

## Strategy 11 | Support with mid-term and end of key-stage educational transitions

### Support with mid-term and end of key-stage educational transitions *(Strategy based on practices in Anglo-Saxon contexts)*

#### TYPES OF STRATEGY

☐ Prevention ☐ Intervention ☐ Compensation

#### ADDRESSED TO THE RISK FACTORS

- ☐ Personal challenges
  - ☐ Need for motivation, aspirations and expectations
  - ☐ Disengagement
  - ☐ Irregular transitions
  - ☐ Lack of training to transit (transitions)
- ☐ Social relations
  - ☐ Difficult relationship at the VET educational centre (with tutors, teachers, colleagues, etc.)
  - ☐ Feeling uncared for by the teachers (and the staff of the VET school)
  - ☐ Peer group expectations: low future expectations of the peer group
- ☐ Institutional factors
  - ☐ Transitions in risk stages: post education
  - ☐ Need for information on the different training alternatives
  - ☐ Need for more personal, professional and academic guidance
  - ☐ Need for greater trust and support from the institution
- ☐ Structural factors
  - ☐ Education policy: compulsory secondary and post-secondary education up to the age of 18
  - ☐ Transition from school to Vocational Training
  - ☐ Being out or disconnected from the system
  - ☐ Erroneous referral processes
  - ☐ Lack of continuity

#### LEVEL

- ☐ Individual level (psycho pedagogical actions)
- ☐ Institutional level (institutional actions)

#### AIM

Offer young people, at risk of dropping out, personalised support to reduce the inherent risks involved in educational transitions, giving them the possibility to effectively direct their own educational trajectory and allowing smoother transitions.

#### DESCRIPTION OF THE STRATEGY

The students at risk of dropping out are at risk of disengaging from education in the previous period, during and after an educational transition. This is the case of mid-term transitions (also called "turbulent" or "irregular" transitions), those that take place outside the normal entry and exit point for all students. Mid-term transitions support, and completion of key stages, refers to the support given to young people's planned and unplanned transitions, so that they experience a positive transition. Support will include working with various stakeholders

such as faculty, administration staff and management teams of vocational training centres, receivers, families and/or legal guardians and the young person, friendships and peer group. Fundamentally, support for educational transitions must ensure that a response is given to the needs of young people, which may differ according to their cultural background, family context, material resources, social and emotional support, academic achievements, their talents, or their interests. This action requires the active involvement of young people, with the support of an adult.

**Key challenges to face for young people to experience successful transitions:**

- ☐ **Resources.** Transitions can be very difficult for teachers and vocational training centres, especially when young people require specific educational needs and do not have the necessary resources.
- ☐ **Empowerment and control.** Young people need to feel that they can successfully face this transition. It is important to recognize that young people at risk of dropping out are the group of students least likely to feel in control during the educational transition, and neither they nor their parents, guardians and/or legal guardians can face it.
- ☐ **Support for the development and maintenance of relationships.** Research shows that one of the critical factors for young people experiencing both positive and negative transitions is the impact on their relationships with family, educators, community members and, above all, friendships. Support should therefore involve the management of existing relationships and the development of new relationships. For young people who suffer from financial problems, it is more difficult to maintain previous relationships to the transition after this one. This can lead to: a) Low self-perception and self-concept, b) Developing new friendships with weak emotional bonds, c) Avoiding new friendships, d) cutting off relationships before a transition. However, transitions can also create positive opportunities, such as ending previous negative relationships and creating new ones. Therefore, support must include help in the transition between old relationships and possible new ones.
- ☐ **Creating a sense of continuity and assigning a reference tutor.** By recognizing the significant changes that the young person will experience in this transition (for example, new curricular areas, new spaces, new dynamics, etc.) it is especially important to strive to create the maximum feeling of educational continuity. The more information about a young person that is presented before transition (or at least at the point of entry), the greater will be the ability to support it. In this regard, research suggests for the young person (and their family) to be assigned to a reference person (guardian or reference tutor), who is the person responsible for their transition and who takes responsibility for all the aspects derived from the transition (Demie et al., 2004).

**Create a sense of academic progress.** It is also important to build a positive educational trajectory as a young man or woman, as this has an impact on the feeling students have of themselves. This recognizes the pragmatic challenges of transitions, where there is a risk of disconnection from curriculum areas and where it is difficult to maintain adequate academic performance and achievement. Therefore, it is important to recognize the achievements of young people while in an educational environment, as well as pass through their expectations and aspirations for the new educational environments in which they must move. Efforts to manage this positive vision of the centre of origin and the receiving centre can support a sense of progress in the educational and labour market trajectories of young people and can respond to the objective of supporting the youth in need of feeling "owners" of their future plans.

## BENEFICIARIES

- ☐ **Young people**
☐ Teaching staff
 ☐ **Families**
☐ Community
- ☐ Other beneficiaries:.....

## WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THE STRATEGY

- ☐ **Tutor**
☐ Teacher/Trainer
 ☐ **Support staff (for example; counsellor, social worker)**
- ☐ Expert external ☐ .....

## IMPLEMENTATION CHRONOLOGY *(When will the strategy be implemented)*

- ☐ At the beginning.
 ☐ **During the academic year**
☐ At the end of the academic year
- ☐ **Transition between the key stage** ☐ .....

## COST

☐ Low ☒ Medium ☐ High

## STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT (How can it be achieved?):

The following actions distinguish between the two types of transitions (midterm and end of stage). Actions that fit both types of transition are highlighted in bold.

1. *Support the completion of key stages to transfer to optional-compulsory studies.* These support actions are designed to make it easier for young people to become familiar with new educational environments as quickly as possible.
  1. *Follow-up during the days of incorporation* (school / university, vocational training, institute of higher or further education) to organise individually or in groups according to the needs and preferences of the young person.
  2. *Information on mobility.* Familiarise the young person with bus routes or mobility routes to reach the new environment.
  3. *Welcome.* When the tutor, on the first day, accompanies the young person in their new environment and introduces them to this new environment.
  4. **Communication skills training.** Provide guidance to the young person on how they can present themselves to teachers, peers, etc. in his new training environment.
  5. **Develop individual or career learning plans.** A road map to achieve educational and career goals (see strategy 1).
  6. **Respond to other learning support needs.** Work with support staff, teaching staff, external agents, special educational needs teaching staff to ensure additional resources are available early in the transition.
2. *To support half term (irregular school transitions) which occur at key stages.* This type of transition requires support strategies that involve sharing information between institutions in order to prepare young people to experience a positive transition. It includes specific actions such as:
  1. **Compile an up-to-date record of the young person's educational history (curriculum vitae to date and academic progress).** It can be useful both for sharing information with the receiving educational environment, and for the registration and monitoring of the young person in the educational centre where they are.
  2. *Collection of key information about family and personal circumstances (custom profile).* Elaborating this personalised profile involves knowing information about the young person's domestic and/or family situation, knowing their interests, talents, significant relationships, pets, preferences in terms of learning styles (for example, individual work, group work), etc., which may be important for teachers to know. This personalised profile must comply with data protection guidelines.
  3. **Support with relationships** (see strategy 14). It is particularly important to get involved early in a transition to vocational school. This may involve providing support in practical, social and emotional guidance on how to end and maintain relationships and how to start new ones.
  4. **Generate an active alumni directory, where each new student has an entry.** This is important so that outgoing and incoming students can feel that they have a legacy at the school.
  5. **Have contact with the old school and the new one.** This is important so the young person (and their family) can be introduced to the new educational context before the transition. It is important to have information about the new educational context.
  6. **Organise a Skype welcome between classmates from the old and the new school to catch up on the new institution.** This is important for the young person to feel welcomed before the transition, but it is also important to generate a feeling of appreciation with previous friendships after it.
  7. *Discussion groups / support group, in small groups and with the whole class group, on the impacts of educational transitions.* This is particularly important in cases where there are a significant number of students who have moved to new educational contexts. Transition impacts may vary by student group, and it is important to consider the social and academic impacts for those who are left behind.

8. *Support and training in communication.* This is especially important for students with financial problems. Training involves ensuring that a student is familiar with email platforms, has an email address, or knows how to store the email addresses of their friends. However, does the student have access to a computer/laptop or the necessary resources such as, for example, making a Skype (microphone, camera)? Does the student have any communication device, such as a mobile phone?

These activities require action and commitment on the part of the assigned transition tutor, young people, teachers and management team to guide, help and support the students during the entire pre-transition and post-transition process. **Therefore, the assigned tutor who supports students must have the ability to coordinate transition actions.**

#### RESOURCES *(What is needed?)*:

- ☐ Designated person (tutor, counsellor)
- ☐ Private space for meetings
- ☐ Professional specialist in social and emotional aspects (educational psychologist, school counsellor)
- ☐ External agents (e.g., social worker, health professional, social worker)
- ☐ Materials / One:
  - ☐ Academic record sheet
  - ☐ Registration of personalised information
  - ☐ Internet access and communication platforms (Skype, email account, etc.)
  - ☐ Student directory and online forum or blog (password protected)
  - ☐ Camera and ease of taking, sending and printing photos
  - ☐ Mobile phone access

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Related protective factors:

- Individualised support when needed.
- Well managed changes.
- Build trust.
- Guidance of students when necessary.
- Faculty to support students.
- Good reception.
- Build a positive identity towards learning.
- Non-teaching support.
- Improvement of expectations and aspirations.
- Construction of support networks.
- Strategies to establish a network of positive friendships.
- Integrate the young person in the educational community.
- That the student feels supported.

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