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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE
TRANSITION EXPERIENCE OF NORMALLY DEVELOPING CHILDREN
WITHIN THE FIRST TWO MONTHS OF ENTERING
AN INTEGRATED PRESCHOOL

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We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard



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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this thesis was threefold. One purpose was to describe the consumers (parents of children attending) of the Pearkes (Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health) integrated preschool program during the research period in order to provide Pearkes administration with information which may be useful in future planning. The second purpose was to describe the transition behaviours of children over three years of age who were entering the integrated preschool for the first time. This information will provide teachers and parents with an idea of what may be expected during the first two months or transition period when three year old children enter integrated preschool programs. The third purpose of this thesis was to describe strategies and other factors which parents and teachers identified as useful in easing the transition period.

Additionally significant to this thesis was the use of study results on policy development specifically in relation to pre-entry preparation for children enrolled in integrated preschool programs. This thesis

also adds to the existing studies regarding the experiences of normally developing children in integrated preschool programs

Parents and teachers completed questionnaires based on Jorde's (1984) study examining the influence of parent's attitudes and behaviours on the adjustment of two year olds to a new, regular (not integrated) preschool experience. This was adapted for use in the integrated program by the researcher with the assistance of an early childhood educator

No one strategy could be identified as playing the most central role in easing the transition process however, a number of strategies such as pre-entry preparation were explored and thought to be useful

Examiners



Supervisor Professor M Callahan (School of Social Work)



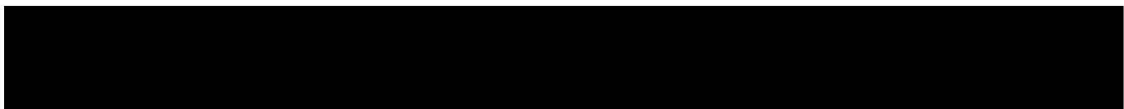
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband Jack,
our son Michael and to the memory of my
mother, Fran Cormack

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Segregated preschool programs for children with handicaps began in the 1950s when parents of children with handicaps were refused admission for their children into existing public daycare programs (Health & Welfare Canada, 1980) For two decades, young children with handicapping conditions were isolated from the general public They either remained in the family home, were cared for in institutions (Odom & McEvoy, 1988) or attended separate day care facilities which encompassed early intervention programs (Health & Welfare Canada, 1980; Odom & McEvoy, 1988)

In the early 1970s educators began to recognize a need to establish integrated preschool programs for children with handicaps (Bricker, 1979, O'Connell, 1984, Odom & McEvoy, 1988) This accelerated effort was largely due to judicial and legislative factors in the United States including the Head Start Programs initiated in 1965 (Haring, 1974, Hymes, 1991) that focused on the older, preschool child from disadvantaged and low stimulation environments. These programs made a commitment to provide public awareness,

early intervention, quality health, daycare, and educational programs for all children. In time this same concept began to be applied to programs for children with handicaps and those at risk for developmental delays. In 1974 Head Start had met the congressional mandate to fill not less than 10% of its national enrolment with children who were handicapped (Hymes, 1991, Odom & McEvoy, 1988). From this arose the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P L 94-142, 1975, 1977) which adhered to the principle of the least restrictive environments for all children with handicaps (Guralnick, 1981).

Utilizing the values and philosophy which led up to the legislation of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, integrated preschool services similar to those in the United States began to emerge in Canada in the late seventies. At this time the development of integrated preschool services became an important concern among early childhood educators (Health & Welfare Canada, 1980). Thus, since the mid 1970s, integrated special education preschools have played an increasing role in the preschool service delivery to young children with handicaps (Bricker, 1979, Jenkins,

Speltz & Odom, 1985, Odom & McEvoy, 1988) Early childhood educators continue to develop integrated preschool programs as service delivery moves from facility-based models to family and community-based models (Bricker, 1978)

The terms "integration" and "mainstreaming" are defined in numerous ways by different authors. The definitions are usually linked to the ratio of children with special needs to the number of normally developing children in a setting. Jenkins, Speltz and Odom (1985) define integration as "programs for handicapped children in which some nonhandicapped children are enrolled" (p 7). Mainstreaming refers to the placement of children with handicaps into programs for nonhandicapped children (Odom, Deklyen & Jenkins, 1984), or where more than 50% of the children are developing normally (Odom & McEvoy, 1988).

Examination of the effects of integration on children with handicaps has received much attention (Esposito, 1988, Odom & McEvoy, 1988). The effects on normally developing children have received less attention, although there have been some studies on

developmental outcomes for normally developing¹ preschool children in integrated programs (Esposito, 1988, Odom & McEvoy, 1988) and these studies will be further examined in a following review of the literature

It can be expected that children will experience a "settling in" period when entering any new setting such as a preschool. The writer is interested in knowing more about this settling-in or transition period when a normally developing child enters an integrated preschool program. While employed as a social worker in an integrated child development centre (the Pearkes building of the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health), the writer has observed that normally developing children differ from one another in their behaviours during this transition time. Some children appear to have more difficulty separating from the delivering parent while other children appear upset at other times of the day. Having observed this, the writer queries possible reasons for the different reactions and if any of these reasons relate specifically to the integrated concept of the program

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Reasons for differences in behaviour during transition time have been examined by Jorde (1984) In a study examining the influence of parent's attitudes and behaviours on the adjustment of two year olds to a new preschool experience, she found that it is very complex to sort out all of the factors influencing the transition experience However, she identified contextual factors such as space, play resources, planned experiences and the actions of preschool teachers as important in influencing this experience She also identified that parental attitudes and behaviours will play a role during this time of transition as well as the personality of the child Jorde notes that some key areas that may influence the transition process are preschool preparation, sibling influence, predictable routines and consistency.

Jorde's (1984) study is very important to this research because it identifies key areas or factors that may be crucial in assisting children with the transition into preschool Jorde's study was carried out with normally developing two year old children entering an non-integrated preschool setting while this study will examine the transition period of normally

developing children three years and older entering an integrated preschool setting

The writer also has a personal interest in the transition process. My husband and I have a wonderful son named Michael and he is attending the preschool program at the Pearkes Building of the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health (also referred to as QACCH). When he is three years old he will attend the integrated preschool classroom. As parents it will be useful to know what we can do to prepare our son for this new entry into an integrated program in order to make the transition as smooth as possible for him.

The purpose of this study is threefold: one, to describe the consumers (parents of children attending) of the Pearkes integrated preschool program during the research period, two, to describe the transition behaviours of children over the age of three who are entering the Pearkes integrated preschool program for the first time, and three, to describe strategies and other factors noted by parents and teachers which may have influenced the transition process.

This study is significant for a number of reasons. First, demographic information will be available to

Pearkes administration to assist them in identifying those families utilizing the integrated preschool program and their reasons for choosing this program. This information has not been available in the past and may be useful in planning future admissions. For example, it may be helpful to know why consumers are utilizing the integrated preschool program since this is not used exclusively by employees of the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health to meet a daycare need.

Second, in describing transition behaviours, parents and teachers may have a better idea of what behaviour they might expect children to display at different intervals during the first two months or transition period. It may be comforting or encouraging to know if these behaviours were observed in other children during the transition period.

The third reason this study is significant is that strategies and other factors that may have influenced the children's transition process will be clearly identified. As a result, parents and teachers will have the option to utilize these pre-entry or transition techniques.

The fourth reason this study is significant is that results could have an impact on policy and procedural development for early childhood education programs including the Pearkes integrated preschool program. The current Pearkes policy reflects the promotion of integration since all classrooms are integrated for children over the age of three. An examination of the transition period may affect policy and procedures in relation to preparing children for entry and the information shared with the parents and children prior to entry. The ability to forecast predictable effects of transition will provide information and strategies for program planning that encourages children's competence or decrease their adjustment difficulties (Ladd & Price, 1987)

The fifth and final significant reason to carry out this study is to add to the few existing studies that examine normally developing children in integrated settings (Bricker & Bricker, 1971, Bricker & Sheehan, 1981, Bruder & Bailey, 1982, Cooke, Ruskus, Apolloni & Peck, 1981, Ispa & Matz, 1978, Hoyson, Jamieson & Strain, 1984, Odom, Deklyen & Jenkins, 1984)

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of the literature will begin with a definition of the normalization principle which guides the concept of integration. Following this, existing literature on the impact of integration and mainstreaming on normally developing children will be examined to glean important findings and identify gaps in knowledge. The process of transitions will also be explored. Developmental theories will be used to frame the transition process as well as to examine what is considered age appropriate development in relation to separation.

Normalization Principle

As noted at the beginning of this thesis, the need to provide special education in segregated settings was the predominant point of view of the 1960's. However, it is now apparent that children with special needs benefit from exposure to a richer and more challenging environment, increased opportunity for observational learning, and peer benefits (Guralnick, 1981) which are much more evident in integrated settings (Wolfensberger, 1972). Wolfensberger (1972) defines

normalization as the "utilization of means which are as culturally normative as possible, in order to establish and/or maintain personal behaviours and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible" (p 46)

All children with special needs have the right to grow and participate in the mainstream of society with the same developmental opportunities of and alongside those without handicapping conditions (Health & Welfare Canada, 1980)

Wolfensberger describes physical integration as being made up of four factors location (distance from resources and social groupings), its physical context to other facilities and settings, access to it, and its size [the number of (deviant) persons grouped together] However, meaningful integration must be more than physical inclusion (Cooke, Apolloni & Cooke, 1976, Wolfensberger, 1972) Social interaction, acceptance and the formation of relationships should also occur (Wolfensberger, 1972, Odom & McEvoy, 1988) Findings from this thesis will contribute to the literature on normalization It will also provide information which can be made available to parents, preschool teachers and administrators about the

transition process of normally developing children entering an integrated preschool setting

Integration

Researchers have demonstrated how children with handicaps can benefit from being mainstreamed into programs with nonhandicapped children (Cooke, Ruskus, Apolloni & Peck, 1981, Galloway & Chandler, 1978, Ispa & Matz, 1978) However, research regarding the effects of integration and mainstreaming on nonhandicapped participants has been limited (Esposito, 1988, Odom, Deklyen & Jenkins, 1984) Studies were reviewed in order to examine the overall effect of mainstreaming/integration on normally developing children who enter integrated preschool programs Including this information in this study on transitions will provide the reader with a more complete picture on integration at the preschool level Bricker & Bricker (1971) used Bayley Scales (Bayley, 1969) and Stanford-Binet (Terman & Merrill, 1973) testing tools to measure nine normally developing children in integrated preschool programs They found that development of these children progressed as it should have throughout the school year with no regressive effects noted when

placed in a mainstreamed program

Bricker and Sheehan (1981) and Bricker, Bruder & Bailey (1982) measured children in integrated preschool settings using a variety of measurements. Bayley Scales (Bayley, 1969), McCarthy Scales (McCarthy, 1972), Student Progress Record (a developmentally based instrument covering sixteen areas of behaviour) and the Uniform Performance Assessment System (White, Edgar & Haring, 1978) Bricker and Sheehan (1981) found that the normally developing children showed substantial improvement on multiple measures of progress including areas of behaviour. Bricker, Bruder and Bailey's (1982) findings suggest that in general normally developing children can make significant developmental and educational gains in integrated classrooms, and at the very least, the children's development will not be hindered by the integration process. Neither this study nor the above mentioned study by Bricker and Bricker (1971) included a control group of normally developing children in non-integrated preschool programs therefore it would be difficult to speculate on whether these results would carry over to different preschool settings

Hoyson, Jamieson and Strain (1984) measured children using the Learning Accomplishment Profile (Sanford, 1974) and found that normally developing children in integrated settings made social and educational gains. Ispa and Matz (1978) utilized McCarthy Scales (McCarthy, 1972) to observe behaviour during classroom planned activities. They observed twenty-eight children for twelve minute durations on four occasions. They determined that children with handicaps and children without handicaps were socially well integrated.

Cooke, Ruskus, Apolloni and Peck (1981) carried out three studies over three years. They used a noncomparable control group in a mainstreamed pre-school classroom and measured the children with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary test (PPVT) (Dunn & Dunn, 1981), Vineland Test of Social Maturity (VSM) (Sparrow, Balla & Cicchetti, 1984) and the Alpern Bolls Developmental Profile (AB) (Alpern & Bolls, 1972). In Study 1 they found that children in the non-integrated classes made more significant gains on developmental measures than would be expected from maturation. Study 2 showed that children in mainstream classes had

significantly higher scores on the VSM and AB than would be expected from maturation. Children in non-integrated classes scored higher in AB subscale social than would be expected from maturation. The third study revealed that the children in non-integrated classes were only higher than children in integrated classes on VSM. One consistent finding across all three studies was that the normally developing children scored less well on measures of social abilities in mainstreamed settings than in non-integrated classes.

A 1984 study carried out by Odom, Deklyen and Jenkins compared the performances of sixteen normally developing children enrolled in four integrated classes with a group of children in preschool classes for normally developing children. All children were tested in the Fall and late Spring. The tests used were the Stanford Binet Intelligence Scales (Terman & Merrill, 1973), the Preschool Language Scale (Zimmerman, Steiner & Pond, 1978), the Uniform Performance Assessment System - Preacademic Subtest (White et al, 1978) and the California Preschool Scale of Social Competence (Levine, Elzey & Lewis, 1969). Odom, Deklyen and Jenkins found that both groups (normally developing

children in the integrated class and normally developing children in a nonintegrated class) made significant gains during the school year in areas of intelligence, language development, preacademic skills as well as social competence

In reviewing the above studies, it is clear that few of the studies utilized control groups and some of the studies were limited in the number of subjects involved. It should also be noted that the ratio of normally developing children to children with special needs differed from one study to the next as did the degree of special needs and medical conditions of the children. The possible influence of these two areas is not explored in this study since this is not the primary focus of this thesis. Nevertheless, the cumulative findings suggest that normally developing children in integrated or mainstreamed preschool classes do not appear to be negatively affected in areas of intelligence, language development, preacademic skills or social competence. The studies did not reveal a difference in developmental outcome for preschool children in integrated as opposed to mainstreamed settings (a difference in the number of

children with special needs) An exception to this are the studies by Cooke et al (1981) where their findings indicated that normally developing children in mainstreamed classrooms scored less well on measures of social abilities

Theoretical Framework

Transitions

Children take part in a number of ecological transitions Bronfenbrenner (1979) describes ecological transition as occurring "whenever a person's position in the ecological environment is altered as the result of a change in role, setting or both" (p 26) The transition process for children involves their development in relation to their environment An example of a transition for children is their entrance into new or altered environments such as a change in school environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) The process of preschool children passing from home to preschool fits this definition and signifies a rite of passage and presents children with a developmental crisis Children need to develop trust in their new setting and in their new caregivers who are temporary parental substitutes Trust is difficult to measure,

however, and can only be nurtured through sensitive ways that parents respond to the needs of children. If a well-developed sense of trust has been formed with parents, children will be more open and responsive to their new caregivers and more secure with their new surroundings. This process will allow children to move into new experiences more easily, to expand their cognitive awareness and to become more independent (Erikson, 1963). Ladd and Price (1987) concur that children who are secure and like their school environment have a better chance at profiting from educational experiences. In light of this evidence, there is a need to examine what factors may provide for a more successful transition.

Jorde (1984) identifies two influences that seem to have a strong impact on how a toddler responds to a transition, the first influence is the setting. Space, planned experiences and actions of teachers help set the stage for the transition process and ultimately children's adjustment. Second, the attitudes and behaviours of parents play a dominant role in shaping children's transitions. Guralnick (1981) adds that normally developing children entering an integrated

preschool setting may be encountering children with special needs for the first time. The feelings and opinions they enter with will either come directly from their parents or indirectly from the overall culture and may already carry negative preconceptions

Framework for Childhood Transitions

The ecological model proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) assists in providing a framework for the transition process since it focuses on how developing children interact within their total environment. When children are born their environment is limited to family (immediate & extended) and friends. As children grow their environment expands to include peers, other caregivers, community and school. Children then begin interacting reciprocally between different environments which Bronfenbrenner refers to as "microsystems". He defines the interrelationships between the microsystems as a "mesosystem". The transition process can be seen as one of expanding the child's environments (Diamond, Spiegel-McGill, Hanrahan, 1988) or of more microsystems relating to one another as mesosystems.

Bronfenbrenner (1986) identifies three steps in observing a child in transition. First, there is a

consideration of the relationships that exist prior to the transition. These could be previous interactions between two settings, as well as information, attitudes and expectations that existed in each setting and possibly in respect to the other setting. For example, a friend's child may have previously attended the same preschool therefore one or more of the teachers may be known to the family whose child is about to enter that same preschool. Another possibility is that the preschool may have a reputation within the community for providing safe, nurturing care. These factors provide the parents with certain attitudes and expectations as soon as a decision is made for the child to attend the preschool.

The second step that Bronfenbrenner identifies in observing a child in transition begins once the child has actually started attending the preschool. The family system must then reorganize to accommodate this process. This reorganization can be very significant and may include a change in the parents' expectations and attitudes. For example, a child's successful creative experiences may allow one family member to then view the child's creativity in a new light while

another member may have already acknowledged this strength but is focusing on the child's social skills in relation to the child's peers

Family members must also reorganize their own roles in relation to the child. Routines are altered, trust needs to be developed in the school program and the reality of less parent-child time and more teacher-child time needs to be addressed (Johnson, Chandler, Kerns & Fowler, 1986). Active involvement for parents as part of the transition team, the provision of information and identifying the child's and families' needs can alleviate some of the stress involved in this reorganization (Fowler, Chandler, Johnson & Stella, 1988).

The third step in observing a child in transition occurs once the transition has taken place. Changes begin to take place in the existing relationships between the various environments in the child's life. This process varies in the degree and number of contacts and interactions between the child's family and other environments. There will be times which are extraordinary when a child's family and preschool teachers need to maintain very close contact. One of

these times would be a family death which could influence how children interact with others or in general relate to a new setting. This could be a time when parents and teachers need to communicate openly (Balaban, 1987, Diamond, Spiegel-McGill, Hanrahan, 1988)

Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (1986) suggests the importance of enhancing interrelationships or in other words, creating mesosystems between each of a child's present environments (microsystems) as well as the one he is moving into (preschool) during the process of transition. To facilitate this process Bronfenbrenner encourages frequent, direct contact among the different settings such as between the child's home and preschool.

Jorde (1984) supports the belief that all aspects of a child's life must be considered when planning for a smooth preschool transition. The physical make-up of the preschool setting as well as the classroom programming are important. The attitudes and behaviours of parents will help shape the transition as will sibling influence and pre-entry preparation. Jorde concurs with the ecological model in focusing on

the importance of the interrelationship of these many influences that play a role in the transition outcome

Theories of Attachment

Psychoanalysts are in agreement that a child's first human relationship will form the foundations of his personality. They are also in agreement that within the first year almost all infants have developed a close bond with a mother-figure² (Ainsworth, 1979, Bowlby, 1969). Ainsworth (1979) refers to this bond that has formed as attachment. There is no consensus regarding how quickly the bond occurs, the process by which it is maintained, how long the bond lasts and the overall function (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby (1969) and Erikson (1963) agree that the nature of this bond plays a large role in later development. Primary caregivers who are sensitive to children's comfort needs will assist in providing a secure base for children. On the other hand, those primary caregivers who are insensitive to meeting the security needs of children may contribute to the development of separation anxiety (Bowlby, 1973) and depression (Bowlby, 1988) in the children which may carry through to adulthood (Bowlby,

1973) Also, the security of the mother-child relationship may influence the relationship the pre-school child will have with peers (Lieberman, 1977)

By the age of four months, most infants respond differently to their mothers than to other people. Children will follow their mothers more with their eyes thus demonstrating the ability to discriminate perceptually. Attachment behaviour becomes evident when children act in a manner that maintains proximity to their mothers. This proximity-maintaining behaviour may result in children becoming upset when their mothers leave the room (Bowlby, 1969) and show joy or relief when re-united with their mother figures (Ainsworth, 1979). Ainsworth (1979) describes attachment behaviours as predictable, species-characteristic and resulting from a need for a species to survive. Attachment and attachment behaviours are said to have a biological function of protection (Ainsworth, 1979).

A change often takes place when a child is approximately two years and nine months old and anxiety around separating seems to decrease somewhat (Bowlby, 1969, Weinraub & Lewis, 1977). Until this age children

continue to be upset and may exhibit this by crying or clinging when their mothers leave them and in the example of nursery school attendance, may demand more of the teacher's attention at this time. Children may also be quieter than usual when their mothers are absent and less likely to engage in play. This behaviour may be markedly different than how children may have interacted if their mothers had remained in the room (Bowlby, 1969)

Bowlby (1969) and Gesell (1940) state that children are more likely to accept the temporary absence of their mothers and feel more secure with familiar persons or who Bowlby refers to as "subordinate attachment figures" (p. 205) once they have reached their third birthday. Maccoby (1980) supports Bowlby and Gesell and adds that children can derive security from others they have known only briefly by the time they are two and a half.

Children are more capable of making adjustments after the age of three and adjust well to coming to preschool, remaining there and leaving (Gesell, 1940). Rutter (1981) cautions that although children are now able to handle temporary separations from their

mothers, they may react with some anxiety regarding stressful situations such as entering a new school Bowlby (1969) adds that the security developed by children at three years of age is conditional First, the subordinate attachment figures should be familiar to the children and the children should become acquainted with them while in the company of their mothers Second, the children need to be healthy and not in a setting where they can be alarmed Third, they must know where their mothers are and know when they will resume contact If these conditions are not met then children may show behavioral disturbances In a regular setting such as nursery school it is also important for the subordinate attachment figures to be consistent to allow the children to feel secure

Jorde (1984) and Balaban (1987) note that the process of separation (anxiety) creates emotions shared by the children and their mothers or primary caregivers Anxieties felt by separating parents may influence how they respond to their children It is important for preschool teachers to be aware of this relationship and to provide reassurance to the children and the parents during this transitional time (Miller &

Weissman, 1986)

There are intervention techniques and strategies that may assist in providing a smoother transition from a previous setting into a preschool program. Guralnick (1981) notes the importance of pre-entry planning. Providing information beforehand can help reduce fear and apprehension in children who enter unfamiliar settings. This is especially significant when the setting deviates from what the child expects. Children may have a beginning notion of what a preschool looks like but be surprised to enter and see children with special needs. If children are not adequately prepared for the presence of children with special needs, the result could be social isolation for either the normally developing children entering or for the children with special needs. In the above mentioned situation, anxiety may be a result of the unfamiliar setting rather than from separation from the parent (Douglas, & Blomfield, 1958)

The caregivers and children may become oriented to the preschool centre through visitations before the children begin attending on a formal basis. Some separation anxiety may also be reduced by engaging

children gradually into the preschool program. Children may attend for a few hours at a time working into a full day (Balaban, 1987, Miller & Weissman, 1986, Read, 1976). Jorde (1984) and Balaban (1987) also suggest that home visits by the preschool teacher prior to attendance are helpful. The presence of family photographs at the preschool (Balaban, 1987, Jorde, 1984) are helpful as are transitional objects (Miller & Weissmann, 1986) such as stuffed toys and blankets.

Providing children with information prior to the parent leaving is helpful (Miller & Weissman, 1986). This should be kept brief and may be as simple as knowing where the parent is going and what time to expect the return. The actual good-bye is an important part of the process. Slipping away causes children to feel abandoned and betrayed (Balaban, 1987, Miller & Weissman, 1986) while an announcement of good-bye indicating the departure is an acceptable strategy. If children are crying the parents may telephone in to check following their departure (Miller & Weissman, 1986).

Attachment theory provides us with a framework for

identifying children's transition behaviour in relation to their stage of development. Adjusting to new situations involves familiarity and control. Children begin to feel a sense of control as they learn ways to make the adults and their environments more responsive. This happens once children become more familiar with their setting, peers and teachers. Cognitive growth and language development help children to understand their environment and signal their needs allowing them to be less dependent on their delivering parent or mother figure to fulfil their needs (Jorde, 1984). Knowledge of attachment theories and the factors that may influence transition can also assist with developing techniques and strategies that will provide for a smoother transition to preschool (Fisher, 1988).

A review of the literature explored the normalization principle which guides the concept of integration through encouraging the provision of services for children with special needs in a culturally normal manner. Studies examining the overall effect of integration on normal development indicates no negative affects to children as a result of integration. The literature review also explored

transitions and the role attachment theory plays in providing a framework for identifying the behaviours preschool children may display during a time of transition

The literature also revealed strategies that have proven useful to parents and preschool teachers in making the transition stage easier for normally developing children to enter preschool programs. This study will bridge the gap in literature regarding normally developing children entering integrated preschool settings by providing information on the transition period.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Setting Description

The G R Pearkes Building (Pearkes) is operated by the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health and is located in Victoria, British Columbia. It provides programs including rehabilitative, educational (early childhood) and family support to children who have special needs. Programs are designed to meet the therapeutic needs of children with handicaps on an out-patient basis as well as through an on-site integrated preschool program. The children with special needs attending this preschool program display diagnosed disabilities that range from moderate to severe. Among the population are children with general developmental delays, central processing difficulties, cerebral palsy, communication disorders and Downs Syndrome. There are children who are also medically fragile since their care involves specialized tube feeding programs. The integrated preschool program is staffed by a team of professionals: preschool teachers, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists. Consultation services are also

provided through social work and psychology

Deryck Thomson, who was the Executive Director at Pearkes from 1976-1985, recalls that the concept of integration had been discussed prior to his arrival while Pearkes was under the direction of Garth Homer Thomson states that a great deal of information had been circulating in the community about the benefits of integration in general and that local school boards were beginning to discuss the reality of future integration for school age children ³ Pearkes staff began discussing the possibility of moving into an integrated model of service delivery Once it was determined that existing staff were supportive of this concept, Thomson approached the policy making body, the board of directors of the G R Pearkes Centre (until 1993 the Pearkes Building was known as the G R. Pearkes Centre for Children) Apparently the board had some concerns about the integration model. First, they were concerned about how this move would be perceived by the parents of children with special needs Second, they needed a new funding formula since government funding was based on the number of children in

attendance who had special needs. In order to learn the views and feelings of parents who had children with special needs, the board as well as the Executive Director worked in liaison with a parent/board member to assemble groups of parents to discuss the possibility of integration. As the parents were generally supportive, the next step was the preparation of staff which was carried out through training seminars. Funding concerns were addressed, new licensing guidelines were met and the likelihood of an integrated preschool program seemed to be within reach. The missing ingredients were the normally developing children to integrate into the program. Thomson approached the staff who managed the daycare at the University of Victoria and discussed the possibility of their involvement in a pilot project of integration. Apparently several parents from the University Daycare Centre felt that the concept of integration was important enough to move their children to the Pearkes preschool program. The integrated program at Pearkes began in 1978.

Changes in mainstreaming policy in the last couple of years have altered the overall makeup of the

integrated program at Pearkes. In the past all therapy services (occupational and physical therapy, speech therapy, social work and psychology) were provided at the Pearkes site. However, with the introduction of Pearkes-based outreach programs in the late 1980's, many children with special needs are now able to receive therapy and/or consultation services within their community preschool programs. The children who attend Pearkes usually require more direct, frequent therapy than those who receive services in their community.

Study Participants

The participants in this study were the normally developing children over the age of three who attended the integrated preschool program at Pearkes in September 1992.⁴ The sample was composed of 11 children ($N=11$ normally developing children) who were the total population of those attending this preschool program for the first time.⁵ The children attended four different classrooms and classroom designation was assigned by children's age. The children who were

4

5

enroled in the same preschool program for therapeutic purposes had a range of special needs including cerebral palsy, Down's Syndrome and autism. Some children were more medically involved and received feeding through a gastrostomy tube or were assisted with breathing through a tracheotomy. Some children also experienced seizures. Children in the classrooms included children with special needs, normally developing children entering for the first time and normally developing children who attended the previous year. Children attended four different classrooms with the ratio being eight children with special needs and six normally developing children, ten children with special needs and five normally developing children, seven children with special needs and five normally developing children and eight children with special needs and six normally developing children.

The list of potential study participants was determined by the Senior Preschool Teacher. She utilized potential class lists and cross checked this with enrolment prior to the start of the program in September 1992, identifying those normally developing children entering the integrated preschool program for

The first time

Characteristics of the Study Participants
and their Families

The participating children in this study ranged in age from 2 9 years (early admissions) to 4 7 years with the average or mean age being 3 6 ($\bar{X}=3 6$ yrs) Of the children, 18 2% ($n=2$) were under the age of 3, 54 6% ($n=6$) were in the range of 3 to 4 years and 27 3% ($n=3$) were between 4 years and 4 7 years There were eight boys ($n=8$) or 72 8% and three ($n=3$) girls or 27 3% in the population

Eighteen percent ($n=2$) of the children attended the preschool two days a week, 45 5% ($n=5$) attended three days a week, 18 2% ($n=2$) attended four days a week and 18 2% ($n=2$) attended five days a week 27 3% ($n=3$) attended for the full day while 72 7% ($n=8$) attended for part of the day

Five mothers or 45 5% reported employment outside of the home These mothers all reported employment through the QACCH The positions they worked in ranged from 89 9% ($n=4$) in teaching, housekeeping or support positions and 9 1% ($n=1$) in a clinical position

One hundred percent of fathers reported being

important. Nine point one percent ($n=1$) rated it as fairly unimportant while 45.5% of respondents ($n=5$) stated that it was the least important reason for choosing Pearkes.

Nine people responded to the question relating to convenience of location. There were not any responses ($n=0$) that placed this as the most important reason for choosing Pearkes preschool. Twenty seven percent ($n=3$) rated it as somewhat important, 18.2% ($n=2$) rated it in the middle, one parent or 9.1% felt it was relatively unimportant and 27.3% ($n=3$) saw it as their least important reason.

Sixty four percent ($n=7$) of the ten parents who responded to this option stated that the main reason they choose enrolment for their children in the Pearkes integrated preschool program was based on the reputation of the program. Twenty seven percent ($n=3$) stated that it was the second most important reason.

Thirty six percent ($n=4$) of the nine parents who responded rated the program components (swimming, field trips) as being in the middle in regard to their choice of placements while 18.2% ($n=2$) felt it was somewhat important and 27.3% ($n=3$) rated it as fairly

unimportant

Eighteen percent ($n=2$) of the ten respondents ($N=11$) rated mainstreaming philosophy as an important reason for choosing the placement with 27.3% ($n=3$) rating it as somewhat important. Forty five percent ($n=5$) rated it as middle to somewhat unimportant.

Thirty six percent ($n=4$) of participants responded to the space allowing for "other" responses (free response). These were adult/child ratio ($n=2$) and nurturing aspect of teachers (by reputation), ($n=2$)

Design

The writer arranged for the observation of children in their natural, integrated preschool classroom without controlling or manipulating the subjects or the environment. This study is representative of nonexperimental, descriptive research. The purpose of descriptive research is to "observe, describe, and document aspects of a situation as it naturally occurs" (Polit and Hungler, 1991, p 175). This study describes observed transition behaviours over a two month period and identifies factors that may influence the transition process.

Measures

Instruments

Data were gathered through two instruments. The Integrated Preschool Experience Parent Questionnaire (Appendix A) and the Integrated Preschool Experience Summary of Teacher's Observations (Appendix B). Both measures were based on Jorde's (1984) study examining the influence of parents' attitudes and behaviours on the adjustment of two year olds to a new, regular (not integrated) school experience.⁷ Jorde's Transitions Study - Parent Interview was used as a guide for the Integrated Preschool Experience Parent Questionnaire (Parent Questionnaire). The Parent Questionnaire is largely quantitative but allows for qualitative free responses on ten of the questions. Jorde's Evaluation of Child's Adjustment to School Experience/Summary of Teacher's Observations was used as a guide for the Integrated Preschool Experience Summary of Teacher's Observations (Teacher's Observations Checklist). This instrument is in a quantitative format utilizing rating scales. Modifications as well as the insertion of questions relating specifically to children with

special needs were made by the writer with the assistance of an early childhood educator. Three early childhood educators advised the writer that the average "settling in" period was approximately two months. Two months had also been the length of time that Jorde based her observations on in the above mentioned study. For these reasons parent's and teacher's observations in this study were based on this time period. The early childhood educator has a diploma in Early Childhood Education with a specialty in Special Education (degree in progress). She has been a preschool teacher for fifteen years.

Parent Questionnaire

The Parent Questionnaire included nine questions designed to elicit responses from parents specifically relating to the factors identified by Jorde (1984), (and others) as possibly influencing the transition period for children entering preschool. The nine questions addressed consistency of who brings the children to preschool, previous experience of children with caregivers, if children were familiar with any of their classroom peers prior to entering the program, whether parents involved children in an orientation and

if so what this involved, and the role of siblings and partner in the transition process. The last questions on the Parent Questionnaire were designed by the writer and the early childhood educator to determine if children had previous experience with others who have handicapping conditions. The writer is interested in knowing if this familiarity may play a role in the transition process of entering an integrated preschool program.

The Parent Questionnaire included three questions regarding the observed transition behaviours of the children from the parents' perspective. The first question asked parents to record how the children responded at home following the first visit, the first full day, after two weeks and after two months to their new environment. They were provided with five possible responses with a space allowed for a free response.

A second question asked parents if the children initiated questions once they returned home about children with special needs. Parents were asked to record this during the first week, at the end of the second week and at the end of two months.

The last question regarding observed transition

behaviours asked parents to describe the responses of children to questions the parents may have asked while away from the preschool about the preschool placement. The responses were recorded at the end of the first week, after two weeks and at the end of two months.

Teacher's Observations Checklist

The second instrument used was the Integrated Preschool Experience Summary of Teacher's Observations (Teacher's Observations Checklist). This questionnaire was adapted from Jorde's (1984) questionnaire on the Evaluation of Child's Adjustment to School Experience. Jorde observed parent's attitudes about separating from their child and identified any parental behaviours that assisted in making the transition process smoother. The questionnaire for this study was adapted by the writer with the assistance of the previously mentioned early childhood educator for teachers to observe the children's behaviours at the end of the first week, at the end of the second week and at the end of two months. Teachers responded using a 1-5 rating scale indicating whether they observed the behaviours as being almost present (1) to markedly present (5).

The questions in this checklist were separated

into three categories that documented observations regarding children's behaviour in the classroom with their parent present, without their parent and the children's relationship with the teachers. One final question asked teachers to rate the overall transition process during the first two weeks and at the end of two months using a 1-7 rating scale. A score of 1 indicated a transition with more ease while 7 indicated one with more difficulty.

The first section on Classroom Behaviour with the Parent Present was adapted from Jorde's (1984) questionnaire which specifically documented mother-child interaction. This questionnaire was adapted to include the relationship with either parent. Some of these questions specifically address the behaviour of separating from the delivering parent. Since separating behaviour is often related specifically to development, this information is important as a baseline in exploring what might be expected of the children developmentally at the time of transition.

The second section observing Classroom Behaviour - No Parent Present, was adapted from Jorde's study by the writer with assistance from the early childhood

educator This section includes the behaviours of normally developing children towards children with special needs, towards normally developing children and towards the adults (preschool teachers) in the classroom

The third section on Relationship with Teachers remained the same as that in Jorde's (1984) questionnaire and noted how children responded to teachers verbally and physically at the end of the first week, after two weeks and after two months

Procedures

Prior to the distribution of Parent Questionnaires and Teacher's Observations Checklists, the Parent Questionnaire (Appendix A) was pilot tested by two parents whose children had attended the program previously Three changes were suggested by the two parents that previous experiences of children with other caregivers should include when care began and the span of time involved, and, that the orientation hours be recorded in a combined format The Parent Questionnaire was adapted to include these suggested changes (in bold print in Appendix A)

Prior to the fall term beginning in September

1992, the senior preschool teacher distributed the Observations Checklist to the preschool teachers with instructions on when to begin their observations. The preschool teachers familiarized themselves with the Observations Checklist and recorded their observations as the program allowed for this. The senior preschool teacher as well as the preschool teachers distributed the letters of explanation which also informed parents that the final results would be available for their perusal (Appendix C), the letter of consent (Appendix D) and the Integrated Preschool Experience Parent Questionnaire to the parents during the orientation days.

Completed questionnaires were either returned to the senior preschool teacher, the individual preschool teachers, placed in the writer's mailbox at the Pearkes Building or mailed directly to the writer's home in stamped, self-addressed envelopes which were supplied at the beginning of December 1992 and distributed by the preschool teachers. One written reminder was sent to parents of a child no longer in program (he had attended during the two month observation period therefore the data related to this child is included).

Ethical Considerations

All participants in this study are minors therefore informed consent was required and obtained from the parents of the participating children. The letter to the parents describing the nature and purpose of the study as well as the letter of consent assured parents of anonymity for themselves and their child. The letter of consent also informed parents that they could withdraw without explanation at anytime from this study.

This researcher is also a social worker at the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health, therefore, some of the parents of the participants are also colleagues. Given the nature of this collegial relationship, the researcher provided the senior preschool teacher with a coding system to ensure confidentiality. Each Parent Questionnaire and Teacher Observation Checklist were coded with a unique number (specific to the classroom) and a corresponding child number (determined by the senior preschool teacher and the preschool teachers).

Ethical approval for completing this study was obtained from the University of Victoria Human Subjects

Committee (Appendix E) A letter of permission was sent to Dr J Tibbles who is the chair of the Arbutus Society (now QACCH) Research Committee requesting approval to proceed (Appendix F) This was approved by Dr Tibbles on behalf of the Committee (Appendix G) and later formally approved by the Committee (Appendix H)

The data were kept in a locked file cabinet in the office of the senior preschool teacher at the Pearkes Building The letter of consent stated that all information regarding children's names will be destroyed at the time of completion The only piece of material containing names (by relationship) is the letter of consent These will be retained over time to maintain proof of consent however the relationship to children remains anonymous due to the coding system

Analysis of Data

The majority of data gathered from the Parent Questionnaire addressed demographics These were closed questions and were analyzed using descriptive statistics These categorical data were compiled to assist Pearkes administration in profiling the consumers of the integrated preschool classrooms

Included in the Parent Questionnaire were nine

questions relating to factors that may have influenced the transition process. The closed questions were analyzed in the same manner as the free response questions which allowed for "other" responses. These factors were analyzed by content analysis to determine if there were any predominant patterns or themes.

The questions on the Parent Questionnaire regarding observed transition behaviours were analyzed to determine if the children experienced changes over time in behaviour, in initiating questions and in responding to questions.

The Teacher's Observations Checklist consisted of three categories documenting observations specific to the children's behaviour in the classroom with their parent present, without their parent and the children's relationship with the teachers. The teachers used a 1-5 rating scale and documented the observations after the first day, after two weeks and at the end of two months. The purpose of these questions was to determine if behaviours of the children changed over time once there had been an opportunity for the children to settle into the new program.

The first section consisted of ten questions

Three questions addressed the role of the parent in the classroom and seven were in regard to children's behaviour in the classroom with the parent present. These seven relate specifically to the children's behaviour. Five of the seven questions were reverse coded in the analysis to allow for a simple frequency distribution. A cumulative sum of the seven behaviours over the three time periods was then determined with the highest possible score being 35 per time period. The higher score indicated that the children appeared to have had an easier transition into the classroom. In other words, the children would have exhibited less clinging to the parent upon arrival, less physical and verbal anxiety, would have explored the environment more and would have displayed less anger or clinging, tearful behaviour when the parent departed.

The second section examined the behaviour of normally developing children to children with special needs, towards other normally developing children and towards the adults in the classroom. One question regarding the avoidance of children with special needs required reverse coding. The sums were compiled with a possible highest score of 50. The higher score

indicated that the children were able to exhibit more self control in solitary play, with other normally developing children and with children with special needs. This also indicated that the children were able to refrain from aggressive behaviour towards other normally developing children, towards children with special needs and towards adults in the classroom. Higher scores also indicated a willingness to try new activities and a curiosity regarding children with special needs. These observations were recorded after the first day, after two weeks and at the end of the two months.

The third section examined the relationship of the children with their teachers. Observations were noted regarding whether or not the children greeted the teachers by name, if the children responded to nurturing and were able to accept help from the teachers, if they were able to express their needs, and finally, if in general the children appeared to be gaining trust in their teachers. The maximum possible score in this section was 25 and the higher scores indicated that the children were beginning to establish a relationship with the teachers. As with the other

two sections, scores were noted at the end of the first week, at two weeks and at two months

The highest possible cumulative total for all three sections is 110 per child per time period or 330 for a combination of all three sections over all three time periods. The only two sub-sections not included in this cumulative sum are the parent's role while in the classroom with the children and how the teachers characterized the overall transition process for each child after two weeks and after two months.

The parent's role in the classroom was noted on a 1-5 rating scale in the first section of the Teacher's Observations Checklist on Classroom Behaviour with Parent Present. Teachers observed whether or not the parent verbalized expectations for the children's behaviour, if the parent discouraged over dependence and if the parent actively encouraged the children's independence. The highest possible score was 15 and the higher score indicated that parents played a more active role in the transition process in the classroom.

The last question addressing the teacher's opinion on the overall ease or difficulty of the transition process was rated on a 1 (fair amount of ease) to 7

(difficult with some observable anxiety) scale The purpose of this was to cross check each score with the sums of the three sections in the same questionnaire

Statistical correlations were not carried out because of the small population Categorical variables were examined in relation to the most frequent responses to determine if any clear trends emerged These variables were age of children, gender, consistent routine, previous childcare experience, orientation, role of partner and sibling and previous contact with others who have special needs

CHAPTER IV

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Demographic data accumulated from the Parent Questionnaire have been noted in Chapter III in the section on Characteristics of the Study Participants and their Families. An exploration of these findings will be discussed in the first section. The second section will describe the transition behaviours as noted by the teachers and parents of the children over the age of three who are entering the Pearkes integrated preschool program for the first time. The third section will explore characteristics of the children and strategies utilized by the parents that may have influenced the transition process.

Demographic Data

In reviewing the demographic data it should be noted that the families whose children were involved in this study are not typical. For example, one hundred percent of fathers report being employed while the unemployment rate in British Columbia in 1992 was 10.4% (Statistics Canada, 1993).

The 1991 Census (Statistics Canada, 1993) states that 38.3% of females in British Columbia over the age

of fifteen have some post secondary schooling and 9 7% have university degrees Fifty-five percent ($n=6$) of females (mothers) in this study reported having post secondary schooling and of those, 27 3% ($n=3$) attended college, 18 2% ($n=2$) have graduate degrees and 9 1% ($n=1$) has a Phd

The 1991 Census (Statistics Canada, 1993) states that 36 5% of males over the age of fifteen in British Columbia have some post secondary schooling and 12 9% have university degrees Sixty-three percent ($n=7$) of the males (fathers) in this study reported having post secondary schooling and one or 9 1% has a Phd

One hundred percent ($n=11$) of the parents in this study reported living together while Statistics Canada (1993) reports that in 1991 only 88% of families included two parents

Given these statistics, it could be said that the children in this study live in atypical homes where the home is made up of two parents, all fathers are employed and the educational background of mothers and fathers exceed the norm as reported by Statistics Canada (1993)

As noted in Chapter III, the main reason as cited

by 63.6% ($n=7$) of the parents in this study for choosing the Pearkes integrated preschool program was the reputation of the program. Twenty seven percent ($n=3$) reported this as the second reason for choosing this particular preschool program. This is interesting to note since 54.5% ($n=6$) of the children in the program were enrolled for preschool purposes and not to meet a daycare need. The placements were utilized by community families who would have had more of an option than families requiring daycare to choose any number of preschool programs. The fact that 54.5% of placements were for preschool purposes contributes an interesting element to the consumer profile as well. Daycare placements are usually a necessary support while preschool experience may be viewed as a luxury by those who would be unable to purchase this service.

There does not appear to be notable relevance in relation to the distance families lived from Pearkes or the ethnic background of families. No themes or patterns emerged that may have played a role in the transition process.

Transition Behaviours

Teacher's Observations Checklist

Classroom Behaviour/Parent Present

The first section of the Teacher's Observations Checklist explores the classroom behaviour of children while the delivering parent is still present. Seventy-three percent ($n=8$) of the children were brought to the preschool program by their mother, 18.2% ($n=2$) arrived on the Easter Seal Bus (at times were delivered by parents) and one child was brought by a father. Seven questions on the checklist related specifically to the children's behaviour. The behaviour was observed and noted at the end of the first week, at the end of the second week and at the end of two months. Higher scores indicated that the transition into the classroom appeared to be with more ease while the lower scores indicated that there may have been more difficulty. Each observation time had a highest possible score of 35.

Scores listed on Table 1 indicate that at the end of the first week 45.5% ($n=5$) of the children scored between 30 and 35, 45.5% ($n=5$) of the children scored between 20 and 30 and one child scored 17. At the end

Table 1

Teacher's Observations ChecklistClassroom Behaviour/Parent Present

Child	One Week	Two Weeks	Two Months
One	32	32	33
Two	17	17	20
Three	26	26	31
Four	35	35	35
Five	35	35	35
Six	32	34	35
Seven	23	28	34
Eight	26	25	26
Nine	23	23	29
Ten	30	31	33
Eleven	26	26	28

Note Highest Possible score is 35

of two weeks the same five children again scored between 30 and 35, the same five children scored between 20 and 30 and the same one child scored 17. At the end of two months 63.6% ($n=7$) of the children scored between 30 and 35 and 36.4% ($n=4$) scored between 20 and 30.

The children scoring higher appeared to have had less difficulty separating from the delivering parents and easing into the classroom while their parents were still present. The children displayed less clinging behaviour and less physical and verbal anxiety. The children also explored the environment more freely and were more comfortable when the parents departed.

Classroom Behaviour/No Parent Present

Table 2 lists the observations of the children's classroom behaviour while the parent was absent. Each child was observed at the end of the first week, the end of the second week and at the end of two months with the highest possible score for each time period being 50.

At the end of the first week 18.2% ($n=2$) of the children scored between 45 and 50, 45.5% ($n=5$) of the children scored between 35 and 45 and 36.4% ($n=4$)

Table 2

Teacher's Observations ChecklistClassroom Behaviour/No Parent Present

Child	One Week	Two Weeks	Two Months
One	32	32	29
Two	44	44	44
Three	43	43	42
Four	50	50	50
Five	50	50	50
Six	32	32	38
Seven	24	24	28
Eight	37	38	39
Nine	38	38	39
Ten	37	37	38
Eleven	20	20	26

Note Highest possible score is 50

scored below 35. The score remained the same at the end of the second week. At the end of two months 18.2% ($n=2$) scored between 45 and 50, 54.6% ($n=6$) scored between 35 and 45 and 27.3% ($n=3$) scored below 35. It may be relevant to note that 79.5% ($n=9$) of the children's scores increased from the end of the first week to the end of two months while remaining in the same ranking order. For example, child nine scored fourth highest at one week and remained fourth highest at the end of two months. Of the two exceptions (18.2%), children 6 and 8 changed their rank only by one number. What this may reveal is that the children who appear to be having a more difficult transition at the end of the first week may be the same children who continue to have more difficulty during the transition period of two months. Having this awareness, parents and teachers may choose to intervene with additional strategies in hopes of further assisting the transition process.

The children with the higher scores appeared more able to exhibit self control and tolerate some frustration in solitary play, with normally developing children and with children with special needs. They

also appeared to refrain more from exhibiting aggressive behaviour towards normally developing children, towards children with special needs and towards the adults in the room. The higher scores also indicated that the children appeared more willing to try new activities, were more inquisitive and curious about children with special needs and sought out children with special needs to play with.

Relationship with Teachers

The third section on the Teacher's Observation Checklist recorded the relationships of the children with the teachers. The observations and recordings took place at the end of the first week, at the end of the second week and at the end of two months with the highest possible score being 25. These observations are listed on Table 3.

At the end of the first week 27.3% ($n=3$) of the children scored between 20 and 25, 63.6% ($n=7$) scored between 15 and 25 and one child scored below 15. At the end of the second week the scores were the same. At the end of two months 63.6% ($n=7$) scored between 20 and 25, 27.3% ($n=3$) scored between 15 and 25 and one child scored under 15. Higher scores noted on Table 3.

Table 3

Teacher's Observations ChecklistRelationship of Children With Teachers

Child	One Week	Two Weeks	Two Months
One	18	18	20
Two	18	19	20
Three	22	23	25
Four	23	23	24
Five	25	23	25
Six	17	19	21
Seven	15	16	18
Eight	15	17	18
Nine	12	12	14
Ten	18	19	22
Eleven	16	16	16

Note Highest possible score is 25

would indicate that those children were more likely to greet teachers by name, respond to nurturing and accept help from the teachers, to express their needs and in general appeared more trusting of the teachers. Those children who appeared to have an easier time developing relationships with teachers at the end of the first week continued in this manner with only a slight increase in scores at the end of two months and following this same pattern those who had more difficulty initially were the same children who continued to have the lower scores at the end of two months. In recognizing this, teachers may choose to utilize some strategies to ease the difficulty. This was the same pattern that was identified in classroom behaviour with no parent present.

One last question addressed the teacher's opinions on the overall ease or difficulty of the transition process. This was recorded at the end of two weeks and at the end of two months. Table 4 lists the children and notes whether the transition process was observed by the teacher on a 1-7 rating scale as being with more ease (1) or with more difficulty (7).

Table 5 compares the teacher's opinions on overall

Table 4

Teacher's Overall Opinion

Child	Two Weeks	Two Months
One	1	1
Two	7	5
Three	1	1
Four	1	1
Five	1	1
Six	2	1
Seven	6	3
Eight	4	3
Nine	5	2
Ten	3	1
Eleven	3	1

Note 1 - overall transition with more ease

7 - overall transition with more difficulty

Table 5

Cross-check of Teacher's Observations

Child	Two Weeks		Two Months	
	Teacher's Opinion	Individual Score/ Max 35	Teacher's Opinion	Total Score/ Max 330
One	1	32	1	246
Two	7	17	5	243
Three	1	26	1	284
Four	1	35	1	325
Five	1	35	1	330
Six	2	32	1	260
Seven	6	23	3	210
Eight	4	26	3	241
Nine	5	23	2	228
Ten	3	30	1	265
Eleven	3	26	1	194

Note 1 = ease 7 = difficulty Higher number on individual score and total score indicates more ease

transition ease or difficulty with the observations that were made on the three different sections of the Teacher's Observations Checklist. These scores were compared at two weeks and at two months.

Some of the scores indicated on the teachers' overall opinion parallel very closely with the individual and total scores while others appear somewhat inconsistent. This is likely because this question on overall ease or difficulty was recorded only once at the end of two months and naturally was then recorded by memory.

Parent Questionnaire

Children's Reaction to New Environment

The Parent Questionnaire included three questions relating to behaviours children may have exhibited outside of the classroom environment. The first question asked parents to note what behaviours best described their child's reactions to their new environment following their first visit to the preschool. One parent's response was difficult to interpret which left ten responses. Five parents (45.5%) felt that their children were eager to enter the classroom and did not appear to be upset or

or disappointed when the parent departed. Three parents (27.3%) stated that their children cautiously entered the classroom and did not respond to teachers for the first 5 or 10 minutes although the children gradually took part in a favourite activity. Two parents (18.2%) noted that their children were fine until they actually arrived in the classroom, then they "whined" or "clung" to their parents.

Ten parents responded to how their children reacted following the first full day of preschool. Five parents (45.5%) stated that their children were eager, 18.2% ($n=2$) noted that their children exhibited some clinging behaviour and wanted their parent to remain with them, one parent noted anxiety from the child, one stated that the child began to whine and cling shortly after arrival and one parent stated that the child entered in a cautious manner.

Of the eight parents who responded to the children's behaviour following two weeks, 63.6% ($n=7$) stated that their children were eager to enter and one parent (9.1%) noted that the child entered cautiously. There were also eight responses after two months and 54.5% ($n=6$) stated that the children were eager to

enter while 18.2% ($n=2$) stated that their children exhibited some clinging and whining behaviours

Children's Questions Relating to Special Needs

The second question asked parents to record whether or not their children initiated questions about children with special needs when they were at home. Eight parents (72.7%) stated that their children did not initiate questions while 27.3% ($n=3$) stated that their child did initiate questions about children with special needs following the first week.

At the end of the second week nine parents (81.8%) reported that their children did not initiate questions about children with special needs while 18.2% ($n=2$) reported that their children did

Seven parents (63.6%) reported that at the end of two months their children did not ask questions about children with special needs while three parents (27.3%) reported that their children did

Children's Response to Questions

The last question asked parents what best described their children's response to questions the parents may have asked while away from the preschool. Parents were provided with four options. Table 6 lists

Table 6

Response of Children at Home

Responsive to questions about school		
	Yes	No
Week One		100%
Week Two		100%
Week Eight		100%
Responds to specific questions		
	Yes	No
Week One	27 3% (10)	63 6% (10)
Week Two	18 2%	81 8%
Week Eight	18 2%	81 8%
Talks spontaneously		
	Yes	No
Week One	45 5% (10)	45 5% (10)
Week Two	54 5%	45 5%
Week Eight	81 8%	18 2%
Responds with interest to children with special needs		
	Yes	No
Week One	27 3%	72 7%
Week Two	18 2%	81 8%
Week Eight	27 3%	72.7%

Note Number of responses is 11 except where indicated

the children's responses at the three different time periods. At the end of the first week one hundred percent of the parents responded that their children were generally nonresponsive to questions about preschool. Seven parents (63.6%) stated that their children would respond to specific questions about another child or incident, 27.3% ($n=3$) stated that their children were nonresponsive to these questions and one parent did not respond. Five parents (45.5%) stated that their children talked spontaneously and enthusiastically about incidents in school while five parents (45.5%) stated that their children did not talk spontaneously. One parent did not respond. Three parents (27.3%) noted that their children responded with interest to questions the parents may have asked about children with special needs following the first week while 72.7% ($n=8$) of parents stated that their children did not respond with interest.

At the end of two weeks, one hundred percent of parents responded that their children remained generally nonresponsive to questions about preschool. Nine parents (81.8%) stated that their children did not respond to specific questions while two parents

Table 8

Additional Characteristics and Aspects

Child	Previous Experience	How Long	Knew Peers	Partners Who Played a Role	Siblings Who Played a Role	Previous Experience With SN	Including Combined Scores
One	Casual & Playground	1 year	No	Yes	No	Yes	246
Two	Employee Daycare	9 months	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	243
Three	Employee daycare Family daycare	2 7 years	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	284
Four	casual	2 years	No	Yes	No	Yes	325
Five	casual	18 months	No	Yes	No	Yes	330
Six	casual		Yes	No	No	No	260
Seven	casual	3 years	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	210
Eight	casual family daycare	3 7 years	No	No	No	Yes	241
Nine	full time nanny playgroup	2 years	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	228
Ten	full time nanny	3 years	No	No	No	Yes	265
Eleven	playgroup		Yes	No	No	Yes	194

Note Combined scores - a maximum of 330

hectic and included those that began leisurely ending in a hectic pace

The role of the parents in the classroom was observed by teachers and recorded using a 1-5 rating scale. The teachers observed whether or not the parent verbalized expectations for the child's behaviour, if the parent discouraged over dependence and if the parent actively encouraged the child's independence. It should be noted that this would have been influenced by whether or not parents were able to be in the classroom for any length of time. Some parents would only have had a short amount of time due to their own work commitments. Two children arrived by bus the majority of the time therefore teachers made their observations on the times the parents were able to be in the classroom.

The previous care experience of the children ranged from casual babysitters during the days and evenings to a full time nanny. The amount of time spent in care outside of the home or with caregivers other than parents ranged from very casual to 3 7 years. Five children (45.5%) knew some of their classmates prior to the first day.

Tables 7 and 8 do not list orientation since 100% of the children were involved in an orientation with their parents. These orientations included parents talking with the children as well as visiting the preschool classroom. Six parents (54.5%) also spoke to their children specifically about children with special needs.

While eighty-two percent of parents report having at least one other child, only one parent reports that a sibling played a role in the transition process by providing input to the entering preschooler. Seven parents (63.6%) noted that their partner played a supportive role in the transition by either asking the children questions about their new program or talking about the new program in an encouraging manner.

Nine parents (81.9%) reported that their children had previously been in the company of either children or adults who were either relatives or friends who had a handicapping condition. These conditions ranged from children with developmental delays, spina bifida and Down's syndrome to elderly relatives in wheelchairs. Only two children had not had any previous experience around people with special needs.

Table 8 includes the total score of the teacher's observations regarding the children's behaviour with the parent present, without the parent present and the relationship with the teachers. The maximum score is 350 and children with the higher scores would appear to have had a transition process with more ease while those children with the lower scores may have had more difficulty.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study had three major purposes first, it described the consumers (parents of children attending) of the Pearkes integrated preschool program during the research period; second, it described the transition behaviours of children over the age of three who entered the Pearkes integrated preschool program for the first time, and third, it identified strategies and other factors which may have influenced the transition process This chapter will include a discussion of the major findings relevant to the research purposes, policy (procedural) implications of these findings, limitations of the study and recommendations for future research

Consumers

Chapters III and IV reviewed the demographic data extensively and determined that the consumers involved in this study were not typical families in terms of what was reported by Statistics Canada (1993) All fathers were employed and the educational backgrounds of mothers and fathers exceeded the norm

The consumer profile would reflect that perhaps a

more privileged group of parents were utilizing the Pearkes integrated preschool program during the research period. In addition to higher than average employment and education, 54.5% ($n=6$) of the placements were utilized by community families for preschool placements and not to meet a daycare need.

The data also revealed that 63.6% ($n=7$) of the parents cited reputation of the program as the number one reason for choosing the Pearkes integrated preschool program and 27.3% ($n=3$) of the parents cited this as the second reason. This supports Bronfenbrenner's (1984) findings that one reason parents choose a particular preschool is their preconceived ideas about the preschool. This previous awareness provides parents with information and expectations that they require in choosing an appropriate preschool placement for their children. The combination of choosing this program for preschool purposes and the reputation of the program scoring high in terms of choice may indicate that this program was indeed chosen for reasons other than employee daycare convenience. In fact, since 90.9% ($n=10$) of the parents cited reputation as the first or second reason

for choosing the program it would indicate that even those utilizing the program to meet a daycare need may have made their choice largely based on reputation

Transition Behaviours/Strategies & Other Factors

The child who had the highest total score indicating a transition with possibly more ease was a male child, 3 2 years old. He was accompanied by his mother and his mother played a very large role (score 42/45) in encouraging his independence. His morning routine was leisurely to hectic. His previous childminding experience consisted of casual babysitting over an eighteen month period. He did not know any of his peers prior to the first day of the program which he attended four times a week on a part time basis. His preschool orientation was for approximately one hour during which time his parents spoke with him about children with special needs and visited the preschool on one occasion. Prior to this placement he had been quite familiar with children with special needs as his family was involved in providing respite for children with special needs.

The child with the lowest total score indicating a transition with more difficulty was a male child, 3 11

years old. He was accompanied by his father whose role was limited in terms of encouraging independence (score 17/45). His morning routine was hectic. His previous childminding experience was limited to playgroups. He knew some of his peers prior to entering the preschool program which he attended five times a week on a part time basis. His orientation lasted approximately one hour and he visited the preschool with his parents. Prior to this placement he had been in the company of others with special needs.

The above mentioned children simply illustrate profiles of children at either end of the continuum. The child with the highest score was accompanied by a more involved parent and had more experience with outside caregivers prior to preschool however the child with the lower score was older and knew some of his peers prior to entering the program. As illustrated in tables 7 and 8, the characteristics that accompany these children are varied and identified strategies that may be useful to the transition process are present in varying degrees.

Jorde (1984) identifies the attitudes and behaviours of parents as playing a dominant role in

shaping children's transitions Bronfenbrenner's ecological model (1986) also suggests the importance of enhancing interrelationships between the child's environments and to this end he encourages frequent, direct contact While it is true that the child with the lowest score had more limited involvement from the delivering parent, the child with the third highest score also had more limited parent involvement therefore this factor may need to be viewed in relation to other factors It could be safe to assume, though, and supported by the literature (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, Jorde, 1984) that appropriate parent involvement including pre-entry preparation for the child, interactions with the teachers and being aware of the child's individual make-up would be an effective support strategy for a preschool transition

Pre-entry preparation or previous interactions are identified as playing a positive role in transitions (Balaban, 1987, Bronfenbrenner, 1986, Jorde, 1984, Miller & Weissman, 1986, Read, 1976) One hundred percent of the children in this study took part in a parent initiated orientation therefore it would be difficult to determine how much of a role this played

in easing the transition process. In reviewing the literature, however, it could be stated that pre-entry preparation would be a supportive, effective strategy for assisting children with their ease in the transition to preschool. Guralnick (1981) notes the added importance of parent involvement in pre-entry preparation when the setting may deviate from what the child knows or is expecting. Children may be familiar with preschool settings but not necessarily with the inclusion of children with special needs. Fifty-five percent ($n=6$) of the parents spoke specifically about children with special needs during the orientation and only 18.2% ($n=2$) of the children did not have previous experience with others who have special needs. Of these two children, one scored fourth highest in terms of ease while the other was second lowest indicating a more difficult transition. Interestingly, parents of both children stated that they were eager to attend the preschool right from the start. The previous experience with children who have special needs has to be viewed in relation to the other aspects as well such as the role of the parents and previous experiences with other caregivers outside of the family.

home

In relation to the ages of the children, Bowlby (1969) notes that a change begins to take place in terms of separation once a child is approximately 2 9 years old. Children can begin to be apart from their mothers without being terribly upset although they may be quieter than usual, less likely to engage in play and demand more of the teacher's attention. Once children reach their third birthday they are more able to accept a temporary absence of their mother and feel more secure with their teachers (Bowlby, 1969, Gesell, 1940). In this study, the age of the children did not stand out in relation to ease or difficulty. The child with the third highest score was only 2 9 years old while the one who appeared to have the most difficulty was 3 11 years old. Other factors such as previous experience may contribute where there is such an age difference. For example, the child who was only 2 9 years old had been in family daycare and employee daycare (not integrated) prior to entry into this program while the child who was 3 11 years old only had prior playgroup experience.

Conclusion

There were no strong emerging themes or patterns that would have placed one factor well above the rest in relation to a more successful transition. The profiles of the children were very similar. Even where there were discrepancies in scores between one child and another there were still factors such as familiarity with peers that were similar. No single strategy could be identified as playing the most active role in the transitional process nor did the age of children appear to influence the process. Gender did not play a role in the ease or difficulty involved in the transition although this should be interpreted with some caution due to the small population. Rutter (1981) has reported that several studies in relation to daycare report that separation anxiety was more obvious in boys than in girls.

All strategies that were utilized should be considered useful and effective since they were utilized by so many of the parents and supported by many developmental theorists and authors (Balaban, 1987, Bronfenbrenner, 1986, Jorde, 1984, Guralnick (1981), Miller & Weissman, 1986, Read, 1976). One

might speculate that these strategies assisted in the process for both the children who appeared to have more ease as well as the children who appeared to have more of a difficult time because we do not know how the transitions would have looked had the strategies not been utilized. Strategies and factors to be considered when children are entering an integrated preschool program should include an active parent role in the classroom encouraging independence, previous childminding experience and pre-entry preparation in the form of an orientation which should include information on children with special needs as well as a tour of the preschool. The supportive involvement of siblings and spouses should be considered as well. The disposition and personality of children also need to be taken into account when choosing a preschool and assessing how children are adjusting (Jorde, 1984).

It should also be noted that transition does indeed seem to be a "process" although it is a very subtle one. Eighty-two percent ($n=9$) of the children's total scores indicating transitional behaviour increased from the end of the first week, to the end of the second week and then to the end of two months. The

scores of the other 18 2% ($n=2$) remained the same over all three time periods. It would have been interesting to document changes past the two month period. This may have revealed whether or not it is realistic to consider two months as a reasonable period for transition or if more significant changes take place over an additional length of time. Further observations would also need to be assessed in relation to the children's increased age and therefore increased development in terms of separating as well as other behaviours noted in the Teacher's Observations

Checklist

Implications for Procedural Changes

Policy decisions at the Queen Alexandra Centre for Children's Health are made by the Board of Directors and there is a broad policy supporting the concept of integration. This policy evolves into practice and procedures. An examination of the transition process of children entering an integrated preschool program could have an impact on procedures at the Pearkes building (QACCH) specifically if there appeared to be a detrimental effect to either the normally developing children or the children with special needs. In

reviewing the children's overall scores as well as the teacher's opinions on overall transition, there does not appear to be any indication that the transition process or first two months were any more challenging due to the integrated component. Only one child had difficulty with exhibiting self control and tolerating frustration with children who had special needs. However this child was also perceived as having the same difficulty with normally developing children as well as during solitary play. One other child had difficulty with controlling aggressive behaviour towards children who had special needs and the same child also had difficulty refraining from aggressive behaviour with other normally developing children as well as towards the adults in the room.

An effective use of this study would be to provide Pearkes administration with information which could be made available to parents who are considering placing their children in the Pearkes integrated preschool program. The literature review would provide parents with information regarding the overall effects of integration on normally developing children. The results of the research will provide parents with

strategies that might be useful in easing the transition process for their children as well as provide them with the opportunity to read about other children's transitions into an integrated preschool program

Results of this study could also be included in the orientation of new preschool teachers. It would prepare them for what transition behaviours they may expect to see as well as provide them with some strategies to discuss with parents before the children enter the program. The results of the Teacher's Observations Checklist may also be of interest to parents who have children with special needs. There were only two children who had difficulty in relation to children with special needs and these same two children had the same difficulties with normally developing children. It may be reassuring to know that children with special needs were not placed in a vulnerable position through their involvement in an integrated preschool program. This would need to be interpreted with some caution however due to the small population and the high degree of education and expertise of the teaching staff at the Pearkes Program.

The teachers may have been utilizing techniques to familiarize the normally developing children to the children with special needs as well as utilizing intervention strategies to prevent any potential difficulties

With the current trend of integration on the rise, there will likely be an increased role for social workers in centres that offer services to children with developmental delays. These social workers play a role in assisting parents of children with special needs. Parents may have questions regarding their children's transitions and be interested in knowing how this process may affect their children. In addition to assisting parents with general transition issues regarding children with special needs, social workers can utilize these research results to provide support specific to transitions in an integrated setting.

Limitations of the Study

A stronger design would have included a control group in a community preschool that was not integrated in order to explore the role of the integrated concept. Regardless of the design, however, a major limitation remaining would be the subjectiveness of the teachers'

assessments. Teachers naturally base their assessments on their own frame of reference, including knowledge they bring to the assessment, their degree of education, as well as their overall understanding of child development. It may be more effective for one teacher to assess all children. However since these are largely behavioural assessments based on the opinions of teachers the issue of subjectivity would remain

Providing teachers and parents with individual questionnaires for each of the reporting times may have increased effectiveness in recording. It is not possible to determine if the questionnaires were completed at different times or by recall since all questionnaires were only administered once at the beginning of the study. Also, continued access to previously scored questionnaires may have influenced how parents and teachers scored the other times periods

The basic make-up or personality of children was not the focus of this study and therefore not explored. However, future research utilizing qualitative measures would provide more of an opportunity to explore

questions such as the degree to which other factors in the home influenced how children were reacting in the preschool setting. Although a more qualitative format would have included more free response questions as well as the addition of interviews, the role of the researcher within the organization would have remained a barrier. Those utilizing employee daycare would likely be known to the researcher and answers retrieved in a more qualitative manner could possibly reveal the identity of the parents.

Future Research

Future research could include the observations of normally developing children entering community preschools in order to observe the transition process where the ratio of normally developing children to children with special needs is different than that at Pearkes. An integrated community preschool would also include children with special needs whose health concerns may not be as complex as those children enrolled in the Pearkes program which may change the curiosity level and interactions of the normally developing children. Future research could also include a third group of normally developing children

entering a non-integrated preschool. This group would provide a base for comparison. Either one of the above mentioned additions also includes the potential for a larger population.

In carrying out studies based in the community it would be interesting to explore the educational and experiential backgrounds of preschool teachers. This would help to identify if training in Special Education may influence the degree of teacher involvement in assisting the normally developing children entering integrated programs.

Future research could also involve more longitudinal methods to examine behaviours past the initial two month transition period. The same Teacher's Observations Checklist could be utilized to document changes in behaviours over time. Qualitative methods such as parent interviews would contribute information regarding external factors that may influence the transition process. Parent interviews would also be useful in determining if parents felt that the integrated preschool/daycare experience was meaningful for their children.

Footnotes

1 References are made to "able bodied children" during the planning stages of this thesis and will be found in some of the appendices. The More commonly used "normally developing children" was later adopted for use.

2 The term "mother" will be used interchangeably with the term "primary caregiver" which is the more contemporary and widely accepted term.

3 Since 1989 The School Act states that "a board shall make available an educational program to all persons of school age resident in its district" (p C-65) and that "the parents will be consulted first regarding the placement of their child with special needs, with an attempt to fully integrate that child wherever possible" (p E-43)

4 Normally developing children under the age of three years at Pearkes attend classrooms for normally developing children only. This is because of the complex needs of the children with special needs attending who are under the age of three.

5 Other normally developing children attend this program however they have attended previously and were

not included in this study

6 The amount of time spent in the classroom is usually related to whether the placement is meeting a daycare need or is a preschool placement All placements include preschool experiences and transitions and will be referred hereafter as "preschool"

7 Jorde had used Lemon's research on Attitudes & their Measurement (1973) as a guide in structuring her questionnaire for parents titled Transitions Study - Parent Interview She adapted her Evaluation of Child's Adjustment to School Experience/Summary of Teacher's Observations from the Levenstein Mother-Child Home Program (1977)

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APPENDIX A

Integrated Preschool Experience Parent Questionnaire

DATE _____

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

CODE # _____

MOTHER'S INFORMATION

Are you employed outside of the home? Yes ___ No ___

Occupation _____

Is this a preschool placement? Yes ___ No ___

Is this daycare? Yes ___ No ___

Is this employee daycare? Yes ___ No ___

What is the distance from your child's preschool?
(in miles) _____Level of education completed (circle) HS, College,
Undergraduate, Graduate, Phd, other _____

Ethnic background _____

FATHER'S INFORMATION

Are you employed outside of the home? Yes ___ No ___

Occupation _____

Is this a preschool placement? Yes ___ No ___

Is this daycare? Yes ___ No ___

Is this employee daycare? Yes ___ No ___

What is the distance from your child's preschool?
(in miles) _____Level of education completed (circle) HS, College,
Undergraduate, Graduate, Phd, other _____

Ethnic background _____

Are parents living together _____, separated _____,
divorced _____?Do you have more than one child enrolled in this preschool?
Yes ___ No ___ (If so, additional forms are supplied by the
classroom)

How often does your child attend this preschool?

Days 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___

Hours full days ___ part days ___

What is the birth date of your child? _____

What is the gender of your child? ___ M ___ F

Ages of other siblings _____ M/F _____ M/F _____ M/F

- 1 Who has primary responsibility for bringing your child to preschool? _____
- 2 a Child's previous experiences with other care-givers before attending this preschool
 _____ limited to casual babysitters during days and evenings
 _____ full time day nanny in home
 _____ live-in nanny in home
 _____ attended infant/toddler program or playgroup outside of home for more than 10 hours per week without mother's presence
 _____ other _____
- b. During what age span did your child receive this care?
 From _____ to _____
- 3 Did your child know any of his/her classmates before the first day of preschool? _____
- 4 Why did you enrol your child in this particular preschool?
 [Rate in order 1 (most important) to 5 (least important)]
 _____ convenience in hours with respect to my other commitments
 _____ convenience in location
 _____ reputation of the program
 _____ specific program components (ie swimming, field trips)
 _____ personal acceptance of mainstreaming philosophy
 _____ other specify _____
- 5 Describe your "typical" morning routine (hectic, leisurely, etc) _____

- 6 During the first week of preschool, how many hours (combined) did you spend orienting your child to the new preschool? (at home, in the car, at school) _____

- 7 What specific things did you say and do to prepare your child for the separation and transition to a new experience?
- _____ We did not talk about it because I thought it might make my child anxious and uneasy
- _____ We read books dealing with separation and new experiences
- _____ We talked about what he/she could expect in a new setting
- _____ We discussed children with special needs
- _____ We visited the classroom on _____ occasions before the first day of school
- _____ Other _____
-
- 8 What role did your partner and/or other children play during this transition period?
- 9 What behaviours best describe your child's reactions to this new environment? (Indicate most appropriate response, a - f below Explain if necessary)
- _____ on your first visit to the classroom
- _____ on the first full day of school
- _____ after two weeks
- _____ after two months
- a Exhibits anxiety about getting out of the car and entering school (cries loudly, screams, or has tantrums)
- b Fine until we arrive at the classroom, then whines and clings (underline) moderate, excessive
- c Cautiously enters the classroom and does not respond to teachers for the first five or ten minutes Gradually takes part in favourite activity For example _____
-
- d Seems okay until I depart, then displays verbal or nonverbal separation anxiety For example _____
-
- e Eager to enter the classroom Wants to hang up name tag and coat all by him/herself Does not appear upset or disappointed when I leave
- f Other _____
-
- 10 Does your child initiate questions about children with special needs when at home? _____ during the first week
- _____ at two weeks
- _____ at two months

- 11 What best describes your child's responses to your questions about his/her integrated preschool experience when you are at home or away from the school?

@1wk @2wks @2mos

_____ He/she is nonresponsive to my questions about school

_____ Will respond to specific questions about another child or a particular incident that happened during the school day, but is generally unemotional in these responses

_____ Talks spontaneously and enthusiastically about incidents in school

_____ He/she responds with interest to your questions about the children with special needs

- 12 Has your child previously been in the company of children with special needs?

- 13 Do any family members _____

friends _____

neighbours _____

have handicapping conditions? If so, what are they? _____

- 10 Child appears comfortable
and accepting of parent
departure

B CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR - NO PARENT PRESENT

	End of 1st week	At two weeks	At two months
11 Exhibits self control and can tolerate some frustration while			
a in solitary play	_____	_____	_____
b with able bodied children	_____	_____	_____
c with children with special needs	_____	_____	_____
12 Refrains from aggressive behaviour toward			
a able bodied children	_____	_____	_____
b children with special needs	_____	_____	_____
c adults in room	_____	_____	_____
13 Is willing to try new activities	_____	_____	_____
14 Is inquisitive and curious about children with special needs	_____	_____	_____
15 Seeks out children with special needs to play with	_____	_____	_____
16 Avoids children with special needs	_____	_____	_____
C <u>RELATIONSHIP WITH TEACHERS</u>			
17 Greets teachers by name	_____	_____	_____
18 Responds to touch, holding, and nurturing from teachers	_____	_____	_____
19 Accepts help from teachers	_____	_____	_____
20 Expresses needs	_____	_____	_____
21 In general appears trusting of teachers	_____	_____	_____

How would you characterize the transition process during
the first two weeks?

- 1 With a fair amount of ease
- 2 Difficult - anxiety

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

after two months?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

APPENDIX C

Dear Parent

I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Human and Social Development at the University of Victoria. I am also a social worker at the G R Pearkes Centre for Children although I am currently on a maternity leave until mid-October 1992.

I am researching the experiences of able bodied children who enter integrated preschool classrooms. The results of my study will be of benefit to parents who are considering such a placement and have questions about how other children have experienced such a placement.

The preschool teachers will complete a short observational checklist which will record data about the child's adjustment in the new classroom. The four areas observed will be A Classroom Behaviour with parent present, B Classroom behaviour - no parent present, C Relationship with teachers. Observations will take place on the first full day of school, at two weeks, and at two months.

A thirteen item questionnaire will also be sent to all parents to gather background information which will assist me in linking relevant facts from the child's life to the school transition period.

Results obtained will be published as my Masters Thesis and available for your perusal. All results will be coded in an anonymous manner to protect the identity of your family. In fact, I only receive a code from the teacher and not the child's name. All results will be stored in a safe place in the researcher's home and all original data will be destroyed.

I would really appreciate receiving your permission to have your child included in my study. If you are willing to do so, please complete the attached consent form and bring it with you when you bring your child to school. A questionnaire is also attached. Please complete this with your partner and return it in the self addressed stamped envelope at the end of the two month period. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me at 381-1678 or my supervisor, Ms Marilyn Callahan at 721-8037.

Thanking you in advance for your anticipated involvement

Yours sincerely,

Hillary Cormack Luis

APPENDIX D


I, _____, parent/guardian of _____,
(Date of Birth _____) am willing to have this child
participate in the research study being carried out by Hillary
Cormack Luis, graduate student, Faculty of Human and Social
Development, University of Victoria I understand that a teacher
will record observations on three different occasions I also
agree to complete a parent questionnaire to aid with background
information It is my understanding that all information
regarding my child's name will be destroyed upon completion of
the study and that all of the results will be coded in an
anonymous manner. I also understand that at any time I may
withdraw the involvement of myself and my child without
explanation

Signature _____


Date _____

APPENDIX E

9 Person designating him/herself as in charge of the research

HILARY CORNACK LUS 
 (Name) (Signature)

Supervisor (if any)

Marilyn Callahan 
 (Name) (Signature)

Chair/Director of Department or School

MICHAEL J PRINCE 
 (Name) (Signature)

September 1, 1992
 (Date)

10 Additional information, required before final approval can be issued

Approximate starting and termination dates

September 7 - November 7

Name(s) and position of all person(s) who will be conducting the research

NOTE Position = ie Student, Grad Student, Research Assistant, Faculty

1	4
2	5
3	6

APPROVED BY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH AND OTHER ACTIVITIES INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

 October 5/92
 (Date)

DATES From 5 Oct 92 To 31 Dec 92

APPENDIX F

September 8, 1992

Research Committee
2400 Arbutus Road
Victoria, BC
V8N 4V7

Dear Dr. Tibbles,

Attached is a copy of my research proposal titled "Descriptive Study of the Experiences of Able Bodied Children Who Enter an Integrated Preschool During the First Two Months" I have received Human Subjects approval from the University of Victoria for this study Due to the nature of this study I must begin immediately. I realize this is rather short notice however I would appreciate in your capacity as chair of the Arbutus Society Research Committee approval to proceed Chuck Schactman has reviewed and approved this study Please contact me by telephone at 381-1678.

Yours sincerely,

Hillary Cormack Luis, B S W , R S W



APPENDIX G

M E M O R A N D U M

TO	Hillary Luis	
FROM	Dr J Tibbles	DATE September 10, 1992
RE	YOUR REQUEST FOR APPROVAL FROM THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE FOR ETHICAL ACCEPTABILITY OF YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT	

I appreciate the concern that you have regarding being able to describe the experiences of children entering preschool during the first two months, that means, it must begin at the time of their entry into the Arbutus Society in the fall

Therefore, on behalf of the Research Committee, Mr Schactman and I approve your proposal for its ethical appropriateness Please feel free to go ahead-

I will clear this with the Research Committee when it meets later in the month

JART/wf

d Sept 10/92

t Sept 10/92

cc Mr Schactman

LUIS2F

APPENDIX H



6 13-11-92 11:00 AM
J A R Tibbles
Medical Director
2400 Arbutus Road
Victoria BC V8N 1V7
Phone (604) 477-1811
Fax (604) 711-6837

2400 Arbutus Road Victoria British Columbia Canada V8N 1V7

Telephone (604) 477 1811 Fax (604) 711 6837

October 1, 1992

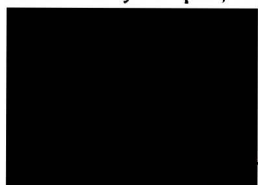
Ms Hillary Luis,
G R Pearkes Centre,
2400 Arbutus Road,
Victoria, B C
V8N 1V7

Dear Hillary

RE YOUR M A THESIS STUDY ON THE EXPERIENCES OF ABLE-BODIED CHILDREN
IN AN INTEGRATED PRE-SCHOOL

Your request for ethical approval for this was formally granted
With best wishes for the success of your project

Yours sincerely,



J A R Tibbles, M B , F R C P F R C P (C)
Medical Director

JART/wf

RCLET2F

VITA

Surname: Luis Given Names: Hillary Cormack

Place of Birth. Nelson, B.C. Date of Birth: October 23, 1956

Educational Institutions Attended:

University of Victoria	1991 to 1994
University of Victoria	1980 to 1985
Mount Royal College	1974 to 1976

Degrees Awarded

B.S.W	University of Victoria	1985
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Title of Thesis. A Descriptive Study of the Transition Experience of Normally Developing Children Within the First Two Months of Entering an Integrated Preschool

Author



Heidi C. Cairns-Lewis

April 13, 1994