

# The HighScope Preschool Curriculum

## ADULTS AND CHILDREN — PARTNERS IN LEARNING

Active Participatory learning — whether planned by adults or initiated by children — is the central element of the HighScope Preschool Curriculum. Children learn through direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas. Trained adults who understand child development and how to scaffold the important areas of learning in the preschool years offer guidance and support.

The preschool component of the HighScope Curriculum includes

- A set of **teaching practices** for adult-child interaction, arranging the classroom and materials, and planning the daily routine.
- **Curriculum content areas** for 3- to 5-year-olds
- **Assessment tools** to measure teaching behaviors and child progress
- **A training model** to help teachers implement the curriculum effectively.
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## TEACHING PRACTICES IN THE HIGHSOPE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

**Adult-child interaction.** In the HighScope approach teachers and children are active partners in the learning process.

This balanced approach to adult-child interaction — also called "intentional teaching" — is critical to the effectiveness of the program. It includes techniques for encouraging learning in specific content areas as well as strategies for helping children resolve conflict.

**Classroom arrangement, materials, and equipment.** The space and materials in a HighScope setting are carefully arranged to promote active learning. The centre is divided into interest areas organized around specific kinds of play; for example, block area, house area, small toy area, book area, sand-and-water area, and art area.

**Daily routine.** HighScope teachers give preschoolers a sense of control over the events of the day by planning a consistent daily routine that enables the children to anticipate what happens next. Central elements of the preschool daily routine include the plan-do-review sequence, small- and large-group times, greeting time, and outside time.

## CURRICULUM CONTENT

**Key developmental indicators.** The curriculum is built around teacher- and child-initiated learning activities in five main curriculum content areas: approaches to learning; language, literacy, & communication; social and emotional development; physical development, health, and well-being; and arts and sciences. Within these areas are 58 key developmental indicators (formerly called "key experiences") — observable early childhood milestones that guide teachers as they plan learning experiences and interact with children.

## ASSESSMENT

**Developmentally oriented instruments for assessing child progress and program quality.** The Preschool COR (Child Observation Record) is used to evaluate child progress in HighScope Preschool Programs. In addition, HighScope's Preschool Program Quality Assessment (PQA) offers a powerful tool for evaluating program quality in seven key areas: learning environment, daily routine, adult-child interaction, curriculum planning and assessment, parent involvement and family services, staff qualifications and staff development, and program management. Use the links at left or above to visit our assessment section and learn more about these instruments.