

TIPS TO MAKE THE TRANSITION PROCESS SUCCESSFUL

As you work with families and other partners who will serve the child and family in the future, it will help for them to know that you want to work in partnership with them. The key elements of working in partnership include:

- Partners will accept each other as competent, capable people who deserve respect and caring.
- Partners need to trust each other and act in a way that protects shared personal information.
- Partnerships take time to develop.
- Partnerships are two-way relationships.
- Partners will work hard to make decisions that are agreed upon.
- Partners share responsibility and effort to achieve agreed-upon goals.
- Partners make sure they discuss and understand families' concerns and children's needs before starting to give help.
- Partners are going to disagree at times; they have to be willing to keep the door open during differences of opinion in order to keep working to resolve conflicts. Negotiation is a way to work to meet in the middle or possibly finding a way of arriving at a solution that can be agreed upon.
- Families and schools are partners within a larger network of family, community, and agency resources. We will all look to requesting additional help, if needed, to get the job done.
- Partners need to really listen to each other and make sure there is understanding on both sides.
- Partnerships require flexibility with ongoing communication among all members to meet the needs of the team. For example, meetings and other activities need to occur at mutually agreeable times and places.

Both parents and professionals have areas of knowledge and skills to contribute to the joint task of working together for the benefit of the child. Clear, honest, and direct communication is the key in forming a collaborative partnership. In a collaborative team working in partnership, all members believe that each of them have unique and needed expertise and can share the roles of leader, learner, and expert to the benefit of the child.