

## **High/Scope**

The High/Scope Educational and Research Foundation was founded over 40 years ago in Ypsilanti, Michigan by Dr. David Weikart. The High/Scope curriculum is validated by research, specifically the Perry Preschool Project. This longitudinal study shows that children who attend quality preschool programs have, as adults, enhanced social responsibility, higher income and greater academic success. Additional research proves that children who attend quality High/Scope programs significantly outperform children in non-High/Scope programs in assessments of cognitive abilities, initiative, social relations, and motor skills and in overall development.

Active learning is the cornerstone of the High/Scope approach. Active Learning means that children and adults are partners in the learning process. Play is the way children learn. In an active learning setting children choose activities and materials that interest them, manipulate materials in their own ways, use language to describe their intentions and actions, and receive adult support during their play. Children make observations, reflect on their actions and solve problems encountered in play.

The High/Scope Key Developmental Indicators are statements related to children's development that provide a framework for understanding active learning. Key Developmental Indicators cover social, emotional, cognitive and physical domains. Each Key Developmental Indicator is essential for the development of the abilities that emerge during early childhood. Key Developmental Indicators can occur naturally during play or they can be planned for during adult initiated times.

In High/Scope classrooms, the learning environment promotes active learning. The classroom space is safe and inviting to children. It is divided into well-defined interest areas with places for group and individual activities. The classroom is filled with materials that support a wide range of play experiences and reflect the children's family lives. There are many real and natural materials in the classroom. The classroom is labelled so that children can find, use, and return materials and relate the printed word to materials that interest them. Open-ended materials expand cognitive skills as children develop their imagination.

In High/Scope classrooms, there is a consistent daily routine which supports active learning and provides children with a sense of security and control. The High/Scope daily routine includes time for the children to plan what they will do, carry out their plans in purposeful play and reflect on what they have done. This is referred to as the "Plan Do Review" process. There is a balance between "child-initiated" and "adult-initiated" activities. Children engage in large group experiences, which have a focus on movement and music: they also engage in adult initiated small group experiences, which have a focus on language and literacy, math, and science. All parts of the daily routine stimulate brain development by offering children choices and by allowing them to pursue their interests. Through a consistent daily routine, focused around opportunities for active learning, children and adults build a sense of community.

Research shows that nurturing adult child interactions help children achieve higher levels of academic achievement. Children who experience positive adult-child interactions also develop enhanced pro-social skills and increased self esteem. In the High/Scope curriculum the role of the teacher is to support and extend the children's learning by observing and listening, asking appropriate question and by scaffolding learning experiences.

Adults in a High/Scope classroom share control with the children. Children are encouraged to make "child sized" decisions. Adults use a variety of strategies such as partnering in children's play, encouraging initiative and independence, supporting the exploration of materials and assisting with problem solving to support children's social, emotional and cognitive growth. Adults believe that children learn best when they are intrinsically motivated. This love of learning is encouraged and supported in a High/Scope classroom.

High/Scope has validated methods of assessing programs. In High/Scope programs teachers work together as a team to support children. They plan their program based on the children's interests using the Key Developmental Indicators as a focus. Recognizing the need for programs to achieve state learning outcomes; Key Developmental Indicators and state standards have been closely aligned. The PQA (Program Quality Assessment tool) is used to assess the classroom and program. Programs that meet the criteria can be certified as examples of excellence in implementing the High/Scope methods.

For more information on High/Scope please ask your child's teacher, or go to [www.highscope.org](http://www.highscope.org).