What are quality preschool learning standards?

New York State’s Prekindergarten (Pre-K) Learning Standards are organized into five specific developmental domains:

1. **Approaches to Learning:**
   How children become involved in learning and acquiring knowledge.

2. **Physical Development and Health:**
   Children’s physical health and their ability to engage in daily physical activities.

3. **Social and Emotional Development:**
   Children’s competence and ability to regulate their emotions, behavior and attention, and to form positive relationships with peers and adults.

4. **Communication, Language and Literacy:**
   Children’s ability to understand, create and communicate meaning.

5. **Cognition and Knowledge of the World:**
   What children need to know and understand about their world and how they apply what they know.


---

**Resources**

- **Crisis in the Kindergarten — Why Children Need to Play in School**

- **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**
  [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

- **The Albert Shanker Institute Preschool Curriculum What’s In It for Children and Teachers**
  [www.shankerinstitute.org/resource/preschool-curriculum](http://www.shankerinstitute.org/resource/preschool-curriculum)

- **The U.S. Department of Education Building Strong Foundation for Early Learning:**
  [http://www2.ed.gov/parents/earlychild/ready/resources.html](http://www2.ed.gov/parents/earlychild/ready/resources.html)

- **New York State Education Department Office of Early Learning**

---

This document was developed by members of the NYSUT Statewide Early Childhood Committee.

---

**Smart Start**

A quality preschool education is important!

---

A resource to inform parents and teachers about the qualities of a strong early childhood educational program

---

Representing more than 600,000 professionals in education, human services and health care.

[WWW.NYSUT.ORG](http://WWW.NYSUT.ORG)
Get a smart start with Pre-K

Research shows that children who attend high quality preschool programs perform better in school.

Children:
- Have stronger ELA and math skills
- Enter Kindergarten with an understanding of the classroom environment
- Have more developed social skills
- Benefit from increased access to Early Intervention Services

Children who attend high quality programs perform better in life and are:
- More likely to graduate from high school
- More likely to be gainfully employed
- Less likely to be incarcerated

Brain research affirms that quality preschool experiences directly impact the success of children throughout their school years and beyond.

Federal, state and local agencies are working to ensure quality education in all of these programs.

These are some other features of a quality preschool program.

- Attention to nutritional needs
- Family involvement and collaboration
- Parent education
- Communication of child’s progress to the family
- Teaching staff with educational qualifications
- Ongoing professional staff development
- Low teacher to student ratio

A quality preschool program includes...

- Research-based developmentally appropriate curriculum
- Ongoing assessments of a child’s learning
- Active, engaged, meaningful learning
- A balance of child-directed play and structured activities
- Opportunities to build healthy relationships and classroom community
- Organized child-friendly environment
- Safe and healthy physical environment
- Consistent daily routines
- Celebration of diversity
- Health screenings — vision and hearing
- Educational screenings for early intervention

High quality preschool programs can include...

- Universal Pre-K
- Targeted Pre-K
- Day Care Centers
- Family Day Care Centers
- Group Family Day Care Homes
- Head Start Centers
- Nursery Schools
- Small Day Care Centers

Adapted from: www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content3/identify.preschool.5.html