



## GUIDANCE ON COMPREHENSIVE AND DOMAIN-SPECIFIC PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM CONSUMER REPORTS

### **Q: Why were the Preschool Curriculum Consumer Reports (CCRs) developed and who is the target audience?**

- The CCRs were developed to provide information and guidance to help Head Start center-based programs select high-quality, research-based preschool curricula that best fit their programs.
- The target audience is primarily Education Managers/Coordinators of Head Start Programs, Program/Grantee Leadership, Self-Assessment Teams, Early Childhood Education Specialists/T/TA Teams.

### **Q: How do programs use the Preschool CCR?**

- The Preschool CCR can be used to evaluate/review the overall strengths and weaknesses of a current comprehensive curriculum in use and answer questions about whether the comprehensive curriculum is meeting the needs of the children in the program across developmental domains.
- Programs can work with self-assessment and T/TA teams to evaluate how their current comprehensive curriculum is already rated on each of the components evaluated in the Preschool CCR. If the program's current comprehensive curriculum has a low rating on components that their program has determined are most important (e.g., evidence of child outcomes, professional development), programs may want to consider investigating a new comprehensive curriculum.

### **Q: How do programs decide whether a domain-specific curriculum might be needed in addition to their comprehensive curriculum?**

- Decide if the program's school readiness goals and child outcome goals are being met.
- If child outcome goals are being met, there may not be a need to add additional domain-specific curricula; continue to monitor to be sure the comprehensive curriculum meets the needs of the program and children.
- If child outcome goals are not being met, examine the domains where children might need more support. Adding a domain-specific curriculum in addition to your comprehensive curriculum might help to increase the number and quality of activities in a certain domain.

## Q: How do programs use the Domain-Specific CCRs?

- Identify potential domain(s) of need. Domain-specific curricula reports exist for Language and Literacy, Mathematics, and Social Emotional.
- Review the curricula rated within the domain-specific consumer report.
- Identify the components that are most important to your program (e.g., evidence-based, comprehensive across domain elements).
- Select the domain-specific curriculum that scores highest on the components that are most important to your program.
- If your program is already using a domain-specific curriculum, work with self-assessment and T/TA teams to evaluate your current curriculum's ratings on each of the components evaluated in the CCR. If your current curriculum has a low rating on components that your program has determined are most important (e.g., evidence of child outcomes, professional development), you may want to consider investigating a new curriculum.

## Q: What if programs are using one or more of the reviewed comprehensive or domain-specific curricula that received high ratings and their data show that their child outcomes are not as high as they would like them to be?

- Children are more likely to make more developmental and academic gains when teachers consistently implement instructional strategies with sufficient fidelity (i.e., delivery of instruction in the way that it was designed to be delivered), consistency, frequency, and intensity to ensure a child's mastery of a set of skills.
- The education manager, self-assessment and/or T/TA team can assess whether a curriculum is being implemented with fidelity by asking the following questions:
  - Are teachers focusing on the specific goals identified in the lessons plans?
  - Are teachers using the recommended teaching strategies?
  - Are teachers using all recommended materials?
  - Are teachers following all the steps or activities suggested in the lesson plans?
  - Are teachers implementing the curriculum lessons with regularity?
- Most curricula have specific guidelines for implementation as well as checklists for fidelity implementation. These can be used to evaluate the extent to which teachers are implementing the curriculum with fidelity.
- If your curriculum does not have an implementation checklist, teaching teams can monitor how well they are implementing the curriculum. For example:
  - Teams identify learning goals of the curriculum.
  - Teams identify teaching practices recommended.
  - Teams identify all recommended materials.
  - Teams identify all the steps or activities suggested in the lesson plans.
  - Teams agree how to monitor implementation fidelity: Who? How often?
  - Teams establish a process to evaluate implementation and provide support to teachers as needed.
  - Team develops an implementation checklist.



## Curricula Resources

### **Curriculum, Assessment and the Head Start Framework: An Alignment Review Tool**

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/curricula/docs/curriculum-alignment-tool.pdf>

### **Choosing a Preschool Curriculum**

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/curricula/docs/curriculum-choosing.pdf>

### **Preschool Curriculum Consumer Report**

Available to download at: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/curricula/research.html>

### **Video introduction for Preschool Curriculum Consumer Report**

Available to watch at: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/curricula/research.html>

### **Head Start Front Porch Series: An Introduction to the Preschool Curriculum Consumer Report**

Available to watch at: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/fp/fpArchive2014.html>



For more information, contact us at: [NCQTL@UW.EDU](mailto:NCQTL@UW.EDU) or 877-731-0764

This document was prepared under Grant #90HC0002 for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start, by the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning.

SUMMER 2015