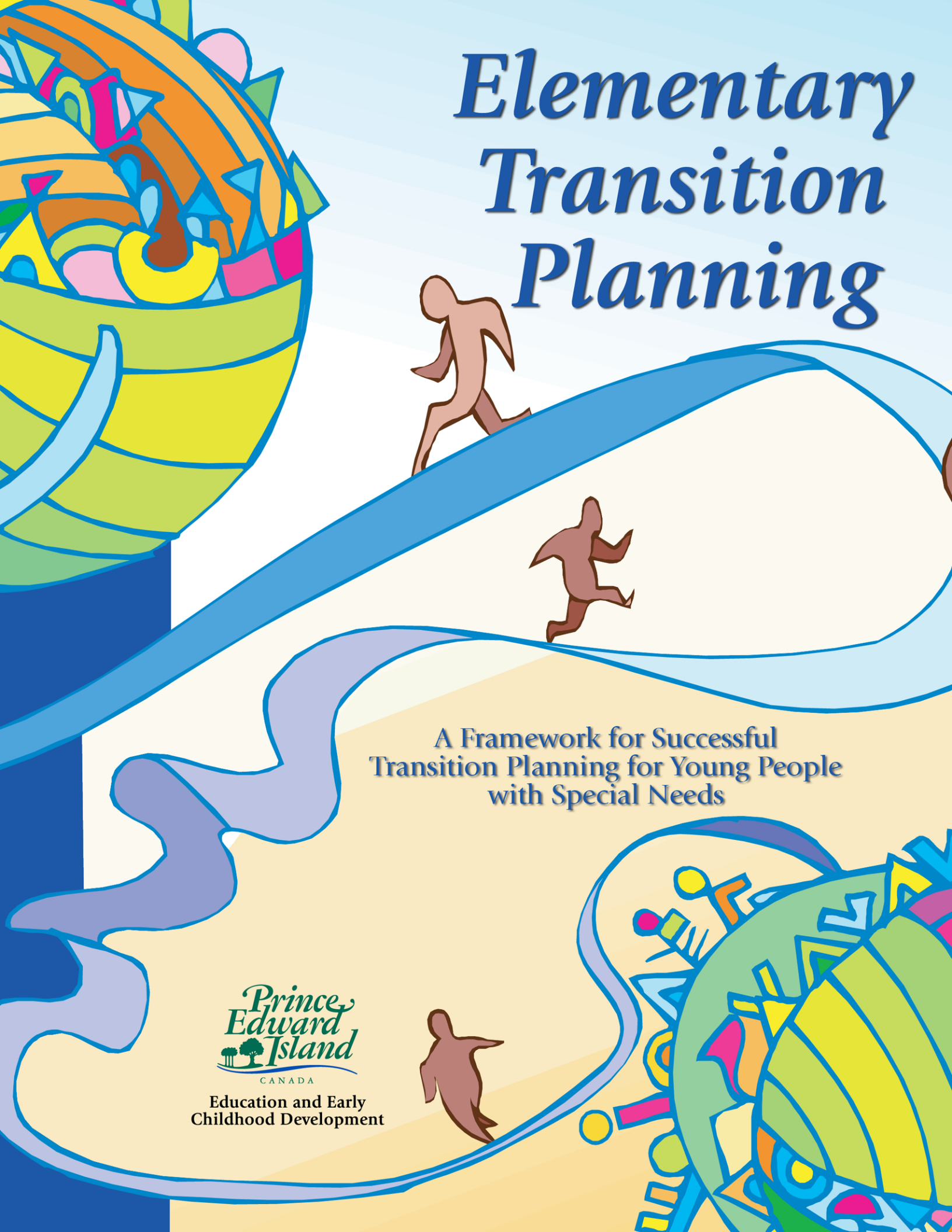


Elementary Transition Planning

A Framework for Successful
Transition Planning for Young People
with Special Needs



Education and Early
Childhood Development





Department of Education

Elementary Transition Planning Resource



Department of Education

Acknowledgments

The Department of Education appreciates the efforts of those who have contributed to the development of this resource.

Marlene Breitenbach
Raeanne Garnhum
Linda Inman Hyson
Terri MacAdam

Copyright

Care has been taken to acknowledge copyright material used in the development of this resource. Any information that will allow us to rectify any reference in subsequent editions would be gratefully received.

Contact Information

Special Education Autism Coordinator
Student Services Division
Department of Education
PO Box 2000, Charlottetown, PE C1A 7N8
Tel (902)569-7792
Fax: (902)368-4622

This resource can be accessed on the Department of Education website at:

<http://www.gov.pe.ca/educ>

First Edition, June, 2003
Revised, August, 2006

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Introduction	4
II.	Student Information	5
	A. Personal Information	7
	B. Sample Student Letter of Introduction - Elementary	8
	C. Sample Student Letter of Introduction - Secondary	9
	D. Parent Letter of Introduction	11
	E. Student Work Sample, Photo or Drawing	12
III.	Assessment Tracking	13
	A. Formal	13
	B. Informal	13
	C. Important Questions to Ask Families	14
	D. Parent Checklists	16
	E. Interpretation Dictionary	20
IV.	Current Issues	21
	A. Medical	21
	B. Physical	22
	C. Sensory	24
	D. Behavioural	26
V.	Effective Supports	24
	A. Visual	24
	B. Organizational	26
	C. Social	27
VI.	Teaching Strategies	28
VII.	Staff Notes	29

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Resource Binder is to assist in communicating needed information from one school or grade to another as students with special needs make necessary transitions. It is hoped that the binder will create an organizational structure to support the collection of individualized programming information that is essential for student success. The binder can be completed or updated at the end of each school year and passed to receiving educators. This will give them an opportunity to continue to implement successful teaching strategies and effective supports. It is intended that the current classroom teacher completes the binder with input and cooperation from the student, the parents and other involved staff.

The main sections of the Resource Binder include Student Information, Assessment Tracking, Current Issues, Effective Supports and Strategies. Not all sections will be relevant or necessary for each student. Select information to include that provides the most important components for that individual. You may decide to add additional sections based on your knowledge of the student. Feel free to be creative to personalize the binder for each student.

All forms contained in the Resource Binder have been included on the accompanying CD to make the tool user friendly and adaptable. This allows them to be filled out or modified using a computer as well, if this is desired.

**This Transition Planning Resource Binder belongs to _____
and has**

(Student)

been completed or updated by:

(Teacher)

(Date)

(Teacher)

(Date)

(Teacher)

(Date)

(Teacher)

(Date)

Planning for Successful Transitions Across Grade Levels

Contributed by Cathy Pratt, Ph.D.

(BBB Autism; printable article #36)

Transition is a natural part of all educational programs. Students with and without disabilities are expected to adjust to changes in teachers, classmates, schedules, buildings, and routines. The transition from one grade to the next can be especially challenging for the student with an autism spectrum disorder. However, these students can more easily make this shift if careful planning and preparation occurs. Below are suggestions for facilitating a smooth transition:

Preparation for transition should begin early in the spring. Whether a student is moving to a new classroom or to a new building, it is helpful to identify the home room teacher, or general or special educator who will have primary responsibility for the student.

Once the receiving teacher is identified, involve this person in the annual case conference process so that they may gain information about the student's current level of functioning and can provide input into projected goals.

Written transition plans may facilitate the student's successful movement. A meeting should be conducted to allow key participants to exchange relevant information. Responsibilities and timelines for individuals involved in the transition should be clearly stated.

Either during the annual case conference or at the transition planning meeting, information should be exchanged about effective instructional strategies, needed modifications and adaptations, positive behavior support strategies, and methods of communication. The receiving teacher should learn about the strategies that have worked in the past so that precious time is not lost at the beginning of the new school year. The receiving teacher may find it helpful to observe the student in his/her current classroom or school setting. This will provide important insight into the student's learning style and needed supports.

Instructional assistants who will be involved in the student's daily education should be identified, educated, and informed about their role in the student's education.

Many teachers may not have precious experience with students with autism spectrum disorders. Therefore, they will need basic information about autism spectrum disorders and about how autism impacts the student with whom they will be working.

Student-specific information about learning styles, communication systems, medical issues and behavior supports is also critical. Remember to include cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, the school secretary, and the school nurse in the training.

Classmates of the new student also may need information. This should be provided in a respectful manner and without stigmatizing the student with autism spectrum disorders.

Before entering a new school, work to alleviate any anxieties the student with autism spectrum disorders may have about the new setting. Preparation for this move can be facilitated by providing the student with a map of the school, a copy of his/her schedule for the fall, a copy of the student handbook and rules, and a list of clubs/extracurricular activities. Develop a videotape about the new school and provide written information about specific situations so that the student can learn and rehearse for the change at his/her pace.

Visitations should be conducted to allow the student and his/her family to meet relevant school staff, to locate the student's locker, and to become familiar with the school culture. Identify key people or a mentor the student can contact if she/he is having a difficult time adjusting or understanding a certain situation. It may also be helpful to find a location where the student can go to relax and to regroup. Provide the student with a visual menu of coping strategies.

Parents should receive information about bus schedules, parent-teacher organizations, and available resources (e.g., counselors, social workers, nurses).

Prior to the new school year, it will be helpful to establish methods and a schedule for communicating between home and school. Suggestions for maintaining ongoing communication include journals, daily progress notes, mid-term grades, scheduled appointments or phone calls, informal meetings, report cards, or parent-teacher conferences.

Once in the new school, ask for peers who are willing to help the student with the transition and acclimation to the new school. By gaining the support of a friend without a disability, the student with an autism spectrum disorder may have greater access to social opportunities during and after school.

The ultimate goal is to promote a successful experience for both the student and the rest of the school community. By systematically addressing the transition process, students with autism spectrum disorders can be prepared to participate in their new school experience.

Reprinted with Permission from the Indiana Resource Center for Autism
<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/~irca/ftrainpapers.html>

Personal Information

Name:	Parents/Guardians:
Date of Birth:	Address:
Diagnosis:	Medical Alert/Allergies:

Current Level of Support	Frequency
Resource	
Teacher Assistant	
Mentor	
Guidance	
Youth Worker	
Tutor	
Peer Helper	

Does the student have a current IEP?	[if yes, please note location of the IEP here]
Does the student need an adapted curriculum?	[if yes, please add information about adaptations in the Staff Notes section]
Does the student need a modified curriculum?	[if yes, please add information about modifications in the Staff Notes section]

School History (please update each year)

School	Teacher	Grade	School Year

Introduction from the Student

My name is _____

I am _____ years old.

I have _____ brothers and _____ sisters.

I have _____ pets. They are _____

My favorite television show is _____

My favorite color is _____

My favorite book is _____

My favorite foods are _____

I really like to _____

I really don't like to _____

The most fun I have ever had was _____

Learning is easiest for me when _____

Some things that help me do well in school are _____

Something I want you to know about me is _____

Introduction from the Student

Hi!

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. My name is _____
_____. I am _____ years old. I live in _____
_____ with the following members of my family _____
_____.
_____.

In my spare time I like to _____
_____.

My interests include _____
_____.

The type of music that I like to listen to is _____ and my
favorite musical performer is _____.

When I am with my friends it is important to me that we _____
_____.

The most important thing about me that I think you should know is _____

_____.

On television, I really like to watch _____
_____.

My favorite movie is _____.

One thing I really don't like to do is _____
_____.

I would also prefer if you didn't ask me to _____
_____.

However, if you asked me to _____, I would love that!!

Some things that help me do well in school are _____

Some more things about me that I would like you to know are _____

Letter of Introduction from the Parent(s)

Introduction from the Student

Examples: (letter, drawing, photos)

Student Name: _____

Formal and Informal Assessments Completed

Assessment	Date	Location
Mullen Scales of Early Learning		
WISC		
Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales		
Key Math		
Woodcock Reading Mastery		
PIAT-R		
WIAT		
Other:		
ABLIS		
Basic Skills Checklist		
Boehm Test of Basic Concepts		
Brigance Comprehensive Inventory of Basic Skills		
Observation Survey		
Other:		

Important Questions to Ask Families

This worksheet may be useful as a template to communicate with families of students with autism or other special needs. It should not be viewed as an endpoint in itself. It is meant to begin the discussion of classroom issues and challenges between educators and families.

1. What are your child's areas of strength?

2. What types of things work best for your child in terms of rewards and motivation?

3. Does your child have any balance, coordination, or physical challenges that impede his or her ability to participate in gym class?

If yes, describe: _____

4. How does your child best communicate with others?

- Spoken language Written language Picture Symbols
 Sign language Communication device
 Combination of the above: _____

5. Does your child use echolalia (repeating words without regard for meaning)?

- Never Sometimes Frequently

6. Do changes in routine or transitions to new activities affect your child's behavior?

- Never Sometimes Frequently

If yes, what types of classroom accommodations can I make to help your child adapt to change and transitions?

7. Does your child have any sensory issues that could be an issue in class or at school?

Yes No

A. If yes, what type of sensitivity does the student have?

Visual Auditory
 Smells Touch
 Taste Other: _____

B. Describe in more detail: _____

C. What kinds of adaptations have helped with these sensitivities in the past?

8. What behaviors related to autism or your child's special needs am I most likely to see at school?

A. Are there triggers for these behaviors?

Sensory issues Changes in schedule or routine
 Social attention Escape a non preferred task
 Other: _____

B. In your experience, what are the best ways to cope with these challenges and help your child get back on task?

9. Is there anything else you think I should know about your child?

10. What is the best approach for us to use in communication with one another about your child's progress and challenges?

Telephone calls (phone number): _____
 E-mail (e-mail address): _____
 Other: _____

Basic Skills Parent Checklist

Name: _____

Date: _____

Please check that column that indicates your child's current skill in each area.

Skill Area: EATING Targets:	Needs Help	Independent	No Opportunity
holds glass			
eats with fingers			
uses spoon			
uses fork			
uses straw			
uses knife to spread			
uses knife to cut			
uses knife to peel			
prepares toast			
prepares cereal			
prepares sandwich			
uses microwave			

Comments:

Caregiver Completing Assessment

Basic Skills Parent Checklist

Name: _____

Date: _____

Please check the column that indicates your child's current skill in each area.

Skill Area: DRESSING Targets:	Needs Help	Independent	No Opportunity
Undressing			
removes socks			
removes shoes			
removes jacket			
removes shirt			
removes dress			
removes "pullover" garments			
Dressing			
puts on shoes			
puts on socks			
puts on shirt			
puts on dress			
puts on jacket			
puts on shoes			
Comments:			

Caregiver Completing Assessment

Basic Skills Parent Checklist

Name: _____

Date: _____

Please check the column that indicates your child's current skill in each area.

Skill Area: GROOMING Targets:	Needs Help	Independent	No Opportunity
puts toothpaste on brush			
brushes teeth			
turns faucets on /off			
washes face			
dries face			
washes hands			
dries hands			
bathes self			
shampoos hair			
combs/brushes hair			
prepares cereal			
wipes/blows nose			

Comments:

Caregiver Completing Assessment

Basic Skills Parent Checklist

Name: _____

Date: _____

Please check the column that indicates your child's current skill in each area.

Skill Area: TOILETING Targets:	Sometimes	Always	Never
indicates when wet or soiled			
verbalizes toilet need			
communicates toilet need nonverbally			
initiates without reminders			
urinates in toilet			
bowel movement in toilet			
manipulates clothing to use the toilet			
wipes self			
flushes			
washes hands after toileting			
has urination accidents (how often?)			
has bowel accidents (how often?)			
remains dry at night			

Comments:

Caregiver Completing Assessment

Interpretation Dictionary

At times communication attempts by students with autism may be misunderstood. If you have particular examples of this student's communication that would need some interpretation, please fill in the chart below. Examples are provided.

(Adapted from Teaching Students with Autism: A Resource Guide for Schools)

What the student does	What it might mean
EXAMPLE: reaches for food item	EXAMPLE: asking for food item
EXAMPLE: increased restlessness, difficulty with sitting	EXAMPLE: need movement
EXAMPLE: pulls at hair	EXAMPLE: frustrated, becoming upset

Student Name: _____ **Date Completed:** _____

Medical Issues

Diagnosis? _____

Current medical issues? _____

Allergies? _____

Medication? If yes, list and indicate if administered at home or school

Dietary concerns? Eating considerations? _____

Physical Issues

Physical limitations? Specify where help is needed. _____

Hearing and vision normal?

Toilet trained? Independent in self care? _____

History of seizures? Describe a typical seizure as experienced by this student. What procedure is followed?

Sensory Issues

Unusual response to visual stimuli (reaction to lights, sunlight, visual distraction)

Unusual response to auditory stimuli (reaction to loud noises, whispers, echoes, crowds)

Unusual response to tactile stimuli (reaction to touch, pain) _____

Demonstrates self stimulatory or repetitive behaviour: (describe) _____

Challenging Behaviors

Please include information about challenging behaviours that may occur with this student.
Attach a copy of any Behaviour Support Plans currently in use.

Behaviour (Please describe briefly)	Preventive Strategies (effective?)	Current Consequences (effective?)
aggression		
self injury		
non-compliance		
disruptive behaviour		

Other		
Other		

Student: _____

School Year _____

Skill Area: Visual Supports

Type of Visual Support Needed	Purpose	Example	Stimulus Used (photo, object, picture symbol, words, other?)	Materials Needed	Level of independence
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily Activity Schedule <input type="checkbox"/> half day <input type="checkbox"/> whole day	student makes transitions between lessons/ rooms following a visual sequence	strip on desk with photo sequence of lessons i.e music, gym, recess, etc			
<input type="checkbox"/> Task Specific or Embedded Schedule	student completes one task or routine following a visual sequence	brushing teeth; morning routines; school job; build toys or cook with picture instructions			
<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Activity Schedule	student completes several tasks in sequence using a picture or symbol sequence	small binder or clipboard with a list of tasks (pictures or symbols) to be completed			
<input type="checkbox"/> outline or picture jigs:	shape, color or outline cues to provide information about the task to be completed	placemat outline for table setting; outline of parts in sequence for assembly task; color coded folders or labels for materials			
<input type="checkbox"/> labels:	to identify materials, names of items and correct placement	photos, written, color, shape or picture symbols attached to locations or objects			

Other					
--------------	--	--	--	--	--

Student Name: _____

Date completed: _____

Organizational and Environmental Supports

(Please check all applicable)

- Seat student away from noises and distractions (pencil sharpeners, windows, high traffic areas)
- Seat student close to the teacher and board work
- Have visual schedule on desk or easily accessible
- Provide quiet corner of the room for student to work
- Create a variety of structured learning spaces
- Seat student next to a peer buddy
- Provide extra time for student to transition from one activity to another
- Provide quiet time to review daily schedule and discuss any concerns
- Give extra time to transition to class or to get dressed to go outside for recess
- Provide extra time or visual supports to gather materials and be organized at beginning and end of day
- Provide advanced warning of any changes in schedule and routine
- Teach “One Binder” concept to organize materials (See : Orchestrating Academic Success by Dawn Reithaug)
- Provide checklist to organize materials
- Have clearly designated labeled areas for student and teacher belongings
- Other _____
- Other _____

Please list below any other organizational strategies or suggestions that have worked with this student.

Name: _____

Social Supports

Please check any social supports that are presently being used.

Support	Current Frequency	Recommended Frequency
peer tutors/helpers		
recess buddy		
homework buddy		
social skills group		
play group		
social stories		
skill streaming		
rehearsal strategies		
lunch bunch		
friendship club		
circle of friends		
intramural sports or special interest clubs		
other		

Please comment on any of the above social supports that are presently being used and add any additional suggestions.

Student Name: _____

Teaching Strategies

(Please check all applicable)

- Label objects or locations in school environment with text or photos
- Provide student with a peer model for _____ (E.g.lessons/recess/social skills)
- Give short verbal directions
- Display daily class schedule on the board
- Use frames /border/ colored chalk around board work to draw visual attention to information
- Provide additional visual cues when giving directions (sign, gesture, photo, written)
- Use different colored chalk/highlighter or overhead projector to emphasize concepts
- Put stories on tape
- Use checklists or self monitoring strips to increase independence
- Provide frequent movement breaks
- Determine student interests to emphasize these in curriculum
- Reduce amount of work or homework required
- Use alternative devices for creating written work (computer, graphic organizers)
- Speak in a quiet, low tone voice
- Monitor the noise level in the classroom
- Prepare ahead for special events (fire drills/field trips/ assemblies)
- Video tape student to document student progress
- Get student attention before giving a direction
- Use social stories or scripts to explain social situations

Other teaching strategies that may assist this student:
