



THINK ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S EARLY EDUCATION



WHY IS PRE-K IMPORTANT?

Free childcare and school readiness BEFORE age 5!

Pre-K classrooms follow a learning plan created by experts to get kids ready for elementary school. They learn social skills through group activities, play and more! Pre-K is a key step in school success.

WHAT IS PHILLY PRE-K

VS

WHAT IS HEADSTART (AND EARLY HEADSTART)

FREE Pre-K for kids age 3 to 5 —
all families can join, regardless of
income

HOW TO APPLY

1. Have a phone or computer that can take pictures
2. Use the online locator (below)
3. Make list of top 3 programs
4. Gather documents
 - a. Proof of child's age
 - b. Proof of family residency
 - c. Proof of household income
 - d. Caregiver ID
5. Submit application online or on paper through a site

*Uses a centralized application

FREE Pre-K for kids age 3 to 5
AND Early HeadStart for children
under 3. Families must meet
financial conditions; See
HeadStart Common Questions (QR
code below) for more info

HOW TO APPLY

1. Find a center near you with the online locator
2. Contact the center
3. Follow the centers instructions to apply
4. Call (toll-free) 866-763-6481 with any questions

*Applications are handled by individual sites



PHILLY PRE-K
ONLINE
LOCATOR



PHILLY PRE-K
COMMON
QUESTIONS



HEADSTART & EARLY
HEADSTART ONLINE
LOCATOR



HEADSTART
COMMON
QUESTIONS





DAYCARE VS PRESCHOOL (PRE-K)

Every family has different needs. It is helpful for families to know the difference between daycare and preschool. Explore your choices by asking the site what they provide.

Daycare focuses on safely caring for children's basic needs while away from home. Many daycares have learning opportunities.

Preschool uses a standard curriculum to get children ready for school.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What if my child has special needs?**
 - Both PHL Pre-K and HeadStart welcome children with special needs. Be ready to discuss your child's IEP, IFSP, or 504 plan, if they have one. Resources will depend on the site, so ask the site what they provide.
 - **What if my child isn't potty-trained?**
 - Some programs do require potty training, but not all. Talk to the site!
 - **Can I apply to both PHL Pre-K and HeadStart?**
 - If you meet the financial conditions for HeadStart, then it's a good idea to apply to both. This gives your family a better chance of getting a spot.
 - **Are the hours the same at every Pre-K center?**
 - No, the hours can be different at each center. Some sites provide before and after-school care: ask the center directly about their hours.
 - **What is ELRC, and how can I use that to pay for Pre-K?**
 - ELRC stands for Early Learning Resource Center. It helps families pay for daycare if they qualify financially. If your child is in PHL Pre-K or HeadStart and needs care before or after program hours, ELRC might help cover the cost of extra time. Visit <https://www.elrc-phmc.org/elrc-18> for more.
 - **Why does PHL Pre-K ask for income if there are no income requirements?**
 - PHL Pre-K asks about your income to learn more about the families they serve. It does not affect your child's chance of getting in.
 - **What supplies do I need to send with my child to preschool?**
 - It depends. Some programs offer free diapers, wipes, formula, and meals, but be sure to check with the site for details.
 - **What is the difference between PHL Pre-K and HeadStart?**
 - PHL Pre-K is city-funded, and HeadStart is federally funded, with income-based eligibility. Both programs have research-based curricula, but HeadStart offers additional family support services.
 - **How do I choose a Pre-K site?**
 - Choose a site close to your house or work so it's easy to drop your child off. The Keystone STARS website ranks Pre-K's: <https://www.pakeys.org/keystone-stars/>
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