and parents before, during, and after starting school.

4.7 Recommendations

As part of the research conducted by Ruel, Moreau, Bérubé, and April, the Guide pour soutenir une première transition scolaire de qualité (Guide to Supporting a Successful First School Transition) was evaluated in 2015. Several recommendations were made[29]:

- **Supporting parents' involvement in their child's education:**
  - Take advantage of all planned events (child admission, open houses, parent-teacher meetings, gradual return to school) to maximize their impact on the quality of the school transition.
  - Increase opportunities to invite parents and their children to a variety of formal and informal activities from the moment of admission, so that the school becomes a meaningful and welcoming environment.
  - Involve teachers more in planning and conducting transitional activities from the moment of admission.
  - Plan, with parents, transitional activities dedicated to developing a relationship of trust between the school and the family.
  - Leverage existing relationships between families and early childhood service providers to support the development of a positive school-family relationship.
  - Maintain and enrich personalized communication (by phone or in person) between parents and the school.
  - Take advantage of the shift to digital communications to regularly inform all parents about what is happening at school.
- **Strengthen the partnership between the preschool services:**
  - Jointly plan, among all preschool services, common activities to support educational continuity for children experiencing their first school transition and to support their families;
  - Strengthen partnerships between schools and childcare centers for children aged 0 to 5, which care for more than 70% of future students in the year before they start school;
  - Organize regular joint activities that bring together preschool teachers and other preschool service providers, such as training sessions, awareness-raising activities, discussions about their respective programs.;
  - Promote the sharing of knowledge, expertise, and resources between different preschool settings and families, involving all stakeholders in the transition process.
  - Explore, develop, and jointly test strategies to meet the challenge of more effectively reaching families at risk of experiencing a more difficult first transition.
- **Ensure the establishment of conditions that promote the implementation of high-quality transition practices:**
  - Encourage the various decision-making levels (national, school service center, school team) to take leadership in ensuring the implementation of favorable conditions and concrete measures to support planned transition processes among all stakeholders involved in the transition to preschool;
  - Establish a formal intersectoral consultation mechanism, by school service center, that brings together all preschool services in order to better coordinate the transition of children between these services;
  - Continue awareness-raising and training activities on the importance of school transitions, their planning, and the coordination of practices to be deployed.
  - Take advantage of these activities to publicize the *Guide to Supporting a Quality First School Transition*[2] and promote its use as a facilitation tool.
  - Ensure the identification and consolidation of support methods for schools in order to promote the implementation and evaluation of transition practices;
  - Support transition planning by school teams (with management, preschool teachers, school daycare services, complementary services, collaborators, etc.) and use the *Guide to Support a Quality First School Transition*[2] to do so.

- **Strengthen the implementation of specific transition practices when welcoming children with special needs:**
  - Establish and publicize a standard, planned transition process, with a timeline, for welcoming children with special needs. This standard process can then be adapted locally, depending on the environment, schools, and students.
  - Mobilize local MSSS-MELS committees to take ownership of and update planned transition procedures for children with special needs, taking local realities into account.
  - Under the responsibility of the school administration, determine the process that leads to the concrete articulation of the planned transition procedure in the school, while considering the particularities of the environment and the personalization of interventions;
  - Develop an individualized, cross-sectoral transition plan for children who are identified as "students with disabilities or adjustment or learning difficulties" (EHDAA) after admission but before the start of the school year, in collaboration with parents and early childhood services.
  - Involve parents and caregivers who know the child in introducing them to the staff who will be welcoming them before the start of the school year: their characteristics, their achievements, successful educational strategies. These exchanges of information help to give meaning to the information shared and to contextualize this knowledge in order to deal with the realities of life. To do this, the methods of exchange can be varied and innovative;
  - Ask for input from collaborators during the first days of school and include them, along with parents, in the planning of the Plan d'intervention -Plan de services individualisé et intersectoriel (unofficially translation as: Individualized and Intersectoral Intervention Plan-Service Plan (IIP-ISP)) services and the support to be provided.

Conclusion

A continuous process that allows the child, their family, and the various stakeholders involved to adapt to each other when starting school, a high-quality initial school transition aims to promote the child's success and well-being from the very beginning of their schooling. To ensure a smooth transition, the process begins during the year before the child starts school and can take up to two years. **Establishing numerous benchmarks between the initial situation and the new situation helps to maintain the sense of security necessary for the well-being of the child and their parents, as well as for the child to retain what they have learned and continue to develop.** Similarly, planning the transition process involves choosing transitional interventions that correspond not only to promising practices, but also to the specific characteristics of the environment and the needs of the children, parents, and the various stakeholders involved. **It therefore goes far beyond the transmission of information between the educational childcare service and the school environment or the false perception of a need to prepare the child for school.**

Considering the numerous studies that show **that the school transition is a vulnerable period during which the changes experienced can have a significant impact on the rest of the child's schooling, and that the attitudes, skills, and behaviors formed during this transition influence the child's development and educational success**[27], the various stakeholders involved in the school transition are well aware of the importance of taking action. However, consensus on the importance of the first school transition and the need to intervene to ensure that it is as smooth as

possible for children and their parents is not enough. Indeed, **consultation among all stakeholders involved with the child and his or her family during the transition process is essential**. This allows for the coordination of the various interventions to be put in place in order to **ensure a balance between continuity and change**. As a result, everyone has a role to play in maintaining this balance and ensuring a smooth transition for children and their parents. "From an ecosystem perspective, families, preschool educational settings, schools, and the community all have a role to play in children's transition to kindergarten. A common understanding of the issues involved in the transition and coordination between the various partners are therefore crucial (Ruel, 2009; Doherty, 2004), and the transition must be co-constructed within the community context (Fabian and Dunlop, 2007). Collaboration between transition partners promotes continuity between previous educational experiences and kindergarten.[11]"

Therefore, in order to support this consultation, a common and shared vision and understanding of what school transition is and of each person's role in ensuring that expertise is complementary is essential. This reflection therefore requires **a concerted approach that is planned, organized, and evaluated on an ongoing basis. Thus, all adults involved with the child must be part of the transition process, and even if each has their own role, all must look beyond it with a view to shared responsibility.**

Finally, it should not be forgotten that kindergarten is a transitional year in itself, bridging the gap between preschool and elementary school. Although in recent years more and more environments have been implementing transitional practices, it is clear that the transition to elementary school is not as well documented as the transition to kindergarten.11 However, the transition from preschool to primary school is just as important and involves almost as many challenges as the transition from childcare or home to school. Indeed, "from preschool to elementary school, children move from a world that focuses on learning through play to one that favors more standardized learning, where explanations come mainly from the teacher. This transition represents the entry into a formal world, where children learn to read, write, and count through systematic instruction. In addition, first grade usually differs from kindergarten in terms of spatial and temporal layout, the organization of activities, and the type of materials offered. Faced with so many changes, some children may adapt more or less well socially and academically, which in turn can affect their current and future educational success28." In this sense, it is important to extend transition practices beyond the year of school entry and to initiate, even before the end of that year, new interventions, in collaboration between preschool and first-grade teachers, to ensure a smooth transition to elementary school.

And why not work upstream by supporting the development of the adaptive capacities of children and their parents through the implementation of transitional interventions from the very first transition in their educational journey, which for most of them will be when they start attending an educational childcare service?

"Life is a continual process of adjustment and readjustment. What's important for the child is that he continue to see himself as part of the SOLUTION rather than as part of the problem."

– Faber and Mazlish

NOTES AND REFERENCES

The Reference Framework is inspired by the following documents, from which many passages are taken:

1. Schaefer, C. (2018). Interventions transitionnelles vers la maternelle. Conformité aux pratiques prometteuses. Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie. Document de travail, *not published.*
2. Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, Ministère de la Famille et des Aînés, Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec. (2010). *Guide pour soutenir une première transition scolaire de qualité*. 14 p. Idenified at: https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/GuideSoutenirPremiereTransScolQualite_f.pdf

---

3. http://extranet.santemonteregie.qc.ca/sante-publique/promotion-prevention/petite-enfance/comite-reg-colibri.fr.html#prod
4. For a list of the GTR-TS members, see page 2 of the document.
5. Inspired by *La transition entre le service éducatif à la petite enfance et la maternelle : deux univers semblables*. Found at: http://agirtot.org/trois-rivieres-en-action-et-en-sante-comite-0-5-ans/la-transition-entre-le-service-educatif-a-la-petite-enfance-et-la-maternelle/
6. Horizon 0-5. (2014). *L'état sommaire : Démarches locales concertées montréalaises pour une transition harmonieuse vers l'école*. Found at: http://www.horizon05.com/projets-et-realisations/passage-a-l-ecole
7. Poissant, J. (2013). *L'intégration de l'approche universelle et ciblée : l'universalisme proportionné pour soutenir le développement des enfants*. Institut national de santé publique du Québec.
8. 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 p.
9. Four Important Things to Know About the Transition to School Margaret Caspe, M. Elena Lopez, and Chalatwan Chattrabhuti Harvard Family Research Project March 2015 https://elc.grads360.org/services/PDCService.svc/GetPDCDocumentFile ?fileId=9713
10. Gouvernement du Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation (2021). *Programme-cycle de l'éducation préscolaire.*
11. Conseil supérieur de l'éducation (2012). *Mieux accueillir et éduquer les enfants d'âge préscolaire, une triple question d'accès de qualité et de continuité des services*. Québec, Québec : Conseil supérieur de l'éducation, 141 p. Found at: https://www.cse.gouv.qc.ca/fichiers/documents/ publications/Avis/50-0477.pdf
12. Duval, S., et C. Bouchard. (2013). *Soutenir la préparation à l'école et à la vie des enfants issus de milieux défavorisés et des enfants en difficulté.* Québec : Ministère de la famille. 168 p. Found at: https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/documents/preparation-ecole.pdf
13. Ruel, J. et A. Moreau. (2012). *La continuité éducative en réponse aux défis de la transition vers le préscolaire d'enfants ayant des besoins particuliers.* Revue Développement humain, handicap et changement social, volume 20, p.71-78.
14. Noiseux, M. (2017). Fréquentation préscolaire chez les enfants de 0 à 4 ans de la Montérégie. Portfolio thématique. Longueuil : Centre intégré de santé et services sociaux de la Montérégie-Centre, Direction de santé publique, Secteur Planification, évaluation et surveillance. Found at: http://extranet.santemonteregie.qc.ca/sante-publique/promotion-prevention/petite-enfance/comite-reg-colibri.fr.html (section 8: products and tools)
15. Ministère de la Famille et des aînés (2007). *Accueillir la petite enfance, le programme éducatif des services de garde du Québec*. Found at: https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/Documents/programme_educatif.pdf
16. Ministère de l'Éducation (2005), *Guide de planification de l'entrée à l'école*, Ontario, 97 p.
17. Centrale des syndicats du Québec, 2017. *Pour une première transition scolaire de qualité et réussie*, 9 p.
18. Duval (2013), *Le passage du préscolaire vers la 1ère année du primaire au Québec : regards sur les pratiques de transition et l'ajustement socioscolaire des élèves*, presentation as part of a lunchtime seminar - Qualité éducative des services de garde et petite enfance (educational quality of childcare and early childhood services) (January 23, 2013)
19. Carrefour action municipale et famille. *Un service de garde éducatif à la petite enfance qui prend racine dans sa communauté - Guide pratique et stratégique à l'intention des municipalités*, Québec, 39 p.
20. Gov. of Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (2018). Stratégie 0-8ans, *Tout pour nos enfants*, Québec, 54p.
21. https://naitreetgrandir.com/fr/etape/5-8-ans/ecole/fiche.aspx ?doc=entree-maternelle-et-stress
22. Kanouté, F. (2003). *Les parents de milieux défavorisés et l'accompagnement scolaire de leurs enfants*. Faculté des sciences de l'éducation, Université de Montréal, 69 p. Found at: https://www.cgtsim.qc.ca/images/documents/parents_emd_accompa_enfants.pdf
23. Ruel, J. (2011). *Travail en réseau, savoirs en partage et processus en jeu en contexte d'innovation : une transition planifiée vers le préscolaire d'enfants ayant des besoins particuliers.* Université du Québec en Outaouais en association avec Université du Québec à Montréal, 299 p. Found at: https://archipel.uqam.ca/4192/
24. Ruel, J., Moreau, A.C., Bérubé, A. & April, J. (2015). *Les pratiques de transition lors de la rentrée des enfants au préscolaire.* Évaluation du Guide pour soutenir une première transition scolaire de qualité, Université du Québec en Outaouais and Pavillon du Parc Gatineau, 10 p. Found at: http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/adaptation_serv_compl/Evaluation_guideTransition_sommaire.pdf
25. Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie. (2013) *Rapport de la directrice de santé publique 2013. Donner des ailes à leur réussite pour assurer aux tout-petits un bon départ.* Longueuil, Agence de santé et de services sociaux de la Montérégie, 59 p. Found at: http://extranet.santemonteregie.qc.ca/depot/document/3566/Rapport-Colibri.pdf
26. Direction de santé publique de la Montérégie *Conditions d'efficacité des interventions de promotion et de prévention en contexte scolaire.* 2011.
27. Jacques, M. and R. Deslandes, *Relations famille-école et l'ajustement du comportement socioscolaire de l'enfant et de l'éducation préscolaire*, Association canadienne d'éducation de la langue française, Éducation et francophonie, *Volume XXXII:1 – Spring 2004*.
28. Duval, S. and C. Bouchard. (2013). *La transition du préscolaire vers le primaire : l'importance de s'en soucier.* Éducation Préscolaire, 51(2), 28-33.
29. Kraft-Sayre, M. E., & Pianta, R. C. (2000). *Enhancing the Transition to Kindergarten: Linking Children, Families, & Schools*.
30. Dockett, S. and B. Perry, *Le rôle des écoles et des communautés dans la transition des enfants vers l'école*, 2017, Encyclopédie sur le développement des jeunes enfants.
31. Bohan-Baker, M. and P.M.D. Little, *The Transition to Kindergarten: A Review of Current Research and Promising Practices to Involve Families*, 2002, Harvard Family Research Project Harvard Graduate School of Education. p. 9.