

## The Creative Curriculum for Preschool

The Creative Curriculum, for Preschool is a comprehensive curriculum that defines for teachers what content to teach, why the designated content and skills are appropriate for young children, and how to teach effectively.

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool is based on six fundamental beliefs:

1. The value of play as a vehicle for learning.
2. The importance of helping children to develop social competence.
3. The vital role of the teacher in connecting content and learning.
4. The benefits of building a partnership with families.
5. A belief that all children, including those with special needs, can thrive in an appropriate classroom.
6. The importance of linking curriculum and assessment.

### ***The Curriculum Framework***

There are five components of the Creative Curriculum framework.

*How children develop and learn.* A preschool child's social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development, and his or her characteristics and experiences, make each child unique.

*The learning environment.* The structure of the classroom that makes it possible for teachers to teach and children to learn. This includes how teachers set up and maintain interest areas in the classroom, establish schedules and routines, organize choice times and small- and large-group times, and create a classroom community where children learn how to get along with others and solve problems peacefully.

*What children learn.* The body of knowledge included in national and state standards for six content areas—literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology—and the process skills children use to learn that content. The Creative Curriculum shows how children learn content and skills through daily experiences.

*The teacher's role.* How careful observations of children lead to a variety of instructional strategies to guide children's learning. The teachers interact with children in interest areas and during in-depth studies. It is a systematic approach to assessment that enables teachers to learn about and plan for each child and the group.

*The family's role.* The benefits of developing a partnership with every family and working together to support children's optimal development and learning. This last component includes getting to know families, welcoming them and communicating with them regularly, partnering on children's learning, and responding to challenging situations.

### ***Interest Areas***

The five components of The Creative Curriculum, framework are applied to eleven areas—blocks, dramatic play, toys and games, art, library, discovery, sand and water, music and movement, cooking, computers, and outdoors. The Creative Curriculum meets the developmental needs of young children and enhances learning and teaching.

A key element of The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is the strong link between curriculum and assessment. The Creative Curriculum goals and objectives provide the direction for planning the program and a framework for determining what each child knows and how each child is developing. Teachers observe children during their everyday classroom experiences, document what they see and hear, and then make informed decisions regarding a child's development. They use this information to plan activities and experiences tailored to the individual child.