

HOUSE FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE EVERYDAY PRACTICE

Supporting School Readiness for All Children

The National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning Framework for Effective Everyday Practice supports school readiness for all children. We use a house to represent four integral elements of quality teaching and learning: engaging everyday interactions with children; choosing and implementing a strong curriculum; using regular assessment of children's skills, and individualized teaching. In this framework, these elements correspond, respectively, to parts of a house—the foundation, two pillars, and a roof—and when connected with one another, they form a single structure that fosters children's learning and development.

FOUNDATION: ENGAGING INTERACTIONS AND ENVIRONMENTS

Effective, engaging interactions and environments are the foundation for all learning in early childhood classrooms. High-quality preschool classrooms include a well-organized and managed classroom, social and emotional support, and instructional interactions and materials that stimulate children's thinking and skills.

- **Social and emotional support** means that teachers establish and promote a positive climate in their classrooms through their interactions everyday. They are responsive to children, acknowledge children's emotions, help children resolve problems, redirect challenging behavior, and support positive peer relationships.
- **Well-organized classrooms** feature consistent schedules, well-designed learning centers, established routines, and sensitive and appropriate guidance strategies. Staff work together as a team. Classrooms with these characteristics give children a sense of stability and predictability that supports exploring, thinking about, and learning new things.
- **Instructional interactions and materials** in preschool must support and extend children's thinking, problem solving, and conversational skills and vocabulary. Effective teachers support children's engagement by making concepts and skills salient, ask questions that encourage children to analyze and reason, provide the right amount of help, offer feedback that acknowledges children's attempts and motivates continued efforts, and provide high-quality language modeling.

THE FIRST PILLAR: RESEARCH-BASED CURRICULA AND TEACHING PRACTICES

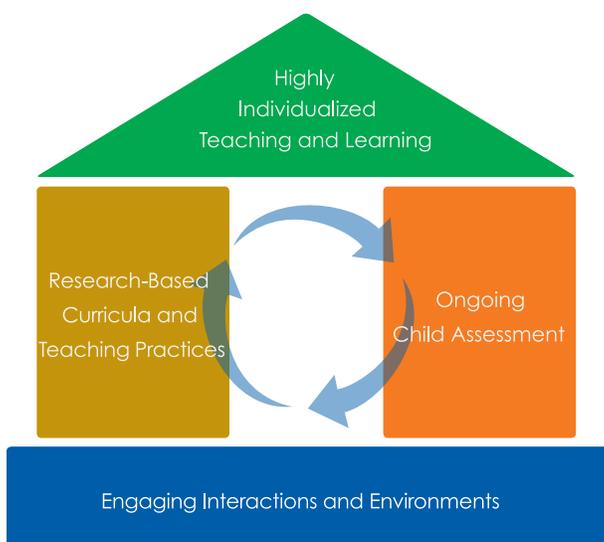
A high-quality, research-based curriculum provides learning goals and activities in key areas of children’s development that reflect support for school readiness goals. A curriculum provides guidance as to what to teach (content) and how to teach (learning experiences and teaching strategies). The content is drawn from current child development science, the interest and ideas of the children, and the values of the community. The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework is an important resource for identifying the content of a program’s early childhood curriculum.

THE SECOND PILLAR: ONGOING ASSESSMENT OF CHILD PROGRESS

Ongoing assessment is integral to curriculum and instruction. If our goal is to help children achieve school readiness and individual learning goals, then we need to keep track of how the children are doing. Assessment information helps us monitor progress—both for individual children and for the program as a whole. The important thing to keep in mind is that assessment information needs to be valid, reliable, and useful (i.e., the results should inform curriculum and instruction).

ROOF: HIGHLY INDIVIDUALIZED TEACHING AND LEARNING

Young children vary widely in their skills, knowledge, backgrounds, and abilities. Teaching has to effectively reach all children regardless of their abilities and disabilities. Effective instruction for all children requires specialized teaching and learning opportunities to access, participate, and thrive in the preschool classroom. Effective teachers are sensitive and skilled in interactions; they use ongoing formative assessment of each child’s skills to plan instruction; and they choose and use curricula and activities that engage all children, regardless of their strengths or needs.



BRINGING THE HOUSE HOME

The House represents four integral elements to move all children toward school readiness. At the foundation, teacher-child interactions are emotionally and instructionally supportive, and the well-organized classroom maximizes learning opportunities. The two pillars represent the linked nature of evidence-based curriculum and teaching strategies with ongoing child assessment. They connect and support the parts of the House—the components of effective everyday practice. The roof represents the highly individualized teaching and learning practices that are required for some skills or for some children to access, participate, and thrive in the preschool classroom. All four elements are interrelated and essential components of high-quality preschool practices for all children.