Transitions

All of us face many transitions in our lives. The transition from primary to secondary school is an exciting time for students, their parents and teachers. This transition occurs at the same time as students are experiencing physical and emotional changes, defining their identity and forming new relationships. Successfully settling in to a secondary school provides students with many opportunities to make new friends, face new challenges and continue learning and developing their interests.

Making transition a positive and exciting time can ensure that students are fully engaged with their learning and are happy to be at school.

This resource for schools and agencies provides information and ideas for the promotion of successful transition from primary to secondary school.

THE BIG JUMP! DVD
http://www.classroomvideo.com.au

This DVD contains interviews from students who are about to make the transition from primary to secondary school, and those who’ve made it. It is an honest and engaging look at this crucial time in a student’s life and is a great discussion starter for kids about to make the leap. It is also a valuable aid for teachers to gain an understanding of what students face.

MindMatters Professional Development: Transitions focus module
This focus module explores a range of transitions for students and school staff (eg transitions between schools, regions, cultures, health agencies, work, training and care facilities).

All Set for High School: A Protective Behaviours Approach
http://www.innovativeresources.org/

This resource provides ideas to support young people's transition to high school. Going to high school can be a challenging time and the Protective Behaviours program can help young people to make this transition safely and in ways that are empowering. Each section begins with teaching/learning activities and worksheets to support them.

School Transition and Resilience Training (START)

The START program has been designed to assist schools to plan and implement crucial primary prevention strategies to build belonging and promote wellbeing in all students as they reach a stage of potential vulnerability.

School Focused Youth Service (SFYS)
SFYS supports prevention and early intervention strategies for vulnerable young people between 10 and 18 years of age by:

- Strengthening partnerships between schools and community service organisations to meet the needs of vulnerable children and young people
- Identifying service gaps and developing strategies to respond to needs identified by schools and community service organisations
- Providing brokerage funds to support projects in schools and the community that address service gaps
RESILIENCE & TRANSITION PROGRAM
Solway Primary School
The program combined a transition support program for year 6 students with a leadership and personal resilience program for students in years 5 and 6. Topics covered included self confidence, self image, communication and leadership, and activities for students included identifying their individual challenges, identifying their individual strengths and coping strategies, developing decision making skills and increasing awareness and preparedness for the challenges of transition. The transition support program included 3 groups of 10-12 students who participated in 4 x 1 hour sessions, and the leadership and personal resilience program involved 8 x 1 hour sessions. A parenting session was also conducted for parents of students in years 5 and 6. A fun and informative approach was adopted, involving a ‘trivia’ format to help parents better understand their child’s transition into adolescence.

Contact Boronia SFYS for more information

STRONG SEVENS
Parkwood Secondary College
This program aimed to improve engagement and relationships with peers and teachers of year 7 students during their transition year. It built on an existing peer support program at Parkwood SC by extending it to cover the whole year and increasing enjoyment and students’ sense of belonging. The program included a dedicated and welcoming Student Lounge which ran once a week for this group at lunchtimes. Year 7 students and their Peer Support Leaders were able to access a guitar hero game and a Wii, had food and drink provided. At its height, the lounge attracted nearly two thirds of the level, plus the year 10 Peer Support Leaders. This program was complemented by classroom sessions delivered by The Workshop looking at friendship issues. This program was successful and cost effective, and made the students feel more “grown up”. Student surveys show a much happier and engaged group who report increased enjoyment and engagement in learning.

Contact Maroondah SFYS for more information

MONASH TRANSITION PROGRAM
Monash Youth & Family Services
The Transition Program is aimed at Grade 6 students leaving primary school and moving onto secondary school. The program aims to build the skills and confidence to handle issues that students may face in their experience transitioning from primary to secondary school. The program focuses on the following topics:
- Fears and expectations
- Real experiences of year seven students
- Strategies to overcome the fears and expectations
- Responding to new situations
- Assertiveness
- Conflict resolution
- Anger management
- Understanding diversity of different cultures and individual needs

The program can be delivered in one day or over 5 sessions.

Contact Monash SFYS for more information

TRANSITION PROGRAM
Nunawading Christian College
NCC operates a primary-secondary transition program. It began in 2009 in 2nd term with students from Year 6 attending once a week for 50 minutes a secondary class such as Home Economics, Science, Art or Technics. This year the program included taking a technics class of 50 minutes per week for the whole year. The students received instruction in building items out of timber. The classes have been very popular and our students have thoroughly enjoyed them.

The aim of the program was to assist students to make a smooth transition and reduce the anxiety of change between primary and secondary. Year 6 students also receive an annual orientation day. Be the time students transfer to Year 7 they are familiar with the secondary school program, some teachers and the routines of secondary school. The program has been very successful with positive student outcomes.

Contact Whitehorse SFYS for more information

KNOX SCHOOLS EXPO
Knox Youth Services
Knox Schools Expo is an informative night for parents of Year 5 and 6 children. The expo, held each year at Knox City Council, attracts over 250 people and is aimed at supporting families to prepare their child to transition to secondary school. The expo includes a presentation about the importance of selecting the right school for each child as well as expectations and social and emotional issues that arise with school transition. A short animation film is screened and a panel of youth and education representatives are present for a question/answer time. All secondary schools in Knox are present to promote their school and staff are available for questions.

Contact Knox SFYS for more information

CHOICES IN LIFE (CHIL) PROGRAM
The Patch Primary School
The STRIDE Foundation ran a course to develop resilience, confidence and self-esteem in female Grade 6 students who were going through puberty and shortly making the transition to secondary school. Eight half day sessions were run over the course of the program and these sessions tackled issues such as drug education, body image, cyber-bullying, sex education and nutrition.

This program was put in place in order to address emerging issues in the school such as negative body image and inappropriate sexual behaviour. The school also noted that a number of students in the upper primary level had been offered drugs in the community and that their knowledge of and exposure to drugs was increasing. The program ended with the young females making face masks and running a pamper session with their mothers as a celebration and bonding exercise.

Contact Yarra Ranges SFYS for more information

YEAR 7 SUPPORT INITIATIVES
Warrandyte High School
Warrandyte High School runs several initiatives to support the transition of students into Year 7.

Pre orientation day: WHS has several students who come from primary schools with no peers and don’t know anyone. We arrange a day before the main orientation day to assist them to make connections with other students. About 24 students come for a morning. The program is run by older students.

Triple C Program: A group of 8 Year 9 student leaders help to run a social skills program to build self-esteem, development and communication skills in a small group of 18 Year 7 students with complex social, emotional and cognitive challenges. The 6-week program focuses on building relationships within the team, sharing experiences, teambuilding challenges and emotional awareness.

Year 11 Peer Support Program for Year 7: The training over 2 days prepares the Year 11 students (20-22) to work in small groups to run classroom lessons on friendship and anti-bullying. Each student receives feedback on his or her performance from the teacher. The Peer Support Leaders also run a series of lunchtime activities as an interclass competition, such as a ‘Year 7 X-factor’ competition and a Treasure Hunt.

Contact Manningham SFYS for more information

Schools and community agencies are invited to contact their local SFYS Coordinator to apply for funding to implement programs which meet identified needs of young people between 10 and 18 years of age.

The SFYS Coordinator can provide assistance with identifying partnerships, planning programs and completing the application form.

Some of the examples provided here were funded by SFYS Brokerage.