Tool for facilitating school transitions

Supporting students in Elementary Cycle Three and secondary school

Supporting students in their school transitions is essential to helping them stay motivated and academically engaged. These transitions are generally a cause for concern and worry for students and require preparation.

The Ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ) has developed a tool to prepare students at the Elementary Cycle Three and secondary levels for their school transitions. More specifically, this tool enables students to recognize their ability to take action and to gain a sense of internal control during school transitions. On their own or with an adult, students can use it to understand how to prepare for the changes ahead.

We encourage you to share the support tool with students, use it in class and invite parents to consult it with their children.

Link to the English version

STEPS IN THE SUPPORT PROCESS

While all students experience school transitions, their ability to adapt to a new situation may depend on certain factors, such as their socioeconomic environment or their personal or cultural characteristics. No matter the circumstances, in order to foster academic resilience during transition, the focus should be placed on students' personal variables, such as their sense of internal control and self-efficacy.

These variables provide students with an impression of being able to influence their environment through their actions rather than being subject to its effects.[1] Helping students to recognize the power they have over their own life allows them to adapt to what lies ahead and to reduce any related anxiety.

The tool provides various steps for a successful school transition. These steps may be used or adapted in class, based on students' needs.

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[1] François Larose et al., *La transition primaire-secondaire: ce qu'on sait des difficultés qui y sont associées et ce que sont les pratiques d'accompagnement les plus favorables* (Sherbrooke, Québec: Université de Sherbrooke, Faculty of Education, Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport, 2007).

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STEP 1 : INTROSPECTION

Introspection allows students prepare for school transition and the unknowns that come with such a change. First, encourage students to analyze the situation. This will enable them to anticipate the future and to self-regulate their thoughts, perceptions, emotions, etc. Students should be encouraged to verbalize their concerns and feelings, to explain what they already know about the situation and to anticipate the changes.

At this step, it is important to encourage students to identify their own underlying strengths by helping them become aware of the resilience they have already demonstrated. During times of transition, being aware of one's personal strengths, qualities and resources enhances one's sense of internal control and competency when facing a challenging situation.

STEP 2 : INFORMATION

Information is the next essential step, after introspection. It is important that students be given access to various reliable sources of information that will allow them to address their concerns and adjust their perceptions. New points of reference will enable students to bridge the gap between their own perceptions and reality.

STEP 3 : PERSONALIZED SUPPORT

Students who are aware of their own aptitudes and ability to take action are better equipped to overcome uncertainty and adjust to new situations. However, it is possible that this may not be enough to reassure students and for them to feel ready to face unknown situations. In this case, it is important to encourage students to pay attention to their own emotions and how they have manifested, and to seek the support of a professional to obtain more personalized help.

The "Parents" section of the Open School website provides various resources to help parents support their children in situations of stress or anxiety, or in situation in which they have to adapt to change. It can be found at **ecoleouverte.ca/en/parent**.

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