

Implementing *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* For Administrators and Professional Development Staff

Are you looking for preschool curriculum to use in your program and wondering if *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* is right for your program? Are you already using a curriculum but want to make a change? Are you already using *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* but want to make sure your teachers are implementing it effectively? If you answered *yes* to any of these questions, this is the place to begin finding answers to your questions.

Choosing a Curriculum

A well-designed curriculum meets the standards of the profession and helps you construct a high-quality program. In selecting a curriculum for your program, you must first learn all you can about it. To learn more about *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*

- read *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*
- **find out** how *The Creative Curriculum®* aligns with your state as well as national standards
- **ask others** who are implementing *The Creative Curriculum®* about their success
- **attend** an introductory session on *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* at a local, regional, or national conference.
- send an e-mail to info@teachingstrategies.com for answers to your questions

Teachers will find it easy to implement *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*. It builds on what they already know. The approach is practical, straightforward, and easy to use. Additionally, if teachers do not have a strong background in child development, *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* explains what to expect of children and how to plan a program that is challenging for each child.

Once you have selected *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*, you can start planning how to implement it in your program.

Implementing *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*

As you begin to develop your plan for helping teachers learn about and effectively implement *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*, think about the different phases of the implementation journey. Each phase is briefly described below:

Phase I: Develop an Implementation Plan

Needs Assessment

A one-size-fits-all approach to implementing curriculum would be simple. However, each teacher in your program is unique and at a different stage professionally. A needs assessment helps you decide the training and resources needed for effective implementation.

What To Do

Complete *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool® Implementation Checklist* to see the extent to which teachers are implementing the Curriculum. The “[Classroom Profile](#)” form helps you develop a quantitative analysis of classroom implementation. The “[Progress and Planning Form](#)” gives you a way to summarize findings and, together with teachers, plan next steps.

Review *A Trainer’s Guide to The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Volume 1: Getting Started*, which provides you with a roadmap for fully implementing *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* in your program. It begins with tools to help you create a comprehensive staff development plan for your program, including creating a shared vision, determining training needs, using the *Implementation Checklist*, developing a training plan, and using learning teams for ongoing professional development.

Provide Resources

The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool is not a prepackaged, off-the-shelf, scripted curriculum. We value teachers’ abilities to be creative, make decisions, and shape their program based on the needs of their children. Teachers need high-quality resources and classroom materials to make this happen.

What To Do

Take an inventory of what each preschool classroom currently has and what is needed. Refer to *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* and the information you collected from the *Implementation Checklist* as a guide. You can also use the “[Setting Up a Classroom for 20 Children](#)” to determine the materials and equipment you need.

Make sure that each teacher has a copy of *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*.

Make decisions about the method your teachers will use to assess and report children’s progress using *The Creative Curriculum® Developmental Continuum for Ages 3–5* ([paper version](#) with [software support](#) for reporting outcomes or [online option](#)).

Prepare a Schedule

By mapping out a training plan for one or more years, you will have a schedule for action. Without this, your staff development efforts may not be successful.

What To Do

Create a one- to two- year professional development plan. Include time and resources for

- orientation
- on-site assistance
- staff time for collegial learning
- extended professional development

The following forms will help you organize and document your planning:

- [Learning Team Plan](#) (pdf)
- [Learning Team Log](#) (pdf)
- [Implementation Planning Calendar](#) (pdf)

Determine if you will have a Teaching Strategies [Professional Development Network Trainer](#) come to your program or if you will send staff to a Teaching Strategies [national conference](#).

For onsite professional development, complete the online “[Professional Development Needs Assessment](#)” form and a staff member from the Teaching Strategies Sales and Customer Solutions team will contact you.

Phase II: Introducing the Curriculum

Introduce *The Creative Curriculum*[®] for Preschool to Your Staff

In the beginning stages of implementation, it helps to have an expert who really knows and understands the curriculum to introduce it to the entire staff. This person will motivate your staff members and help to ensure successful implementation.

What To Do

Arrange for a 3-day introduction to *The Creative Curriculum*[®] for Preschool in one of the following ways:

- Schedule a Teaching Strategies [Professional Development Network Trainer](#) to come to your program.
- Send a program representative to a professional development session offered at the Helen H. Taylor Center for Professional Development at the Teaching Strategies national office or a Teaching Strategies national conference. The representative can then share the information with others.
- Send teachers to a Teaching Strategies national conference.

Arrange for a 2-day introduction to *The Creative Curriculum*[®] Developmental Continuum for Ages 3–5.

Set Up the Environment

Careful arrangement of the furnishings and selection of the materials set the stage for learning.

What To Do

Help teachers set up their rooms according to the guidelines outlined in *The Creative Curriculum*[®] for Preschool, chapter 2, “The Learning Environment” and in the “Interest Areas” chapters. Use information from the *Implementation Checklist* to provide feedback and suggestions on ways to use the environment effectively.

Inform Families

Families want to know what their child will be learning and what their day will be like. Sharing the

curriculum with them will help them understand your approach and how they might partner with you to support their child's learning.

What To Do

Introduce *The Creative Curriculum*[®] for *Preschool* to families. For example, you might

- meet with families individually
- invite families to visit their children's classrooms and talk with the teachers
- hold a family workshop or an open house
- share with families how to use [ParentsCentral](#) if you are using [CreativeCurriculum.net](#)
- provide families with resources that help them understand the curriculum as well as how they can support at home what their children learn in your program

These resources are available in both English and Spanish:

- [A Parent's Guide to Preschool](#)
- [Reading Right From the Start: What Parents Can Do in the First Five Years](#)
- [Math Right From the Start: What Parents Can Do in the First Five Years](#)
- [Building Your Baby's Brain: A Parent's Guide to the First Five Years](#)
- [The Creative Curriculum](#)[®] [LearningGames](#)[®]

Phase III: Providing Ongoing Support and Professional Development

Offer Ongoing Support

Attending a 3-day introductory workshop on *The Creative Curriculum*[®] for *Preschool* is not enough. To achieve positive outcomes for children, teachers must have opportunities to think about their practices, receive feedback and ongoing support, and have opportunities to learn about new and innovative teaching strategies and techniques.

What To Do

Support your teachers in a variety of ways, including

- Observe and give feedback
- model effective teaching behaviors
- foster collegial learning through study groups, peer mentoring, and attending conferences and workshops

Use *The Coach's Guide to The Creative Curriculum*[®] for *Preschool: A Step-by-Step Resource for Individualizing Professional Development* to provide direct, in-class assistance, expand your use of various coaching strategies, and help teachers strengthen their classroom practices. Use *The Coach's Recording Tool* checklists to document your ongoing observations and help you refine teachers' action plans for professional growth and learning.

After you have implemented *The Creative Curriculum*[®] for *Preschool* and *The Creative Curriculum*[®] *Developmental Continuum for Ages 3–5* assessment system for at least one year, attend the "Sustaining

Curriculum Implementation: Leading Staff to Excellence” session at a Teaching Strategies [national conference](#) to learn advanced strategies for using program evaluation and reporting tools to support implementation of the Curriculum as well as strategies for program improvement.

Offer Opportunities for More In-Depth Learning and Reflection

Once teachers understand the basics of getting started with *The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool, they must continue learning and refining their teaching skills. With experience and reflection, teachers can make informed decisions about how to meet the needs of children and families.

What To Do

Using information from the *Implementation Checklist*, *The Coach’s Guide to The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool, *The Coach’s Recording Tool*, and other sources such as child outcomes data, provide targeted, ongoing training and technical assistance. For example, you might try the following:

- Continue to provide workshops for teachers on the components of the curriculum and the interest areas, as needed, using *A Trainer’s Guide to The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool, *Volume 1: Getting Started*.
- Help teachers expand children’s language and literacy development by arranging for a 2-day introductory session on *Literacy: The Creative Curriculum*® Approach. Provide ongoing professional development using *A Trainer’s Guide to The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool, *Volume 2: Literacy*. Make sure teachers have the language and literacy classroom materials they need by providing each classroom with *The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool Literacy Kits ([Kit 1](#), [Kit 2](#), [Kit 3](#), [Kit 4](#)).
- Help teachers become more comfortable with math and provide appropriate math experiences for children by arranging for 2-day trainings on *Mathematics: The Creative Curriculum*® Approach. Use *The Coach’s Guide to The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool to guide you in providing individualized support to teachers. Make sure teachers have the math materials they need by providing each classroom with *The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool Math Kits ([Kit 1](#), [Kit 2](#)).
- Help teachers strengthen their understanding of studies (long-term investigations), and how to support children’s knowledge of science and social studies concepts through studies by providing *Study Starters: A Step-by-Step Guide to Project-Based Investigations I Science and Social Studies* ([Volume 1](#), [Volume 2](#)).
- Give teachers more practice using observation to teach responsively with *Observation: The Key to Responsive Teaching*.
- Contact the Teaching Strategies national office and talk with a staff member about arranging [onsite professional development](#) on topics such as supporting English-language learners, building effective partnerships with families, using *The Creative Curriculum*® LearningGames® with families, or others you’ve identified as interests or needs.
- Attend or send teachers to professional development sessions offered at the Helen H. Taylor Center for Professional Development at the Teaching Strategies national office or Teaching Strategies national conferences.