



*Education & Literacy Department  
Government of Sindh  
Pakistan*

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**EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION  
POLICY SINDH  
2014**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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The provincial policy on Early Childhood Education has been developed with the participation and collaboration of all stakeholders of Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Development initiatives. Representatives from various government, non-government, private entities and individuals have contributed in bringing this document to its present shape. The complete list of participants in the policy development process can be found in Annexure 1.

The Early Childhood Education Policy and Standards Development project was commissioned by the Reform Support Unit, Education & Literacy Department, Government of Sindh.

## ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

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ADP	Annual Development Plan
AKU	Agha Khan University
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
BCEWS	Bureau of Curriculum & Extension Wing Sindh
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECED	Early Childhood Education & Development
EFA	Education For All
GER	Gross Enrollment Rate/Ratio
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NEP	National Education Policy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
PSLM	Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement
RAND	Research And Development
RSU	Reform Support Unit
RTE	Right to Education
SEMIS	Sindh Education Management Information System
SESP	Sindh Education Sector Plan
TRC	Teachers Resource Center
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WHO	World Health Organization

## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

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The Early Childhood Education Policy (ECE) 2014 (“the Policy”) is the first policy to be adopted by the Sindh Government of Pakistan that focuses on early childhood since the country’s independence in 1947 and subsequent provincial devolution of education via the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment in 2010. The review process of early childhood education in Sindh was initiated in March 2014 and the first policy draft was completed in November 2014. The lag in finalization of the draft owes to multiple factors including the process of consultations adopted and political challenges within the country.

The Government of Sindh (GoS) was motivated to formulate a policy specific to early childhood as current policy on education was not sufficiently catering to the pre-primary population thereby not producing the desired results and mitigating performance of several key aspects including access, quality and equity of educational opportunities. GoS recognizes that provision of and access to quality early childhood education directly correlates to enhanced school performance, improved student attendance, increased social awareness and community engagement resulting in overall positive socioeconomic growth. In line with international pledges like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Dakar Framework for Action Education for All (EFA) Goals, GoS is committed to forging a knowledgeable Islamic society by focusing efforts on expanding dimensions of early childhood care, development, services and provisions.

Topics addressed in this document will also be found in policy documents reviewed of various countries around the globe and will serve to highlight and contextualize the situation, status, challenges and priorities of the Sindh province as opposed to the nation as a whole. The Policy will only propose a path to resolving the emerging illiteracy crisis but appropriate implementation, allocation of resources and building of capacity is paramount to achieving Policy success. It is hoped that the Policy will encompass all modes of early childhood care and education while signifying the importance of this particular period of a child’s life.

On governance, the policy identifies and defines inter-tier responsibilities within the respective roles and functions of the provincial-district governments with reference to early childhood education. On implementation, the Policy document includes strategies and plans that will enable framework administration.

The Policy is a “living document” that will remain for an indefinite period and be subjected to improvements whenever any such requirement is felt by the Government of Sindh which will consider and approve all such improvements that may be proposed.

The purpose of the Policy is to chart out a provincial strategy for guiding early childhood education development in Pakistan. Policy actions outlined may have already been initiated in reforms during the process, most notably in the domains of curriculum, textbook/learning materials, assessment, teachers and community. A number of initiatives are already being implemented by the provincial government, private sector and international development partners. The Policy takes account of these ongoing reforms and integrates them into its recommendations. The Policy is also embedded within the Islamic ethos as enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE)

### OVERVIEW

Early childhood education refers globally to the branch of educational theory that caters to the nurture, development and education of children from birth to eight years of age.

Education and care for young children – three-, four- and five-year-olds – goes by many names: child care, day care, nursery school, preschool, pre-kindergarten, and early education. It is delivered in many settings: center-based, home-based or at the local public school, in urban, suburban and rural communities. Some programs are part-time, part-year, while others offer full-day, full-year services. They can be publicly or privately run, either non-profit or for profit, or they can be operated by the local school system<sup>2</sup>

Maria Montessori, one of the founding early childhood educationists of Pakistan whose philosophies have been widely adopted, highlighted the importance of a child's first formative years when stating, "The most important period of life is not the age of university studies, but the first one, the period from birth to the age of six. For that is the time when man's intelligence itself, his greatest implement, is being formed. But not only his intelligence; the full totality of his psychic powers. " (The Absorbent Mind, p. 21, 1995)

Research details the importance of investing in young children and families to foster early brain development and lay a strong foundation for later learning.<sup>3</sup> An on-going recognition has emerged that learning and achievement gaps start long before kindergarten. As children grow, disparities in their early experiences can set them behind their peers by up to two years even before they begin kindergarten.<sup>4</sup> This "opportunity gap" is particularly evident for children of color and children from communities of concentrated poverty. Unfortunately, this early opportunity gap is overlooked in many current education policy agendas.<sup>5</sup> Programmes for disadvantaged children that are introduced during early childhood are found to have a greater impact than those introduced at a later stage (Engle et al., 2007).



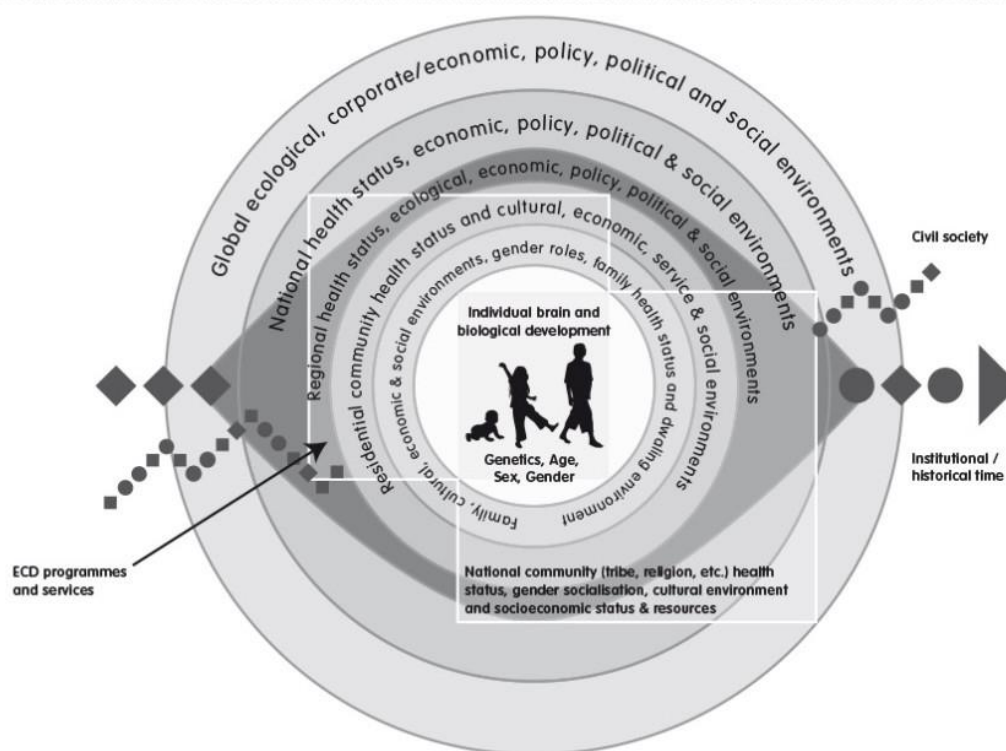
**SOURCE:** NATIONAL OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN CAMPAIGN, BROADER BOLDER APPROACH TO EDUCATION, OPPORTUNITY ACTION TO EDUCATION, OPPORTUNITY ACTION (2014). *BUILDING HIGH QUALITY EARLY SUPPORT SYSTEMS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES. A GUIDE FOR STATE POLICY.*

Early environments are powerful determinants of how well a child develops, and can influence long-term health, learning and behavioral trajectories. The environmental factors that influence a young child's development may be proximal (such as families' economies), or distal (for



example, the ecological and political environment).<sup>6</sup>

**Figure 1** Interacting and interdependent spheres of influence for development in early childhood

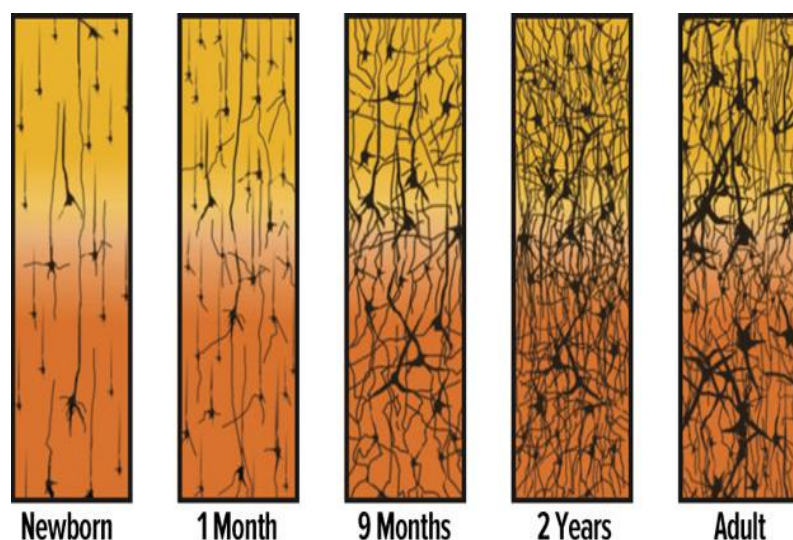


Source: Irwin et al., 2007; WHO, forthcoming a

**SOURCE:** WHO, FORTHCOMING A, (2007). *A VARIETY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING DEVELOPMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD*.

Studies in brain development reveal that 80% of an adult's mental ability is formed in the first three years of life and the brain is twice as active in the first 10 years of life than that of an adult's. A child is born with 100 billion brain cells (neurons) and up to 15000 connections (synapses) may be established for each cell. The brain processes information by forming networks of neurons, which communicate with one another using electrical and chemical signals.<sup>7</sup> These messages are the physical basis of learning and memory.<sup>8</sup> Synaptic connections form and change at an exponential rate as a result of stimulation from the environment so by age 3 children are at 3.8%. This architecture is highly susceptible to responsive care that has proven to mediate both physiological and psychological risks in children. There is clear evidence that positive social and emotional experiences at this stage directly correlates with long term health and well-being of children and thereby school performance.

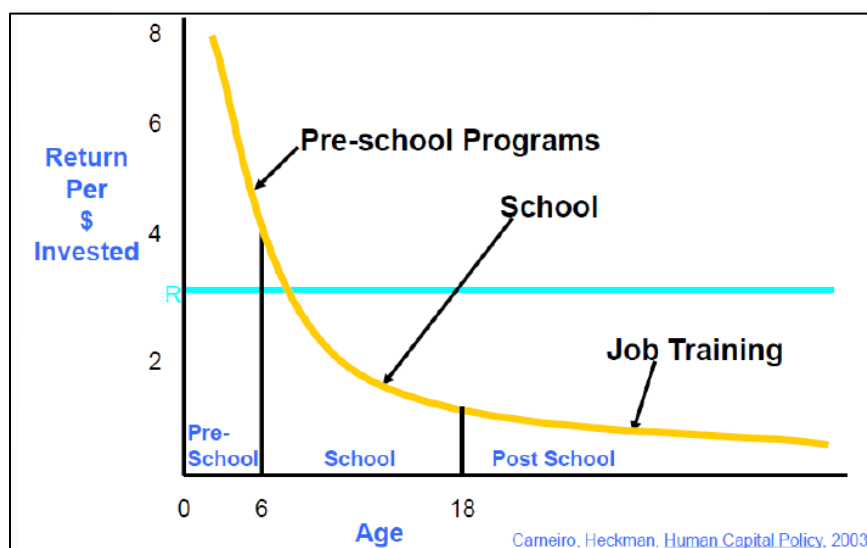
### Synaptic Density over Time



**SOURCE:** COREL, J. L. (1975). THE POSTNATAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN CEREBRAL CORTEX. CAMBRIDGE, MA: HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS;

The domains of early childhood development include physical, cognitive, language, social, emotional and spiritual domains. Globally there are a variety of opinions upon the number of developmental domains and the approaches towards positively stimulating and engaging each domain. Regardless of the approach

or setting however, the goal is to provide high quality education determined by high education standards, developmentally appropriate curriculum, and supportive learning environment with informed and educated staff members. Investment in this area has direct correlations to significant rates of return for a country as highlighted by the graph below.



**SOURCE:** CARNEIRO, HECKMAN, (2003). HUMAN CAPITAL POLICY.

## HISTORY OF ECE IN PAKISTAN AND SINDH PROVINCE

Pakistan has made a number of national and international commitments to better improve both the life and rights of the child beginning in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with the country's first Education Conference in 1947 where Quaid-e-Azam stated, "There is no doubt that the future of our State will and must greatly depend upon the type of education and the way in which we bring up our children as the future servants of Pakistan."<sup>9</sup> "The terms of reference for the primary and secondary committee, then, included the provision of pre-primary education through a clause that the committee shall 'recommend the lines on which pre-primary education may be run and to consider the part of the Central and Provincial governments in setting up Nursery schools'<sup>10</sup>. The age bracket for early childhood mentioned in the 1947 proceedings was 3- 6 years.

Pakistan also became a part of the following treaties and instruments to further this aim:

- In 1948, signatory to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, recognizing the right to education by stating "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit" (Article 26 (1))
- In 1990, signatory to the World Declaration on Education For All and Framework to Meet Basic Learning Needs
- In 1990, ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Four main principles form the core of the CRC:<sup>11</sup>
  - Non-discrimination or universality (article 2): All children have rights, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
  - Best interests (article 3): The child's best interests must be a primary consideration in all decisions affecting her or him.
  - Life, survival and development (article 6): All children have a right to life, and to survive and develop – physically, mentally, spiritually, morally, psychologically and socially – to their full potential.
  - Respect for the views of the child (article 12): Children have the right to express themselves freely on matters that affect them, and to have their views taken seriously.
- In 1996, ratified the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
- In 1996, signed the Declaration and Agenda for Action adopted at the issue of the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, reaffirmed by the Yokohama Global Commitment in 2001
- In 2000, adopted the Dakar Framework for Action, reaffirming the vision of the World Declaration on Education For All adopted in 1990, pledging to achieve EFA goals of "(i) expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children; (ii) ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality;

- In 2000, signatory to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals where Goal 2 is to “Achieve Universal Primary Education” and Target 2.A is to “Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling”
- In 2001, ratified the Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Form of Child Labour Convention (C182)
- In 2001, signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict as well as of the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
- In 2003, passed the National Plan of Action (NPA) 2001-2015 was developed by Ministry of Education, Trainings and Standards in Higher Education, Government of Pakistan for Achieving Universal Quality Primary Education in Pakistan and honoring the commitment to the EFA Goals. It stated that “Early Childhood Education is the third priority of NPA. The plan target is to provide ECE to at least half of the relevant age group, raising the net participation rate to from existing 25% to 50% by 2015”
- In 2009, passed the National Education Policy (NEP), devised a year ahead of its predecessor to gain a head start towards improving access, quality and equity of educational opportunities
- In 2011, provinces signed the Joint Declaration on Education reaffirming both Article 25A, the National Education Policy and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
- In 2012, passed Article 25A of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, following the 18th Constitutional Amendment, guaranteeing that education was a fundamental right of all children aged 5-16.
- In 2013, Sindh Education Sector Plan 2013-16 was passed with a chapter on ECE charting the course for implementation in Sindh.

The Government of Pakistan passed the 18th Amendment in 2010, devolving the responsibility of education to the provinces thereby inspiring in 2012, Article 25A – Education a Constitutional Fundamental Right which included Right to Education (RTE) as part of the constitution stating, “The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 5 to 16 years in such manner as may be determined by law”.

## Status of RTE Acts/Ordinances-25-A

Province	Status of Legislation	Nature of Legislation
ICT/Islamabad)	Passed in the Parliament on December 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2012	Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2012
Sindh	Passed in Province on March 6 <sup>th</sup> , 2013	Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2013
Baluchistan	Passed in Province on March 15 <sup>th</sup> , 2013	Baluchistan Compulsory and Free Ordinance, 2013
Khyber Pakhtunkua (KPK)	Working on Draft legislation	Draft Bill
Punjab	Ordinance Passed by Governor awaiting enactment after Assembly discussion	Ordinance Punjab Free and Compulsory Education 2013
Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)	Not available	Not available
Gilgit Baltistan (GB)	Not available	Not available

**SOURCE:** RAFIQUE G. (2014). *ECE IN PAKISTAN - PROGRESS, CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS*

According to NEP 2009, historically ECE has not been formally recognized by the public sector in Pakistan. The traditional ‘katchi’ class in some public sector schools has predominantly remained a familiarization stage towards formal schooling for un-admitted, young students. A limited part of the Grade I National Curriculum is taught to this group. Against this background, for the first time in Pakistan’s history, ECE was included as a component in the Education Sector Reforms programme and funding was provided to the provincial and district governments.

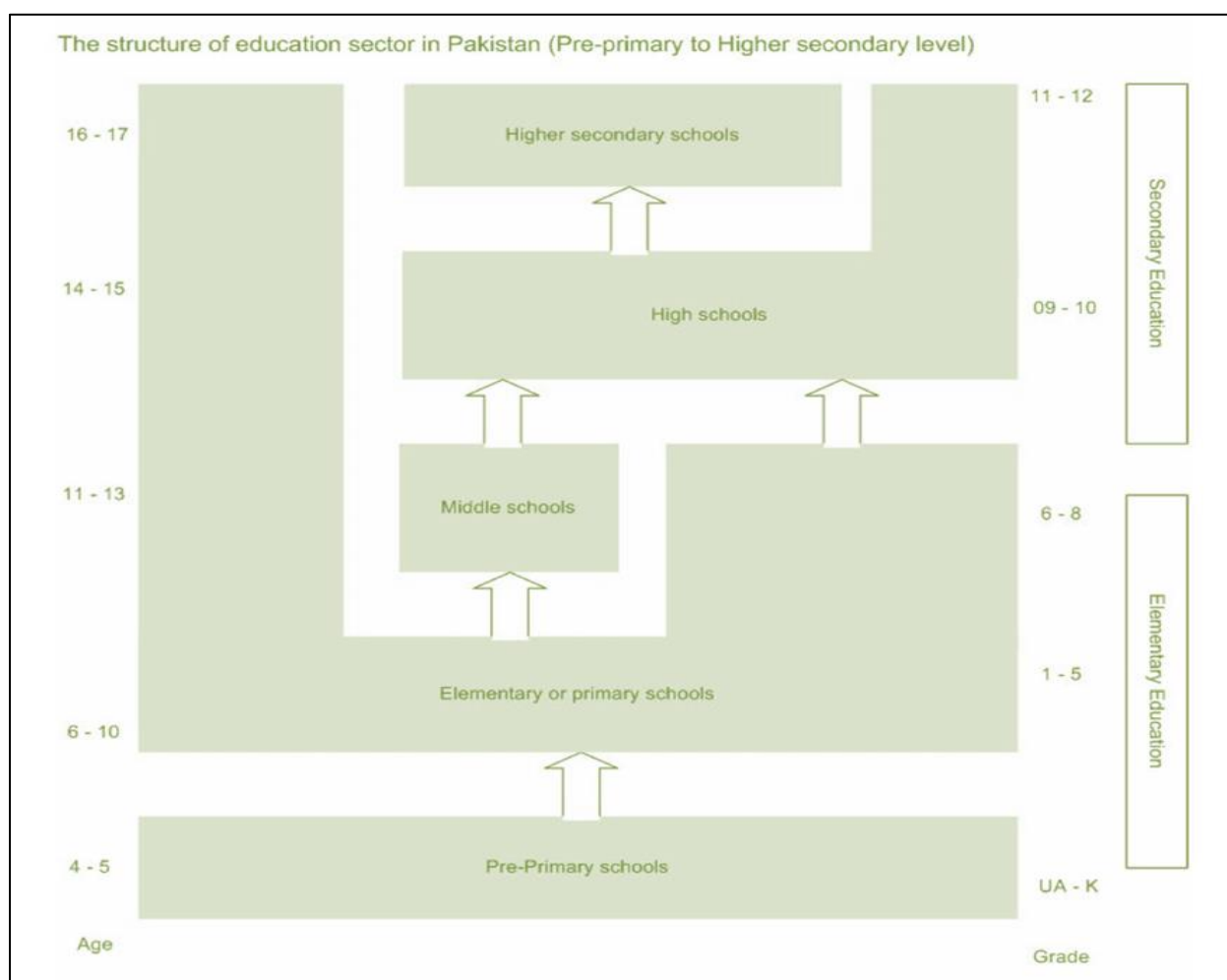
Overarching ECE Policies as per NEP 2009 are as follows:

1. Improvements in quality of ECE shall be based on a concept of holistic development of the child that provides a stimulating, interactive environment, including play, rather than a focus on regimes that require rote learning and rigid achievement standards.
2. ECE age group shall be recognized as comprising 3 to 5 years. At least one year pre-primary education shall be provided by the State and universal access to ECE shall be ensured within the next ten years.
3. Provision of ECE shall be attached to primary schools which shall be provided with additional budget, teachers and assistants for this purpose.
4. For ECE teachers, a two-year specialized training in dealing with young children shall be a necessary requirement.

5. This training shall be on the basis of ECE revised National Curriculum. The curriculum and support material for ECE shall take account of the cultural diversity of particular areas.

International development partners have long since had significant yet fragmented contributions towards the ECE sector. Their generous support combined with overwhelming enrollment increases in the 'katchi' classes have led to measurable strides improving early childhood literacy in Pakistan. A significant milestone to be named is the ECE National Curriculum 2006 developed by the Teachers Resource Center (TRC) that is serving as a vital guide in the development of the Policy. However a long-term sustainable support mechanism must be devised that will serve to effectively coordinate and optimize individual agency efforts into measurable collaborative support, equally spread across the geography to prevent unnecessary overlap and sustain focus on Government goals.

According to the Pakistan Education Statistics 2011-2012, the following image represents the current structure of the education sector in Pakistan from pre-primary to higher secondary.



**SOURCE:** GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN (2011). *PAKISTAN EDUCATION STATISTICS 2011-2012*

Within Sindh:

- In 2002, The District Government Karachi initiated the establishment of 56 ECE centers in different areas of Karachi city.
- In 2003, the Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Wing (BCEWS), Jamshoro established 1200 ECE centers in public schools with funding from the Annual Development Program (ADP). They trained 2000 teachers and over 100 master teacher trainers in 23 districts of Sindh on the Teacher's Guide developed by BCEWS in accordance with the National Curriculum 2002, translated both in Urdu and Sindhi languages. The Literacy & Non Formal Education Department developed a PC-1 to initiate proper implementation of ECE in government schools through a project titled "Establishment of 322 ECE centers in the Existing primary Schools in Sindh."
- In 2014, ECE chapters were introduced in the Sindh Sector Education Plan 2014-18 and the ECE Task Force was formed to provide recommendations for the formation of an ECE Policy by the Reform Support Unit (RSU), Education & Literacy Department, Government of Sindh.

### Timeline for ECE Policy Development

Timeline	Historical Progression
1947	Viewing Nursery as an integral part of the mainstream education at the Education Conference 1947
1950s – 1980s	<i>Katchi</i> classes as a means to merely familiarize children with school setting; no education policy during the four decades made any reference to ECE
1992	Education policy proposed to mainstream <i>Katchi</i> classes
1998	National Education Policy charts out the need for ECE
2001-2015	National Plan of Action for EFA (2001-2015) charts out a complete plan for mainstreaming ECE in the formal education system, through sensitization of stakeholders, allocation of funds, encouraging private sector etc.
2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National ECE Curriculum was developed (Sindhi version as well). This document provides policy and curricular guidelines pertaining to ECE in Pakistan.</li> </ul>
2001-2004	In the Education Sector Reform-Action Plan, ECE was taken up as an Innovative Program implemented across Pakistan with federal funds.
2009	National Education Policy proposes ECE become part of mainstream education

	integrated in all primary schools and suggests action plans
2014	Sindh Education Sector Plan highlights ECE and Sindh focuses efforts on ECE Policy development

**SOURCE:** GOVERNMENT OF SINDH, PAKISTAN (2013). *SINDH EDUCATION SECTOR PLAN (SESP) 2014-2018*

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

Education for the early years has become a crucial necessity for Pakistan with an illiteracy rate of approximately 30% according to the Alif Ailaan Pakistan District Education Rankings 2014, and with almost 5.5 million children out of school, according to the UNESCO Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report 2013-14. This report highlights that Pakistan has the second-highest out-of-school population in the world and is battling with an “extensive”<sup>12</sup> learning crisis encapsulating literacy, academic performance, enrollment and attendance or dropout rates. Despite these findings Pakistan persists in spending only 2 percent of its GDP on the education sector making little difference to increasing access to or quality of Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED). There is an inherent disbelief that education for the pre-primary population holds the key to resolving numerous current and future socio-economic issues of the province.

According to the Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey 2011-2012, the following represents the target age-group of early childhood education and development as a percentage of the total population highlighting that ECD (0-8 years) is 24.22% and ECE (3-5 years) is 8.5%.

**TABLE 1.1 STRUCTURE OF THE POPULATION – BY REGION AND AGE CATEGORY**

REGION AND AGE CATEGORY	2005-06 PSLM			2007-08 PSLM			2011-12 PSLM		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Under One	1.3	1.3	2.6	1.3	1.3	2.5	1.2	1.1	2.3
01-02	2.6	2.5	5.1	2.4	2.5	4.9	2.5	2.4	4.8
03-04	2.8	2.9	5.7	2.7	2.7	5.5	2.8	2.8	5.6
05-09	7.7	7.2	14.8	7.6	7.1	14.7	7.5	6.9	14.4

**SOURCE:** GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN (2011). *PAKISTAN SOCIAL AND LIVING STANDARDS MEASUREMENT (PSLM) SURVEY 2011-2012*

According to the PSLM Survey 2012-2013, the following table represents the Gross Enrollment Rate of children falling the ECD and ECE target age groups



**Table 2.4 Gross Enrolment Rate at the Primary Level (Age 4-9) By Region and Province<sup>c</sup>**  
(Including Katchi Class)

Region & Province	Urban			Rural			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Punjab	114	110	112	103	91	97	106	96	101
Sindh	106	97	102	72	49	61	85	68	77
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	110	103	107	106	78	92	107	81	95
Balochistan	102	85	94	79	39	60	84	49	68
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>92</b>

**SOURCE:** GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN (2012). *PSLM SURVEY 2012-2013*

The table above highlights the GER for the pre-primary and primary population of Pakistan is at 92% and for the province of Sindh it is at 77%.

The table below highlights difference of GER for the primary population when the pre-primary or “Katchi” class population is excluded. We can infer that the decline in GER for Pakistan is by 32% and for Sindh it is 23%.

**Table 2.5 Gross Enrolment Rate for Government primary schools (Age 4-9) By Region and Province<sup>d</sup>**  
(Excluding Katchi Class)

Region & Province	Urban			Rural			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Punjab	43	51	47	69	61	65	61	58	60
Sindh	42	38	40	74	51	63	62	46	54
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	53	50	52	78	58	68	74	57	66
Balochistan	87	69	79	83	41	63	84	47	67
<b>Pakistan</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>60</b>

**SOURCE:** GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN (2012). *PSLM SURVEY 2012-2013*

## ISSUES OF THE DEVELOPING WORLD - FACTS & FIGURES

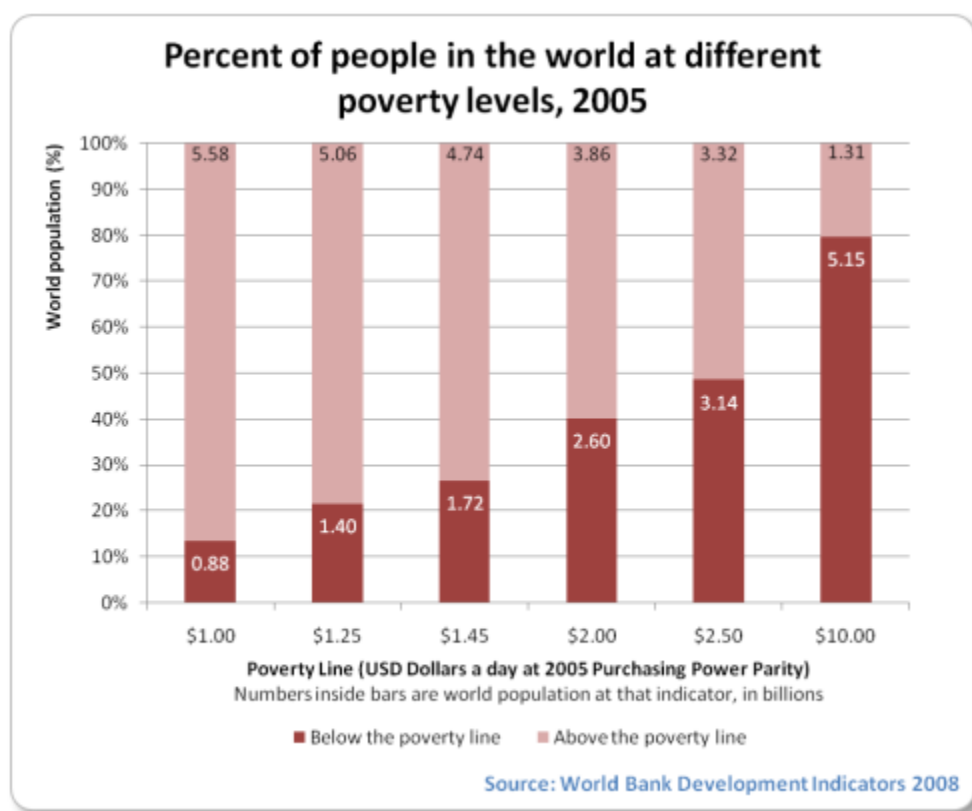
Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names.<sup>13</sup> Almost half the world — over three billion people — live on less than \$2.50 a day. Some 1.1 billion people in developing countries have inadequate access to water and 2.6 billion people lack basic sanitation. Some 1.8 million child deaths occur each year as a result of diarrhea.<sup>14</sup>

According to UNICEF, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty.<sup>15</sup> Around 27-28 percent of all children in developing countries are estimated to be underweight or stunted. The two regions that account for the bulk of the deficit are South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. If current trends continue, the Millennium

Development Goals target of halving the proportion of underweight children will be missed by 30 million children, largely because of slow progress in Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.<sup>16</sup>

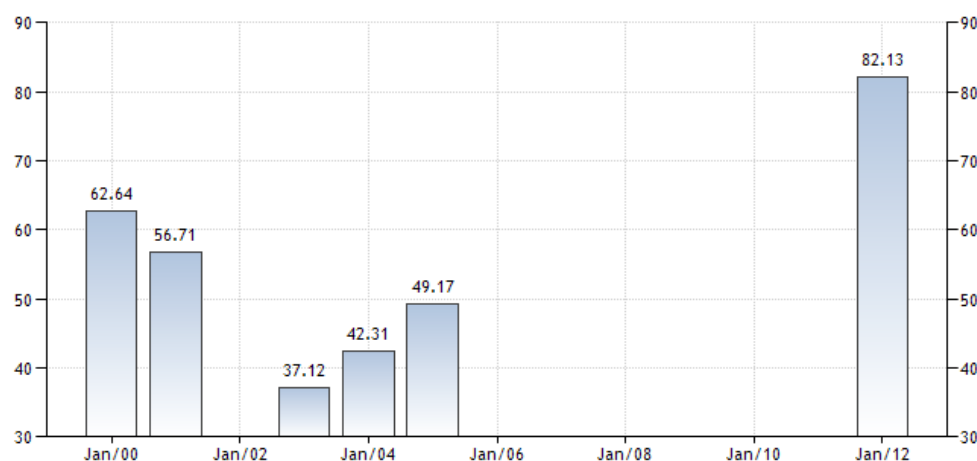
According to the UNICEF 2014 report on State of the Worlds Children:

- The number of children in the world is 2.2 billion and the number of children in poverty is 1 billion. The report states that as per 2012
- Pakistan houses approximately 22 million children under the age of 5.
- Basic indicators of a child's well-being show that Pakistan ranks at number 26 in the world in the Under 5- Mortality Rate (U5MR) category for both males and females, as per 2012 with 86 deaths per 1000 live births. Sierra Leone ranks number 1 with 182 deaths.
- The percentage of children in Pakistan that are underweight are 12%, stunting are 44% and wasting are 15%.
- Malnutrition costs the country Rs. 200 billion every year (equivalent of more than 5% of GNP) in lost lives, disability and productivity.



**SOURCE:** WORLD BANK (2008). *WORLD BANK DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS*

The evidences portray significant issues of poverty, health and hygiene that negatively impact ECD and ECE as early childhood care is the first and most important step towards building a base for learning. It is therefore understandable when the GER for the pre-primary population of the world is only 50% for both boys and girls. According to World Bank the GER for Pakistan from 2000 to 2012 is as follows:



**SOURCE:**  
WORLD  
BANK (2013)

### ISSUES OF THE PROVINCE

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) consultation on ECD in 2013 the following points were highlighted as global challenges afflicting early childhood and mechanisms for prevention or resolution:

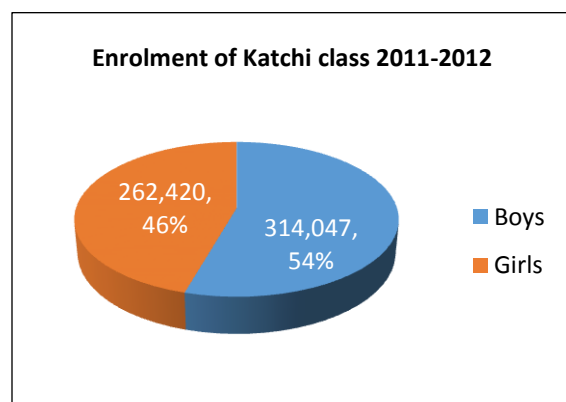
- “Determinants resulting in adversities in early childhood are across multiple areas and sectors – such as inadequate nutrition, frequent illness, lack of care and stimulation, poverty, poor environment, poor parental education, violence and conflict.
- To move towards sustainable development and social equity, the child survival and child development agendas need to be intertwined.
- Optimizing child development requires a life-course approach with interventions during adolescence, pregnancy and childbirth, the newborn period and early childhood especially up to 3 years of age. The health sector thus has a vital role to play.
- Intersectoral collaboration, across primary health care, social sectors, nutrition, education and environmental programmes, is crucial.
- Tools are available and experience from large-scale programmes in high-income countries provide important translational lessons for scaling-up similar programmes in low- and middle-income countries.
- Large number of partners and governments are committed to enabling children to thrive.
- It is therefore imperative that all stakeholders work together to advance the early child development agenda and help children get a best start in life and unleash their full development potential.” (WHO, forthcoming a)

ECE in Sindh shares many of its concerns and problems with the global climate in relation to policy and implementation. The following list highlights major stumbling blocks on the road to provision and sustenance of 100% enrollment, access and quality of ECE:

- Lack of political will
  - The ideology and practice of educating the early years has existed from the inception of Pakistan however the Government of Sindh has recognized and formalized ECE as a field of education only in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Absence of a comprehensive ECE policy
  - There is a clear necessity for a policy on ECE that will define various forms of ECD/ECE services, inclusive of '*Katchi*' classes thereby ensuring appreciation and awareness of stakeholders such as parents' and teachers'
- Absence of ECE regulations and legislation to implement them
  - Until there are laws and rules that clearly identify and ensure the parameters of child interaction, care, development and education, there will be no mechanism to ensure the safety, access and quality of staff, programs, institutions and ultimately the child and his/her learning experiences.
- Absence of formalized and standardized ECE curriculum, materials, programs, institutions, instruction, delivery and assessment.
  - The plethora of unregulated early childhood models currently in practice within Sindh resulting in consistent rates of below average literacy within the early years is evidence enough that piecemeal measures can have no place or impact in the education of a province. The public and private sectors must not collide but combine in their efforts to implement a singular form of early childhood care and education.
- Scarcity or absence of ECE materials, man power, facilities and resources at the school level including supplies and ECE specified developmentally appropriate learning spaces
  - Unaware of the developmental needs of children, limited resources have been allocated to the "katchi" classes to date resulting in inadequate infrastructure and an inability to cultivate the right learning environment.
  - Children in rural and urban areas have diverse learning needs and require differentiated strategies and/ or flexible approaches in the provision of ECE. This makes it essential to develop ECE resource centers and prioritize rural areas. Centers may either be based in existing schools or established separately as per resource availability.
- Absence of ECE department and ECE teaching cadre in the Government of Sindh
  - Inability to recognize the critical yet fleeting stage of early childhood for the holistic development of an individual, ECE has not been given a formalized place in the education mechanism resulting in the non-existence of the ECE profession
- Non-existent ECE teacher education, training, development programs/qualifications and teacher deployment strategies
  - The GoS must develop and deploy standardized cost-effective accredited ECE teacher education, training and development institutes, programs, policies and mechanisms to cater to the overwhelming need of the pre-primary population.
  - The private sector has initialized numerous programs on teacher education (as highlighted in Table ?) however these are unregulated by GoS
- Absence of ECE monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

- Without ECE policies, curriculum or teachers in place, a system of supervision, research and evaluation cannot follow for ECE classes.
- No concept of inclusive practices to cater to children with special needs.
  - Inclusion and differentiated practices are new terms facing cultural resistance in the public sector. The introduction and assimilation of students with special needs within the classroom is a foreign concept requiring a change in mindsets followed by a push for resources to build pilot programs, develop training modules and run inclusive and integrated approaches to education and teaching.
  - A significant move in this direction would be the merger of the Education and Literacy and Special Education Departments of the Government of Sindh in order to synchronize efforts in the process of providing quality education for all.
- Shortage of financial and human resources
  - Financial issues may be addressed by mainstreaming budget allocation (in ADP) for ECE and development of three year PC1 for the Planning Commission for the systematic and sustainable allocation of funds for ECE
  - The dearth of human capital is significant and occurs across the board. ECE requires highly educated, trained, aware and responsive professionals but the province does not currently provide services to develop these individuals or incentives for employed teachers to consider ECE a promising career choice so they may switch
- Lack of community education and engagement
  - The government is currently running no campaigns to enhance parental awareness, maternal health and environmental safety. These are high risk factors that directly affect the quality, access and sustainability of ECE. Multiple INGOs are working towards these endeavors but without a systematic or integrated approach.

The Sindh Education Management Information System (SEMIS) Census of 2011-12 depicts the total enrolment in government schools *Katchi* class to be more than half a million. This figure includes both un-admitted and admitted children and enrolment of girls is slightly lesser than the boys'. The alarming factor is that overall enrolment has declined to 16% in a year and although the validity of this data is uncertain is still important to note that enrolment figures have no direct correlation to student accessibility to ECE as development of both ECE knowledge base and system of implementation is yet to be unfolded for administration of developmentally appropriate education and pedagogy to take place .



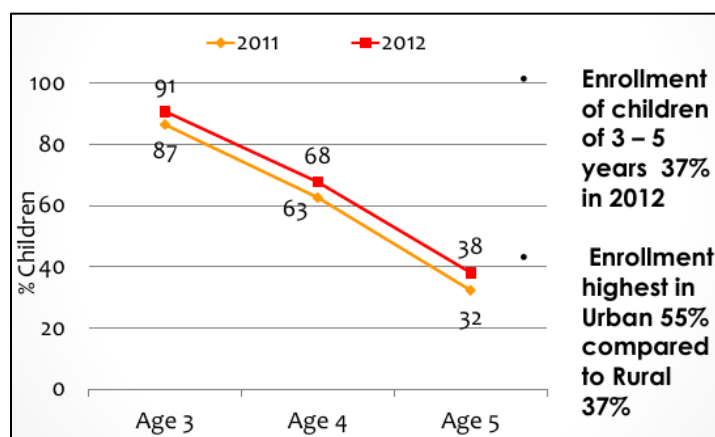
SOURCE: SEMIS 2011-2012

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2012 conducted a survey of 24 districts of Sindh and highlighted that around 62.9% children within the ECE age bracket (2-5 years) were out of school. It further indicates that 37.1% children in rural areas are attending some form of early education: 70.5% of these are going to government schools, 27% are going to private schools and 1.7% are attending *Madarasah*.

Age group	Govt.	Non-state providers			Out-of-school	Total
		Pvt.	Madrasah	Others		
3	6.0	2.9	0.3	0.1	90.7	100
4	21.2	10.3	0.6	0.3	67.6	100
5	45.5	15.4	0.9	0.4	37.8	100
3-5	26.2	10.0	0.6	0.3	62.9	100
Total	37.1				62.9	100
By type	70.5	27.0	1.7	0.7		

**SOURCE:** ASER (2012)

Most of the pre-primary classes (*Katchi*) are attached to primary schools with or without proper rooms allocated. Sometimes, these children are treated as non-enrolled students and, therefore, not formally considered or counted in the enrolment figures. In Sindh, there are a total of 44,522 primary schools and out of these schools a mere 4025 schools have 5 or more rooms.



**SOURCE:** ASER 2012

Numerous national and international development agencies have had a significant impact on ECE in Pakistan over the years. Multi-stakeholder partnerships for ECE include the following:

- Government of All Provinces and Areas
- Education Foundations
- Civil Society Organizations
- Private Sector providers
- Corporate Sector – CSR for ECE – brand based by UNILEVER and others

- International NGOs
- Donors: World Bank, DFID, UNICEF, UNESCO, USAID, CIDA, European Union, GIZ, Save the Children, Netherlands, Norad etc.

Despite their involvement, the gap between public and private education is ever increasing where students in the lower ranking private schools outperform those in the higher ranking government schools. Provincial education gaps have widened due to the geographical differences of wealth and gender. The paucity of educated women results in the absence of a key driving force as research indicates that educated women are more likely to prioritize and effectively monitor their children's education. Sindh is therefore falling behind other provinces in terms of access to and quality of education for the early years.

## SINDH ECE POLICY FRAMEWORK

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### BACKGROUND

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The Policy framework was commissioned in 2013 by Reform Support Unit (RSU), Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh. An ECE Task Force (Annexure 2) was formed comprising of relevant ministries, departments, NGOs, INGOs and ECE specialists, practitioners, researchers, academicians, and development partners. This Task Force was then notified by the Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh and consultative workshops were conducted to design a methodology for the development of an ECE Policy Framework. Five Focus groups were formed as follows to direct policy efforts on key areas of ECED:

1. Policy and Advocacy
2. Curriculum and Textbooks
3. Learning Standards and Assessments
4. Teachers Education and Training
5. Parents and Community

Recommendations were aggregated and ECE policy development was initiated.

### POLICY FOCUS

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*(Parameters defined by Sindh Education Sector Plan 2014-2018)*

### DEFINITION OF ECE<sup>17</sup>

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For the purpose of this Policy and the actions there under, Early Childhood Education (ECE) refers to programmes and provisions for children from three to five years of age, catering to the needs of a child in all domains of development i.e. physical, motor, cognitive, language, social, emotional; creative and aesthetic appreciation and synergy with health and nutritional aspects. Focus will be aimed at developmentally appropriate pre-primary education that will evolve towards formal school preparation. This policy is thus applicable to all early childhood care and education programmes/related services in public, private and voluntary sectors in all settings across regions that are offered to children between 3-5 years. These services could go by the nomenclature katchi classes, pre-primary schools, preschools, nursery schools, kindergartens, preparatory schools, etc. and propose to cater to the needs of children from three to five years.

In the future, it is foreseen that the definition of ECE will expand to include children in the 0-3 and 6-9 categories to meet international standards of ECED.



## VISION

The vision of ECE proposed by the Government of Sindh in line with the 'Education For All Framework' is as follows:

*“The provision of quality early childhood education for all children living in Sindh through early childhood teachers/caregivers/practitioners who are trained , qualified, willing and able to understand the needs of all children with no exception, in a safe, caring and appropriate environment.”*

To further this vision, the Government of Sindh shall be guided by the following framework, objectives and principals

## FRAMEWORK

- The Policy shall encompass program and services for children (3-5 years) and their parents
- ECED interventions through mass media and existing services such as Basic health units/health outreach services, non-formal education programs and community based ECE Centers to cater to children (3-5 years) for strengthening provision of health, hygiene, nutrition and the promotion of sound parenting practices.
- Early learning opportunities to cater to children (3-5 years) in private, work place and community based ECE Centers
- Interventions in ECE Schools to improve teaching-learning practices, further expand upon earlier services and enhance school readiness for children (3-5 years)
- ECE Program in Sindh shall be developmentally appropriate, contextually relevant while maintaining cultural integrity
- ECE Program in Sindh shall include Health and Nutrition education to promote awareness within children (3-5 years) and parent thereby ensuring engagement
- The Government of Sindh shall not provide ECE facilities as separate institutes below pre-primary level, however, provision shall be made through;
  - ECE Schools/centers run by private sector. The Ministry of Education shall facilitate establishment and provide technical support for training
  - ECE Schools/centers run by corporate bodies, factories and institutes. The Ministry of Education shall facilitate establishment and provide technical support for training
  - Non-Governmental Organizations, the Ministry of Education shall facilitate establishment and provide technical support for training of ECE Teachers
  - Community based ECE Schools/Centers established in existing structures. The Ministry of Education shall provide support for establishment of centers, provision of paly and learning materials, and Ministry of Education shall give priority in hiring to ECE Teachers; who are performing their duties
- Recognizing ECE as an inter-disciplinary field, a multi-sectorial leadership strategy shall be pursued for delivering ECE
- The provincial ECE Task Force-Sindh (which has been formed and notified by the Government of Sindh; Education & Literacy Department – Annexure 1) comprising of relevant stakeholders will address issues and provide best suggestions as well as recommendations bi-annually to the Ministry of Education

## OBJECTIVES

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Strategic objectives of the ECE Policy will cater to ensuring that all children in Sindh have the opportunity to access quality age-appropriate and developmentally sound ECE.

Overarching objectives are as follows:

1. To provide opportunities for all children between the ages of 3-5 of age in Sindh to participate in high quality early childhood education programs and services;
2. To advocate and support the establishment of appropriate, safe and healthy environments that meet the developmental needs of all children.
3. To provide and support training and ongoing professional development for all Teachers/Caregivers/Practitioners, and establish the level of certification needed for entry into early childhood education sector;
4. To encourage parental partnerships to increase involvement in the community and development of their children;

## PRINCIPLES

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The Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh declares that:

- Every child has an inherent right to an education that will enhance their development and enable them to reach their full potential regardless of gender, ethnicity, economic, social or religious status.
- Ethical and moral concerns are central to human development and survival. Fundamental constructs such as “decency”, “justice”, “respect”, “kindness”, “equality”, “love”, “honesty” and “sensitivity” are major determinants of the survival of our multicultural society.
- The parent and the home have a major responsibility for the welfare of the child and the well-being of the child can best be served by a strong partnership between the community and the school.
- The educational system must provide curricular arrangements and choices that are free from bias and ensure cultural, ethnic, class and gender needs are appropriately addressed.
- Quality early childhood education ensures lasting benefits for the holistic development of children and their future outcomes.
- Pre-primary education must be an integral part of the early childhood offered by a high quality and adequately resourced system of public education.
- All children should be guaranteed access to 20 hours per week of high quality, free pre-primary education for the two years prior to school.
- The Government of Sindh, in partnership with the civil society and private communities must take responsibility for funding and planning preschool education, accessible to all children in Sindh.

- The Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh must work in partnership with stakeholders to develop a shared Sector Education Plan 2014-18 for early childhood education and care which is focused on the educational needs and rights of every child.
- Early childhood education must recognize and affirm the cultural knowledge, language and values of young children and children from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Children with special needs and children from disadvantaged backgrounds must be provided with equitable access to high quality, properly resourced early childhood education which meets the needs of every child.
- The links and coordination between early childhood services must be developed and supported to provide a more seamless continuum of education from 3-5 years.
- Adequate levels of high quality early childhood education and care should be provided for younger children to meet the needs of children, family and community.
- The creation and retention of partnerships with parents is a positive and important element in the provision of early childhood education.
- All caregivers/ECE teachers and education workers in early childhood education have the right to appropriate recognition, remuneration, career paths and status.
- Early childhood education, including preschool education, must be delivered by qualified early childhood teachers and practitioners. Appropriate registration and accreditation procedures must be adopted.

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## ECE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

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### STRATEGY

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The overarching objectives will be achieved through the following key strategies:

1. Ensure that all children living in Sindh from 3-5 years have access to quality early childhood education through the following actions;
  - a. Establishment of data base through the IT as well as manual to register all children residing in Sindh and record shall be maintained by the Government of Sindh; Education and Literacy Department. The data base shall assist to provide data for projecting requirements for the future establishment of early childhood services
  - b. Promotion of inter-ministerial and agency as well as all other related stakeholders collaboration to provide early childhood education for children
  - c. Identification of the incident of home based “Child Minding” services and the establishment of registration and support mechanism for child minders in order to ensure safe and quality early childhood education
2. Developing and introducing legislative regulations and guidelines, based on minimum standards to support the effective delivery of early childhood education through the specific actions to be undertaken are;
  - a. Adaptation of regulations and standards of early childhood education with establishment of mandatory registration and licensing
  - b. Establishment of in-service and qualification training standards for of all providers of early childhood education to meet the requirements of the regulations and standards in the delivery of early childhood education
3. Providing training and certification at various levels at recognized institutions for all provinces of early childhood services

The specific actions to encourage the professional development of ECE Teachers/Caregivers will establish the clear guidelines and requirements for entry of persons into this sector. It will also stipulate the requirement for leadership level at management level of early childhood education schools as well as provide guidance as to the profile of suitable persons working with children. In this context the following actions to be undertaken;

- a. Drafting a minimum entry level document for ECE Teachers/Caregivers who wish to enter early childhood education sector
- b. Drafting of document on criteria and qualification level for managers/leaders/supervisors etc of the ECE Schools
- c. Creating links with different training programs in the early childhood education programs

- d. Creation of a register of institutions in the Sindh offering programs of study in early childhood education which meets the requirements of designed needs
  - e. Setting of a time frame for all early childhood ECE Teachers to receive training and to obtain minimum qualification
4. Developing a common age-appropriate curriculum which supports the holistic development of the child, in this regards; Curriculum 2007 and curriculums of different institutions may be referred with strong emphasis on methodologies which foster an integrated, interactive and explorative learning process.

There shall be specific consultation and discussion on the development of a harmonized interactive curriculum for all early childhood education providers. Training manuals and audiovisual resources shall be created to guide ECE Teachers/practitioners. Supporting parents shall be a strong component, and parents shall be offered orientation in the curriculum in order to encourage strong ECE School-parent collaboration. The actions to be undertaken are;

- a. National and international curricula to be selected for review in the context of the policy and vision for early childhood education in Sindh
  - b. Curriculum to be developed, drawing on national/international examples if applicable, in the consultation with ECE Task Force Members and practitioners
  - c. Curriculum developed to include attention from ECE transition to primary schooling
  - d. Curriculum to be grounded in the understanding of outcomes, defining quality and measuring of quality in a continuous process to make measurable differences to the lives of the children impacted on
5. Providing opportunities for children with Special Education Needs or minor disabilities as well as all children who are generally seen as living in at risk situations such as poverty, and abuse.

The policy envisions this provision as being achieved through a multi-prong approach including;

- a. Early identification system established
- b. Early intervention process put in place
- c. Rapid assessment and diagnosis procedure
- d. Development of a time effective and workable referral system
- e. Provision of staff child ratios appropriate for the needs of children
- f. Creation of a data base at Reform Support Unit of children through linkages with health department, social welfare department, INGOs, and NGOs etc which create best impact on children

These services shall be the responsibility of the Government of Sindh working in partnership with INGOs, NGOs and private sector to meet the needs of all children of the Sindh, with specific actions including;

- a. Establishment of a data base which will identify the geographical areas where children are living of high risk

- b. Development of protocols by Government of Sindh for the inclusion of children as well as disabilities
  - c. Encouragement and support of inter-ministerial collaboration on program targeted at children at risk
  - d. Continuous education of the general public by the Government of Sindh, through Ministry of Education as to the benefit of early childhood education for all children, and to discourage stigma and discrimination against children at risk
  - e. A mapping exercise to be conducted to collect data on the number of children in Sindh who are not accessing early childhood education
- 6. Strengthening and creating healthy, safe, and secure learning environments for all children with specific actions including;
  - a. Best infrastructure including play grounds of the ECE school will be designed to provide best environment to all children
  - b. Education of parents and community, as to the benefits of these ECE Schools as important to the development of the child
  - c. Education of the public as it relates to their civic duty in the preservation of the play grounds of the ECE Schools
  - d. Education of the children in the safe usage of the equipment which will be placed within the ECE Schools
- 7. Fostering sustainable linkages between the ministries and other organization in the management of this sector

To meet the child in a holistic manner close collaboration among all ministers, agencies, INGOs, and NGOs is needed. The Government will promote inter-sectorial collaboration and management where appropriate. Specific action to be included;

- a. Strengthen and sustain the ECE Task Force for best recommendations
  - b. A collaborative approach within the Ministry of Education to plan and implement the selected curriculum in early childhood school
  - c. A follow up sensitization process which will educate the public on the Government's approved early childhood policy
  - d. Collaboration through MoUs amongst ministries and other agencies, such as the private sector to be the advocates for issues as they relate to children
- 8. Preparing key policy documents to provide guidance in areas such as, nutrition, confidentiality, and privacy, discipline, and non-discrimination with the aim of strengthening the delivery of this sector

The specific actions will embrace like;

- a. Education for parents on the preparation of balanced nutritional meals using locally available foods
  - b. Developing guides to conditionality and privacy for both children and ECE Teachers/Caregivers for use within the ECE Schools
  - c. Developing guidelines as to the forms of positive discipline which are most effective for encouraging self-regulating behavior in children and non-discriminatory practice for use at the ECE Schools
  - d. Training practitioners and parents as to the best techniques which can be used as alternative forms of discipline at the various levels
9. Providing support and educational opportunities for parents in an effort to assist them to understand and value the tremendous benefits associated with early childhood development
- a. Sensitizing and informing parents through workshops on the developmental stages of children
  - b. Parenting workshop for stakeholders to develop a parenting booklet
  - c. Holding regular Parenting Conferences, where staff and parents share pertinent information on the child
  - d. Establishing family day activities, which will assist in bringing parents, staff and children together
  - e. Developing a radio program, which can act as the catalyst for educating the nation on issues such as the importance of early childhood education
  - f. Publishing weekly articles in local languages in the print media on the importance of early childhood development

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## STAKEHOLDERS

The Policy applies to all Government and Private owned ECE Schools/Centers, as well as to all stakeholders of Early Childhood Education which include owners, administrators, ECE Teachers/Caregivers, parents of primary grades, INGOs, NGOs, persons appointed by the Government of Sindh or any authorized agency to interact with the early childhood education providers.

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## ACCESSIBILITY

- Public preschool education must be free and equitably accessible to all eligible children in Sindh.
- Capacity to pay must not be a barrier to access to preschool education and the reliance in some system on parental contributions and fundraising for basic resources must be eliminated.
- A five year strategy plan should be developed and implemented to provide guaranteed access for all children in Sindh.
- Priority must be given to providing access to two years of high quality, culturally appropriate, free preschool education to all children of Sindh.

- Children with special needs and/or from disadvantaged background should be given priority in phasing in universal access to two years of preschool education.
- The Government of Sindh, in funding partnership with the central government, other funding agencies must develop and fund a Preschool Equity Program to ensure that programs and resources address the needs of children with special needs and children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Development of a provincial data base on provision of and participation in preschool education should give a particular focus to the identification of the barriers to access for individual children with special needs, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds for disadvantaged groups

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### QUALITY

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- Quality early childhood education is characterized by appropriate ECE teacher/caregiver ratios and group size, appropriately qualified and trained ECE teachers and enriching, well equipped, caring and secure environments in approved locations, all of which should be defined and enforced by regulation.
- Early childhood education should be coordinated and delivered by qualified early childhood teachers in developmentally appropriate, educationally sound and culturally inclusive learning environments.
- All settings accredited to provide early childhood education must provide an appropriately trained teacher for each group of children accessing preschool education and meet other standards which will ensure quality.
- Quality preschool education actively engages parents in the expanding development of their children, in acknowledgement of their critical role, rights and needs in caring for and educating their children.
- Quality preschool education is strengthened by providing quality transitions, where possible by integrating into or co-locating with primary school.
- A quality preschool education reflects a belief in the uniqueness of childhood by respecting children as they are now and who they are right now.



## ECE STANDARDS

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### INFRASTRUCTURE - ECE SCHOOL/CLASS

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The building should be structurally safe and within easy approach. It should be clean and should have surrounding green area. Clean potable water should be available. Immediate health services in terms of first aid /medical kit should be available at the ECE School. There should be provision of adequate developmentally appropriate toys and learning materials. The building structure must be like;

- 2 Classrooms with sliding partition between the 2 classrooms
- Classroom is of size 20x14 ft.
- 1 Kitchen is of 8x3 ft.
- 2 toilets one for staff and other for children including one toddler pan, squatting pan, one slab steel urinal, and one water trough
- One lobby with 2 hand basin one for staff and other one for children
- 1 Children's playground of 50x20 ft.

### ENROLLMENT

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The Government of Sindh; Education & Literacy Department shall admit children in all public schools in overall Sindh/Province of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to children at the early childhood schools. It shall not be discriminated on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies and other early childhood schools administered programs.

The following basic rules shall be applied;

- Children who enroll in the Sindh early childhood schools and live within the attendance area of a particular school shall be accepted for enrollment in that school
- Children must be 3-4 years old but not yet 5 years old, on or before June in order to be age eligible for the admission in early childhood education
- Children with minor disability shall be given priority in awarding admission in early childhood schools
- The parent/guardian of a child shall present the proof of a child's age like;
  - Birth certificate
  - All immunization records
- Transfer of children in any other early childhood school may be made upon the request of parent/guardian due to a change of residence

### STAFF/STUDENT RATIO

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The teacher-child ration is very important of group size and staff-children ratios to the outcomes of early childhood education. The Government of Sindh; Education & Literacy Department believes that an appropriate ratio is one qualified teacher to every ten 5 year old children in preschool education. Currently there are no any national standards for group size or staff ratios in preschool education. It has been recognized globally that smaller class size and lower teacher-child ratio are strongly correlated with children's learning and child development. The smaller class size and teacher-child ratios mean more interaction between teacher and children and more individual attention for each child.

1. A minimum standard must be set as a matter of urgency to establish teacher-child ratios of 2:20 for all preschool education for 3-5 year old children, including one qualified early childhood teacher
2. Group sizes and staff-children ratio must be adjusted in special settings and/or where children with special needs are included, to ensure that children's special education needs are met

### STUDENT TRANSITION

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Children go through many transitions throughout their lives, but one of the most important transitions is the one from a preschool to primary schooling. "During this period behavior is shaped and attitudes are formed that influence children throughout their education".<sup>18</sup> "Children's transitions are most strongly influenced by their home environment, the preschool program they attend, and the continuity between preschool and primary schooling".<sup>19</sup>

Children shall be eligible for transition; who are;

A child who listens

- To directions without interrupting
- To stories and poems for five minutes without restlessness

A child who hears

- Words that rhyme
- Words that begin with the same sound or different sounds

A child who sees

- Likenesses and differences in pictures and designs
- Letters and words that match

A child who understands

- The relationship inherent in such words as up and down, top and bottom, little and big
- The classification of words that represent people, places, and things

A child who speaks and can

- Stay on the topic in the class discussions
- Retell a story or relate an experience of her own

A child who thinks and can

- Give the main idea of a story
- Give unique ideas and important details
- Give reasons for his opinions

A child who adjusts

- To changes in routine and to new situations without becoming fearful
- To opposition of defeat without crying or sulking
- To necessity of asking for help when needed

A child who plays

- Cooperatively with other children
- Shares, takes turns and assumes his share of group responsibility
- Can run, jump, skip, and bounce a ball with comparative dexterity

A child who works

- Without being easily distracted
- Follows directions
- Complete each tasks

## CURRICULUM

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The Government of Sindh; Education & Literacy Department believes that early childhood education should be based on a developmentally appropriate model that responds to;

- Knowledge about how children learn;
- Knowledge of the individual differences of children;
- The need to provide continuity of learning experiences across, between and within all settings of early childhood education.

Developmentally appropriate early childhood curriculum should display the following characteristics;

- Attention to how young children learn through teaching strategies which include observing, modelling, facilitating, supporting and challenging them as learner;
- Progression from early to middle childhood;
- A view of learning as an integrated active and interactive process in which the learners constructs his or her own understanding;
- A value of the gender, experiences, language, and cultures of all children;
- Recognition that learning takes place in a context where, social, cultural, and gender related factors have an influence;
- Curriculum framework and programs must be child focused and reflect the centrality of play in children's learning;
- Early childhood education should operate within curriculum frameworks established by Sindh Government;
- Recognized models of good practice in relation to quality early childhood education curriculum and transition programs should be investigated and disseminated;
- National Curriculum 2007 must be reviewed
- The Government of Sindh; Education Department recognizes the importance of literacy and numeracy skill development within early childhood settings and reiterates that early childhood programs will reflect the centrality of play children's learning

## FACILITIES, MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Early education programs assure that the learning environment, materials, and equipment promote the nature of young children, an interesting curriculum, children's well-being, and program quality. The learning environment is a physical representation of the curriculum and should reflect the opportunities available for child curiosity, engagement and participation. Since so much of young children's development and learning take place through their senses and as a result of direct interaction with materials of all kinds, the kind and quality of the toys and other learning materials play a critical role in advancing their development. Items must be available, adequate in quantity, well-maintained, and appropriate to children's age, development level, and relate to what they are learning, investigating, exploring, and creating.

The following program standards must be ensured at ECE Schools;

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### STANDARD: THE FACILITY WILL SAFE AND SECURE AND COMPILES WITH LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE LOCAL AND STATE

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#### CRITERIA

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- a- Compiles with all facility requirements of the sponsoring agency or legislation
- b- Make provisions for all children, including those with disabilities, to ensure their safety, comfort, and participation both indoor and outdoor
- c- Assures that staff and parents are knowledgeable of all safety policies and procedures that apply to the program
- d- Establish a community of learners where all children, regardless of gender, ability, ethnicity, language or background, have rights, responsibilities and feel safe

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### STANDARD: THE INDOOR PHYSICAL SPACE WILL ORGANIZE INTO FUNCTIONAL LEARNING ECE SCHOOLS THAT CAN BE RECOGNIZED BY THE CHILDREN AND THAT ALLOW FOR INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

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#### CRITERIA

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- a- Provide at least 40 square feet per child of usable space in classrooms
- b- Organize the classroom space into learning centers using child-sized furniture and equipment, age appropriate shelving, low walls, and/or other items to separate the areas
- c- Organize the classroom space to include areas where a child can be away from the group and able to be observed by staff

- d- Provide space for each child to store personal belongings and other things
- e- Addresses different curricular/development domains (e.g.; aesthetic, emotional, language, cognitive, sensory, social, physical) and instructional strategies at each learning center
- f- Allow children to move from one area to another without obstructions
- g- Organizes and maintains natural and produced materials for children's easy access, inquiry and exploration
- h- Prominently displays individual and project work of the children in the classroom
- i- Prominently displays, at the child's level, children's creations, multicultural photos of children and families, and other items of interest to the children
- j- Provides visual exposure and stimulates to eat healthy foods and be more active (e.g. books, posters, fruit bowls, gardens)

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**STANDARD: THE OUTDOOR PHYSICAL SPACE WILL SAFE AND ALLOW FOR INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES AND SOCIAL INTERACTIONS**

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**CRITERIA**

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- a- Provide at least 65 square feet per child of usable, well-maintained outdoor play space which include a variety of safe surfaces and elevations (e.g. soil, grass, sand, hard flat)
- b- Keep children protected from unsafe areas and environmental hazards
- c- Provide well-maintained playground equipment of suitable size for the age of the children and accessible to children with disabilities
- d- Provide materials and equipment suitable for use both indoors and outdoors
- e- Provide outdoor play equipment and materials, accessible to each child and of suitable design and size for 3-5 years old children
- f- Teach children to increase their awareness, build confidence, and learn to take manageable risks (e.g. walking or balancing on a log)

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**STANDARD: EQUIPMENT, TOYS, MATERIALS, AND FURNITURE REFLECT THE CURRICULUM, WILL AGE APPROPRIATE, SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE OF THE ABILITIES AND DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL OF EACH CHILD SERVE**

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**CRITERIA**

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- a- Provide well-maintained materials (both natural and produced), equipment and activities that reflect children's culture, diversity, developmental abilities, individual learning styles, and home languages

- b- Provide instructional adjustments and adaptive devices for children with disabilities to ensure their learning, comfort and participation
- c- Provide safe, interesting, appropriate and sufficient equipment, toys, material and furniture that support the learning expectations and encourage each child to experiment and explore
- d- Plan an environment that minimizes conflict by providing enough materials, space, and equipment and by setting clear expectations for their use

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## LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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A supportive preschool learning environment promotes the development of children's thinking skills; raise awareness of diversity and multiculturalism; and supports enthusiasm and engagement as the keystones of approaches to learning. The environment must nurture children's capacity to engage deeply in individual and group activities. Such an environment is created through interactions with indoor and outdoor environment that offer opportunities for children to set goals and persist in following through with their plans while acquiring new knowledge and skills through purposeful play. Carefully planned instructions, materials, furnishings, and daily routines must be completed by an extensive range of interpersonal relationships. In this regards, each child's ideal development across every domain like; language, social, physical, cognitive, and social emotional will be supported, sustained, prolonged and enhanced. While the adults in the preschool environment provide the conditions and materials that effect how children play and support learning so that more sophisticated levels of interaction and expression are realized, it is the child who determines the roles and the rules shaping the play.

While the adults in the preschool environment provide the conditions and materials that effect how children play and support learning so that more sophisticated levels of interaction and expression are realized, it is the child who determines the roles and the rules shaping the play. The learning environment must, therefore, accommodate planned and unplanned, as well as structured and unstructured experiences. Unstructured play should take up a significant portion of the day. Structured activities include daily routines that provide young children with needed stability and familiarity like; circle time, small group time and lunch as well as learning activities that integrate preschool content and achieve specific goals planned by adults.

More important is the structured and unstructured activities and learning environment must be welcoming, safe, clean, warm and encouraging. The preschool learning material are arranged to invite purposeful and thus facilitate learning. Inviting preschool materials also help children acquire symbolic knowledge, which allows them to represent their experiences through a variety of age-appropriate media, such as drawing, painting, construction of models, dramatic play, and verbal and written descriptions.

The following well defined, accessible ECE centers that encourage multiple contents areas must be ensured by the Government of Sindh;

- Library that includes a range of material including picture books story books and books on other topics, headsets with audio tapes.

- Block center that includes many different kinds of building materials such as, unit blocks, hollow blocks, dolls, audio tapes, pencil, paper, tape measures, rulers, architectural images.
- Provide materials that deepen knowledge of diversity and multiculturalism like; dolls of different ethnicities and races, musical instruments from variety of different cultures, stories that shows how one event is interpreted, costumes for dramatic play.
- Offers individualized adaptation and modifications for preschool children with disabilities
- Allow children easy access to an ample supply materials
- Offers space and opportunities for solitary, parallel and small group play indoors and outdoors
- Display ECE center materials at children's eye level
- Includes materials and activities appropriate to a range of development levels and interests that encourage children's engagement

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### DAILY ROUTINES

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Engaging daily routines that;

- Encourage the development of self-confidence by offering children multiple opportunities to make choices, such as deciding projects, selecting centers, and inviting classmates to be a part of an activity.
- Encourage curiosity, problem solving, and the generation of ideas through exploration
- Are implemented flexibly to meet individual needs and provide opportunities for the success of all children (e.g., younger children with short attention spans are not forced to remain for long periods of time in a whole-group activity, dual language learners can demonstrate their abilities in their home language, as well as in English, children with disabilities are offered modifications and adaptations to meet their individualized needs).
- Provide opportunities for conversation and self-expression in English and in the child's home language, if other languages are spoken at home.
- Encourage and model the use of language in different social groups and situations.
- Stimulate questioning and discussion during all activities.
- Include the use of technology, such as computers and smart toys with age-appropriate software, to enhance the development of critical thinking skills



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## LEARNING DOMAINS

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### SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Young children's social/emotional growth and learning occurs as a result of their interactions with others and is interconnected with their development in the physical and cognitive domains. Relationships with adults and children in the preschool environment exert a powerful positive influence on children's social/emotional development. A high quality preschool program requires dedicated and qualified teaching staff, working in partnership with children's parents, to systematically assist children in developing social competence and confidence.

As children move through the preschool day, their teachers carefully observe and listen to them and adapt their responses to suit individual children's social and emotional needs. Preschool teachers support young student's developing self-concepts and self-esteem by talking with them about their actions and accomplishments and by always showing respect of their feelings and cultures. Throughout the day, teacher coach and guide children as they interact with each other, and they support children's social skills and problem solving abilities. Within this community of learners, children develop the social and emotional competencies they need to fully immerse themselves in the preschool day and become successful learners.

There are five preschool standards for social/emotional development:

1. **Children demonstrate self-confidence**
2. **Children demonstrate self-direction**
3. **Children identify and express feelings**
4. **Children exhibit positive interactions with other children and adults**
5. **Children exhibit pro-social behaviors**

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### VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

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Some of the most effective means children have for explaining and understanding their world is through the arts. For young children, the critical component of the arts is the creative process rather than the end result or product. In the creative process, approaches to learning such as initiative, curiosity, engagement, persistence, reasoning, and problem-solving are reinforced through concrete, hands on, individualized, and group learning experience. Environments that stimulate creativity through visual art, music, dramatic play, and creative movement and dance support all aspects of development and learning. In many instances, creative arts in the preschool classroom are inextricably linked to other curriculum areas and can be used as a strategy for learning about local communities, different cultures, and other content. When integrated in a developmentally appropriate way, the creative arts promote memory, cognition, observation, inquiry, and reflection. The arts also help children appreciate beauty in the environment, in their everyday world, and in works of art.

Sometimes feelings or understandings that cannot be expressed well in words can be well expressed through the arts. It is vitally important to provide children with the materials and time necessary to explore experiment and create in their own way throughout the day, integrating the arts into all domains and subject areas. Providing with the freedom to create does not preclude the teacher from supporting children's artistic development by using strategies such as describing modeling, and providing feedback to support their learning. The teacher should be knowledgeable about artistic traditions of different cultures and should integrate aspects of such cultures throughout the classroom environment and activities.

There are four preschool visual and performing arts standards;

1. Children express themselves through and develop an appreciation of creative movement and chance
2. Children express themselves through and develop an appreciation of music
3. Children express themselves through and develop an appreciation of dramatic play and storytelling
4. Children express themselves through and develop an appreciation of the visual arts (e.g., painting, sculpting and drawing)

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### HEALTH, SAFETY, AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Health, Safety, and Physical educations in the preschool classroom encourage children's sense of self and support their emerging independence. Physical development impacts how children navigate the physical environment. Therefore, the preschool environment should be organized to support both indoor and outdoor activities that maximize each child's opportunities to develop gross-and fine-motor skills as well as health and safety awareness. Teachers should provide a wide range of concrete, developmentally appropriate, indoor and outdoor experiences each day to assist in the development of each child, including planned and spontaneous interactions promoting healthy habits that enhance lifelong well-being.

There are four preschool health, safety, and physical education standards;

1. Children develop self-help and personal hygiene skills
2. Children begin to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to make nutritious food choices
3. Children begin to develop an awareness of potential hazards in their environment
4. Children develop competence and confidence in activities that require gross-and fine-motor skills

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### APPROACHES TO LEARNING

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Approaches to learning, such as initiative and persistence, are behaviors and attitudes that show how children learn, not just what they learn. There are five dimensions of school readiness for early learners along with physical development, social and emotional development, language development, and

cognition. The approaches to learning standards build on the preschool social emotional development standards.

Children with higher levels of attentiveness, task persistence, eagerness to learn, learning independence, flexibility, and organizational skills do better in both literacy and math at the end of the preschool school year, at the beginning of their first grade year, and even in later grades<sup>20</sup>

The way a child approaches learning is a strong predictor of later success in school. School readiness includes the ability to tackle and persist at challenging or frustrating tasks with flexibility, follow directions, take risks, make and learn from mistakes, and work as a part of the group. You children develop these skills by engaging in playful learning experiences, which strengthen cognitive capacities such as paying attention, remembering rules, and inhibiting impulses to achieve a larger goal<sup>21</sup>

Both child-initiated and teacher-guided plays, along with other intentional teaching strategies, combine to support children's approaches to learning.<sup>22</sup>

The environments for young children promote positive approaches to learning when are carefully designed to embrace diverse learners by offering them an avenues for developing physical, social, emotional, and cognitive skills.

For example research shows that children who engage in complex forms of socio-dramatic play have greater language skills than non-players, better social skills, more empathy and imagination, and shows greater self-regulation and higher levels of thinking.<sup>23</sup>

Children develop positive approaches to learning within well-organized environment that offer independence, choice, predictable routines, and opportunities for social interactions in small group activities. Children's engagement is deepened when materials and activities are relevant to their interests, offer the right level challenge, and provide many options such as long term projects or studies, making it more likely that will understand and remember relationships, concepts, and reach higher levels of mastery, especially with teacher support. Teachers play an important role in nurturing positive approaches to learning. An important starting point is to develop caring and respectful relationships with children and their parents. Children who feel valued and receive the message that they are capable learners become engaged and excited about learning. When children are given ample time and support to deeply engages in developmentally appropriate, challenging learning experience, they more easily master new skills, making rewards and other incentives to learn and behave unnecessary.

The international teaching practices outlined in this policy, such as listening, observing, providing specific feedback, asking thought-provoking questions, providing verbal and emotional effort and teamwork, modeling flexibility, noticing children's interests, and helping them make connections, will provide teachers with strategies for reinforcing positive approaches throughout the day.

There are four preschool standards for approaches to learning;

1. Children demonstrate initiative, engagement, and persistence
2. Children show creativity and imagination
3. Children identify and solve problems
4. Children apply what they learned to new situations

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## SUBJECT MATTER

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### MATHEMATICS

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A preschool classroom's physical and teaching environment should capitalize on children's natural, spontaneous interactions with math in the world around them by featuring a wide range of ongoing mathematical opportunities. Possibilities for learning across all the math domains as counting and cardinality, operations and algebraic thinking, number and operations in base ten, measurement and data, and geometry should be available, daily, in the classroom activity/interest areas, during small and large group teachers-child interactions, and out of doors. (Annexure 3.1 and 3.2)

The preschool standards for mathematics call attention to the fact that;

- **Early childhood mathematics should emphasize;**
  - Number
  - Spatial relations and measurement
  - Geometry
- **With a top priority of developing**
  - Children's sense of number as quantity
- **Underscoring the importance of**
  - Mathematical practice skills

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### MATHEMATICS PRACTICE SKILLS IN PRESCHOOL

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Young children need ongoing opportunities to develop their mathematical thinking. In addition to daily opportunities for independent choice and exploration, preschool classroom time should be regularly allotted for in depth, small group math experiences that encourage children to interact, pursue problem solving strategies and reflect. Teachers should facilitate a supportive learning environment by continuously observing, listening and scaffolding children's mathematical thinking in every day contexts. Teachers should also recognize and problem solving that occurs when mathematics is combined with other curriculum content areas. (Annexure 3)

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### SCIENCE

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Young children first construct scientific knowledge by using their senses to interact with their environment and make sense of the world around them. Their science understanding is facilitated and extended by adults whose own sense of wonder is a match of their curiosity. Children are more inclined to observe, questions, and reflect about their investigations when encouraged by teachers who are also invested in the process. Thus, throughout the preschool years, children develop and refine their scientific abilities through observing, inquiring, and experimental during rich and inviting opportunities for open-ended exploration and focused enquiry. Preschool teachers intentionally encourage science investigations and inquiry based on their professional understanding of appropriate science content and learning outcomes for

young children. Teachers actively encourage sustained exploration of a particular topic over as long as four to five weeks of focused inquiry. Teachers understand that purposefully planned experiences with in children' immediate environment and daily surroundings provide the best context for science learning. In addition, preschool teachers seize opportunities for enhancing children's learning during exploration that naturally integrates math and science concept. They purposefully introduce materials, techniques, and technologies that provide natural avenues to science learning.

Parents should also be invited to observe and participate in classroom sciences activities. Teachers can stress the importance of modeling a positive attitude about science by providing activity extensions for parents to explore at home. Community partnership and resources should be valued and used as much as possible. Science centers, working farms, public gardens, and children's museum often have science exhibits or programs that are developmentally appropriate for preschoolers and that expand upon concepts children and exploring in their classrooms. Local businesses, including nurseries, fruit and vegetables markets are valuable resources for enhancing classroom science investigations.

There are five preschool science standards;

- 1. Children develop inquiry skills**
- 2. Children observe and investigate matter and energy**
- 3. Children observe and investigate living things**
- 4. Children observe and investigate the Earth**
- 5. Children gain experience in using technology**

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### SOCIAL STUDIES, FAMILY, AND LIFE SKILLS

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The teaching of social studies, family, and life skills in the preschool class room begins with cultivating all children's understanding of themselves and their place in the family and moves to an understanding of social system in ever widening circles; from family to the classroom, community, the neighborhood, and the world. Preschool teachers provide a wide range of concrete, developmentally appropriate activities and field trips that offer opportunities to explore and celebrate similarities and differences among children, lifestyles, and cultures. However, teacher understands that young children classify and make concrete connections that sometimes lead to statements that may sound biased. At this time, teachers take the opportunity to discuss racial, culture, and gender biases with children. These discussions help build a foundation for understanding and appreciating diversity.

Social studies, family, and life skills are integrated throughout the preschool day, as teachers endeavor to establish a caring community life based on respect and appreciation of individual differences. The

classroom environment is organized to provide opportunities for children to develop independent behaviors and to act out-real life situation. The environment reinforces those skills and concepts that encourage good that develop each child's capacity to participate in a culturally diverse, democratic society in an increasingly interdependent world.

Families should be given ongoing opportunities to visit the classroom and share their cultural traditions and experiences throughout the school year. Celebrating cultural diversity should not be limited to holidays.

There are four preschool social studies, family, and life skills standards;

- 1. Children identify unique characteristics of themselves, their families, and others**
- 2. Children become contributing members of the classroom community**
- 3. Children demonstrate knowledge of neighborhood and community**
- 4. Children demonstrate awareness of the cultures within their classroom and community**

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## WORLD LANGUAGES

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The diverse nature of our society necessitates that children develop an understanding of languages other than their own. The world languages standard addresses this need by describing what all preschool children should learn and what teachers should teach to encourage awareness of different languages. In preschool, children are just beginning to learn about language and how it works. Some of their language learning will focus on languages spoken in their homes, and some of this learning will focus on the languages they encounter in their community. With the growing number of young children in Sindh who speak and understand different home languages, preschool teachers and classrooms must be equipped to support children's learning in more than one language. Being bilingual can be an asset for all children. Teachers can integrate words from languages other than English into the classroom through songs, daily routines, and story books. Labels written in languages other than English can be used to identify items within the classroom. Parents and community members who speak languages other than English can be valuable resources in helping children both understand and respect the linguistic diversity presents in our culture, and they should be invited to share these languages with the children.

Social consideration must be given to preschool children who already know more than one language. Materials should be available that represent and support the native languages and cultures of the children and adults in the class. Teachers should understand that all languages are learned in context as children interact with and explore their world. In addition, teachers should plan opportunities to extend children's languages throughout the day and across all content areas.

There is one preschool world language standard;

1. Children know that people use different languages to communicate, and will express simple greetings, words, and phrases in a language other than their own.

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## TECHNOLOGY

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### Using Technology with Preschool-Age Children

Like blocks, books, and crayons, technology in a preschool classroom offers versatile learning tools that can support children's development in all domains. For example; there are electronic story books that can read stories to children in multiple languages, adventure games that foster problem solving skills, story making programs that encourage literacy and creativity, math related games that help children count and classify, and science activities that promote inquiry and an understanding of the world through the lens of child. When preschoolers are encouraged to work together with electronic devices and computers, social skills are tapped as children negotiate turn-taking. However, technology should never be used to replace the concrete, real life experiences that are critical to a young child's learning; it must always be used in balance with other meaningful activities and routines. Technology should be embedded into children's centers and should be used to enhance their learning and development during choice time as well as during small-group experiences.

The number and type of developmentally appropriate technology-based options for preschool-age children are increasing on a daily basis. While some of these experiences involve traditional desktop computers of the mouse-and key board variety, others take new and sometimes unexpected forms. They may include a toy that talks or responds to a child's touch, an electronic story book, or a pen-like stylus that can, with a tap, read a word in a variety of languages. By the end of preschool, children with technology experience can use pull-down menus to launch programs, can negotiate menus and interfaces, and feel comfortable using computers, digital cameras, and smart toys. The behaviors listed in the standards below are indicative of these understandings and should never be used as formal measure of a child's knowledge.

There are four preschool standards for technology;

1. Navigate simple on screen menus
2. Use electronic devices independently
3. Begin to use electronic devices to communicate
4. Begin to use electronic devices to gain information

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## EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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"Education for sustainable development concerns all levels, settings and types of education. It must therefore not be conceived as a stand-alone action, but rather as an integral part of any education system and capacity building strategy."<sup>24</sup>



Calligraphy on recycled paper by students of the college

SOURCE: UNESCO (2014), EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOOD PRACTICES IN PAKISTAN



## ASSESSMENT (TECHNIQUES, MECHANISM OF RECORDS, REPORTING, ACCOUNTABILITY)

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Assessment of young children is an ongoing process which includes identifying, collecting, describing, interpreting, and applying classroom based evidence of early learning in order to make informed instructional decisions. This evidence may include records of children's conversations, their drawings, and constructions, as well as photographs of and subjective notes describing their behaviors.

The documentation is a preliminary stage in the assessment process, focuses on identifying, collecting, and describing the evidence of learning in an objective, nonjudgmental manner. The ECE Teachers/caregivers of young children should take the time to identify the learning goals, collect records of language and work samples, and then carefully describe and review the evidence with colleagues. Documentation of children's learning should be directly linked to a set of clearly defined learning goals. Furthermore, the documentation/assessment process should consist of materials that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, especially when using materials to assess language learners. In addition, when using assessment data to inform the instruction of all young children, which includes basic language learners as well as children with disabilities, ECE Teachers/caregivers must be sure to use multiple age-appropriate methods overtime.

Careful assessment can increase the teacher's understanding of child development, assist in understanding the needs of the children in a specific ECE Center/class, and enhance the teacher's ability to reflect on the instructional program. Such reflections also assist teachers in articulating assessment purposes with appropriate community members and communicating assessment results with parents.

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## MAJOR PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

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The primary purpose of the assessment of young children is to help educators determine appropriate classroom activities for individuals and groups of children.

The assessment process should:

- Build on multiple forms of evidence of the child's learning.
- Take place over a period of time.
- Reflect the understanding of groups, as well as of individual children.
- Show sensitivity to each individual child's special needs, home language, learning style, and developmental stage.

The information collected in the assessment process should:

- Connect to developmentally appropriate learning goals.
- Add to understanding of the child's growth and development.
- Provide information that can be applied directly to instructional planning.
- Be communicated to the child's parents and, to the extent appropriate, to the child

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### HOW TO CONDUCT ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

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Individual- and group-administered norm-referenced achievement tests are usually inappropriate tools for assessing young children's development and talent. Such instruments are not typically designed to provide information on how children learn, how they might apply their learning to real-life situations, or how the test results relate to the teacher's instructional goals and planning.

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### DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING MEASURES

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In the past two decades, progress has been made in improving child survival, and child mortality (under 5 years) has gone down from 12 million in 1990 to 6.9 million in 2011 (WHO, online b). However, more than 200 million children under 5 worldwide do not reach their full developmental potential. Most of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (Grantham-McGregor et al., 2007). Conditions during the first 3 years set lifelong trajectories and influence the health, wellbeing, learning and behavior throughout the child's life course<sup>25</sup>

Developmental screening measures are administered to each child individually and are used as the first step in identifying children who may demonstrate developmental delay with language or motor skills, or problems with vision or hearing. In such type of cases, the results of the screening measures should be used to determine whether a child needs further comprehensive diagnostic assessment. Information received from a single developmental assessment or screening should never serve as the basis for major decisions affecting a child's placement or enrollment. Developmental screenings should be viewed as just one component in a comprehensive early childhood education assessment system. Assessment should be tailored to a specific purpose and should be used only for the purpose for which it has consistently demonstrated reliable results.

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### TEACHER IMPLICATIONS FROM ASSESSMENT

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The assessment process enhances the teacher's ability to:

- Identify the most appropriate learning experiences for children.
- Make more productive instructional planning decisions (e.g., how to set up the classroom, what to do next, what questions to ask, what resources to provide, how to stimulate each child's development, and what external support systems to use).
- Teach more effectively, using interactive experiences that enhance children's development.
- Meet more of some children's special needs and interests within the classroom. (The ongoing process of identifying, collecting, describing, interpreting, and applying classroom-based evidence

can help the teacher to become more aware of and develop a broader repertoire of instructional strategies.)

- Respond more easily and effectively to demands for accountability.

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## PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

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Portfolio assessment is the systematic and intentional collection of significant samples of each child's work, together with the teacher's comments on how the work samples and records of language serve as evidence of the child's movement toward established learning goals. The portfolio process should clearly indicate the learning goals, should illustrate and document each child's development over a period of time, should actively involve children, and should reflect each child's individual development.

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### STRATEGIES FOR PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

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- Determine the developmental area or areas to be assessed (e.g., spoken language, art, early literacy, symbolic play, motor skills, math concepts, creativity, peer relationships).
- Identify the documents that best demonstrate development (e.g., drawings, paintings, other artwork, photos, dictated stories, book choices, teacher's notes, audiotapes, graphs, checklists).
- Regularly create a collection of samples with children's input (e.g., record what the children tell you about a variety of things).
- Develop a storage system for the samples of children's work.
- Describe the documents with colleagues in order to gain additional perspectives on each child's development (e.g., study groups of ECE teachers/caregivers can be formed to collect and describe samples of children's work).
- Connect the children's work to the learning goals.
- Make sure the samples show the full range of what each child can do.

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## OBSERVATION

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Observation of young children is crucial to appropriate documentation and assessment. However, observation is a skill that must be developed and perfected by the teacher over time.

In the process of observing children, teachers can make use of the following techniques:

- rating forms,
- photography,
- narrative description,
- anecdotes,
- videotaping,
- journals, and recording of children's conversations and monologues

But; observation must be intentional. As part of the daily classroom routine, it is probably the most authentic form of assessment. Observing what children do every day is the best place to start when creating a real-life profile of each child.

#### What to Observe

- Patterns in behavior reflecting motivation to learn, explore, or investigate a particular thing. These patterns are evidence that a child consistently exhibits these behaviors.
- Problem-solving strategies.
- Patterns of social interaction (i.e., determine individual preferences for large-group, small-group, or solitary play in the classroom and on the playground).
- Key attributes of the child (i.e., identify and list recurring interests).

#### How to Observe

- Observe regularly with a specific purpose.
- Observe children at different times of the day.
- Observe children in different settings throughout the school or center.
- Observe the usual demeanor of the child, not unusual behavior or bad days.
- Observe for new possibilities (e.g., if a child is having trouble, could the environment or circumstances be changed to assist the child?).

#### How to Involve Parents

Parents should be partners in the accurate and sensitive assessment of young children. The following practices help encourage parental involvement in child assessments:

- Accentuate the positive when assessing children.
- Build assessment comments about how a child is doing into everyday conversations with parents.
- Explain assessment approaches at a parent meeting or workshop. Be clear about the differences between standardized tests and authentic assessment.
- Write about assessment in a newsletter or a special letter home.
- Demonstrate that parents are valued as respected partners in the behavior and progress of their children.
- Support assessment comments with documentation showing what the child has accomplished over time.

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### HOW TO INVOLVE CHILDREN

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Everyone (ECE teacher/caregiver) has a view of each child's abilities, preferences, and performances, including the child. To effectively involve the children in their own assessment:

- Observe and document things the children say and do. Often random statements such as, “I was this big on my last birthday, now I’m THIS big,” are evidence that children are capable of assessing what they can do and how they are changing.
- Ask children about themselves. Children will tell you what they do and do not like to do. Some children may prefer a private, intimate setting in which they have your undivided attention, while some children may respond to more informal discussions in busier settings.
- Ask children to assess their work. Ask children to help decide which work should be included in their portfolios. Respect their choices and responses about their work.
- Let children take pictures of their most prized work from time to time. They can make a bulletin board display of their specially chosen pictures or collect them in a portfolio

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## ECE TEACHERS AND TEACHING

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### COMPETENCIES OF AN ECE TEACHER

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Core competencies are what adults who work with young children need to know, understand and be able to do to support children's learning and development. The competencies use the word "ECE Teacher" to indicate that the professionals in the early childhood education field put knowledge into practice.

Development of ECE Teacher's competencies is very essential to recognize the importance of diversity in early childhood education settings, which include culture, linguistics, and ability. Core competencies support professionalism in early education by serving as the foundation for practices carried out by early childhood teachers in the early childhood settings.

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### LEVELS OF CORE COMPETENCIES

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The four levels are cumulative, meaning that early childhood teachers at the top level have the skills and knowledge to meet all the competencies in the lower levels.

The levels are best described as;

1. Demonstrate the skills and knowledge to support quality early childhood care and education
2. Demonstrate the skills and knowledge at the previous level plus: applies skills and knowledge to implement effective early childhood environment and experiences for young children
3. Demonstrate the skills and knowledge at the previous levels plus: design, plan, and analyzes policies, procedures, and practices that are optimal for young children
4. Demonstrate the skills and knowledge at previous levels plus: advances the field of early childhood education through advocacy, leadership, teaching, coaching, and mentoring

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### COMPETENCY DOMAINS

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There are six domains are being proposed by the ECE Policy;

1. Health & Safety
  - a. Knowledge of all regulations
  - b. Safety and Emergency Procedures
  - c. Health
  - d. Food & Nutrition
2. Family Engagement
  - a. Creating respectful, reciprocal relations with parents
  - b. Engaging parents in their children's development and learning

3. Development and learning
  - a. Child development
  - b. Influences on development
4. Curriculum
  - a. Content
  - b. Process
  - c. Teaching and facilitating
5. Observation and assessment
  - a. Knowledge of early childhood assessment
  - b. Conducting developmentally appropriate authentic assessments
  - c. Conducting formal assessments
  - d. Practicing responsible assessment
  - e. Documenting assessment information
  - f. Communicating assessment information
6. Professionalism
  - a. Identifying and involving oneself with the early childhood education profession
  - b. Ethical standards and professional guidelines
  - c. Valuing diversity
  - d. Advocating for children, families and profession
  - e. Commitment to ongoing professional development

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## STANDARDS OF TEACHER TRAINING

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### CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

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#### Level-1

Possess skills in math and language equivalent to the level of a high school graduate

#### Level-11

Possess skills in math, language/literacy, science, social studies, and early childhood education content equivalent to having completed two years of post-secondary education

### USE OF RESOURCES

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#### Level-1

Use materials, time, and space effectively

**Level-11**

Develop various systems for effective use of materials, time, and space

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**HYGIENE & APPROPRIATE DRESS**

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**Level-1**

Practice good hygiene and dress appropriately for interacting with young children in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities

**Level-11**

Continue to practice good hygiene and appropriate dress and help others understand the importance of dressing appropriately for a variety of activities

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**PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE**

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**Level-1**

Demonstrate a positive, responsible, sensitive, and respectful attitude in working with young children and their parents and families

**Level-11**

Further develop skills for demonstrating positive, responsible, sensitive, and respectful attitudes in working with young children and their parents and families

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**PROFESSIONAL WORK HABITS**

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**Level-1**

Exhibits professional work habits including confidentiality, respect for all people, dependability, time management, independence, and teamwork

**Level-11**

Further extend efficiency and effectiveness in work habits

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**CONTINUOUS UPDATING OF KNOWLEDGE**

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**Level-1**

Attend orientation/read training materials on ECE and participate in additional opportunities to increase competency for working with young children and parents and families



## Level-11

Read professional journals and share with other professionals, attend workshops, conferences to enhance knowledge for working with young children and parents and families

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### COMMUNICATING WITH BROADER COMMUNITY

## Level-1

Communicate clearly with parents and colleagues about early childhood practices

## Level-11

Participate in local community activities and share information about the early childhood profession

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### ETHICS IN COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTIONS

## Level-1

Abide by the professional code of conduct of early childhood education that prohibits interacting in any way that is physically or emotionally harmful, disrespectful, dangerous or intimidating to the children and parents

## Level-11

Demonstrate ethical behavior by following all applicable early childhood education regulations and adhering to a professional code of ethics

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### PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional development is an ongoing process of maintaining current knowledge and practice, participating in ongoing professional development opportunities, and engaging in ongoing synthesis and critical analysis of research and theory as it is applied to practice. Implementation of the Policy will result in preparing children to meet the core curriculum content standards only if there is a commitment to their implementation by all stakeholders. Full understanding of the document and familiarity with the developmentally appropriate practices necessary for its implementation can be fostered through a well-organized and consistent plan for professional development geared to each stakeholder group.

- Reform Support Unit, Education & Literacy Department and other related boards need to make professional development a priority and provide by allocating necessary resources
- Administrators need to provide curriculum support, resources, materials and opportunities for staff to improve teaching practices. ECE directors, Head of RSU, principals, education supervisors and directors of special education will need to actively pursue and provide professional

development activities and time for ECE teachers to reflect and refine best practices. They will also actively engage themselves in the professional development activities.

- ECE teachers, educators and other staff members and related service providers need to review and explore this document together, in addition, each person will be encouraged to independently reflect on this document and implement strategies to improve classroom practices. ECE Teachers and other staff members will need to collaborate in program planning and in the implementation of these expectations.
- Families need to become more knowledgeable about developmentally appropriate practices and be made aware of resources and suggestions for affordable access to activities that promote the child's learning and development. They also need to support their child's growth and development through participation in their child's early childhood education program.
- Universities and colleges need to support the Government's efforts to improve preschool practices by providing opportunities for professional preparation specific to the expectations that will contribute to the attainment of the preschool.

## ECE SCHOOL, PARENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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Supportive preschool partnership help create the kind of environment in which parents, schools, and the community work together to achieve and sustain shared goals for children. A well-defined early preschool education plan should incorporate a wide range of parent's involvement and to foster such partnership. Trust and respect are essential for building collaborative relationship between ECE school staff and parents. An integral component of the partnership is recognition of families as the experts about their children. The program and its staff must always show respect for the child, the parents and culture of the home.

In addition, ongoing communication and coordination helps to ensure that appropriate and effective learning opportunities are available to children at home and in school. The give and take inherent in these relationships promotes both the schools and the family understands of the child. The younger the child, the more necessary it is for professionals to acquire this knowledge through relationship with children's parents.

Below is the well- defined plan for establishing and nurturing reciprocal relationships with parents and the community.

## GOVERNANCE & STRUCTURE

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The preschool program design provides structure and policies that encourage and support partnerships between the schools and home. In particular;

- Parents are involved in aspects of program design and governance like; advisory councils and school leadership/management team.
- Opportunities are provided for preschool ECE teachers/staff and parents to develop the skills necessary to actively and effectively participate in the governance process like; workshops offered by the program, seminars sponsored by the Education & Literacy Department Government of Sindh, speakers and activities sponsored by the colleges, universities and/or child advocacy organizations.
- Advisory council meetings and parent programs are held at times that are conducive to parents as well as community participation.
- Program policies actively encourage and support parent's involvement like; family members are welcomed as volunteers in the classroom and other areas of the program, family members are encouraged to observe in classroom, family members see and interact with program administrators formally and informally.

## CULTURE & DIVERSITY

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The preschool program design ensures recognition and respect for culture and diversity. In particular;

- ECE classroom materials reflect the characteristics, values, and practice of diverse cultural groups (e.g., books are available in variety of languages, artwork reflects a broad spectrum of races, cultures, and ages, both boys and girls, and diverse lifestyles, careers, locations, and climates)
- Cultural and religious practices are acknowledged and respected throughout the year (e.g., absences for religious holidays are allowed, dietary restrictions are respected, culturally driven reasons for nonparticipation in some school activities are honored)
- The uniqueness of each family is recognized and respected by all members of the school (e.g., languages, dress, structure and customs)
- Cultural traditions are shared in the classroom and throughout the program (e.g., pictures of specific cultural activities that children participated in are displayed in the classroom).

## COMMUNICATION

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The preschool program design provides a two-way system of communication that is open and easily accessible, and in which parents and community representatives are valued as resources and decision makers. In particular;

- All program information is provided to parents/families in lay terms, in the language most comfortable for each family, and using multiple presentation strategies (e.g., handbooks, videos, websites, television and newspapers)
- Ongoing information concerning program/classroom standards and activities is provided to parents/families and the community (e.g., a regular newsletter, a program website) and includes strategies family members can use to assist their children with specific learning activities or to extend their children's classroom learning through activities at home and in the community
- Educational opportunities for parents/family members are based on the needs and interests of children's families and include information on such topics as child development, supporting learning at home, and positive methods of discipline. Family members play an integral role in developing the family education program.
- Information about the child and parents is solicited before enrollment and at regular intervals throughout the school year, using home visits, home-school conferences, informal chats, phone calls, emails, and notes.
- Documentation of each child's progress is provided for parents, and understanding of the documentation is guided by written and verbal communications in the language most comfortable for the family.

- Pertinent information regarding individual children's progress is provided to receiving schools when children transition from one program to another.
- Registration procedures and documents capture essential information about each child (e.g., parent's contacts, immunization records).

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### COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

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The preschool program design ensures opportunities for building community partnerships and accessing community resources. In particular;

- Information about referrals to community resources (e.g., employment opportunities, health services and adult education classes) are provided to families.
- Small businesses, and other organizations are invited to collaborate in supporting children and parents (e.g., through the creation of a community resource board).
- Collaboration with community agencies help to ensure delivery of services to families who may benefit from them (e.g., program can offer a meeting space for parents to interact with community agencies).

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### PARENT'S SUPPORT

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The preschool program design recognizes parents as the experts about their children. In particular;

- Resources are provided to help parents enhance the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of their children (e.g., a newsletter with ideas for educational tips, such as local museums and libraries; a listing of books to support the development of emergent library and numeracy skills; discussion sessions at which families share information about activities).
- Opportunities are developed to facilitate the creation of support networks among parents with children enrolled in the program (e.g., game days for adults, fairs and craft show to promote and support the talents of parents).
- Parents activities are planned at varying times of the day and week to encourage the participation of as many parents as possible (e.g., at breakfast, at the end of the work day, in the evening, and on weekends).
- Parents are encouraged to visit the program when it is most convenient for them (e.g., to observe their child, volunteer during play, participate at meals and special events).

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### TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS AND GRADES

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The ECE teacher's qualification must be;

- Must be graduate
- Preference shall be given to;

- Diploma in ECE
  - Diploma in Teaching
- Minimum 2 years teaching experience
- Work with people with disabilities

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### ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS

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A major deterrent to ensuring the right kind of ECE is the lack of understanding of developmentally appropriate ECE among the parents and other stakeholders. In order to address this deficit, extensive use of media will be made, including folk, print and electronic media, to reach out and convey perfect message to parents, caregivers, professionals and the larger community and create awareness of the appropriate kind of ECE. Parent and community outreach programs will be strengthened to establish collaborative care providing relationships.

## EARLY EDUCATION AS A RESPONSE TO INEQUITY, POVERTY, AND RISK

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Early Childhood education as a response to inequality, poverty, and risk are very significant for children. Child experience poverty differently from adults; they have specific and different needs and requirements. While an adult may fall into poverty temporarily, falling into poverty in childhood can last a lifetime-rarely does a child get a second chance at an education or a healthy start in life. Even short periods of food deprivation can impact children's long term development. If children don't receive adequate nutrition, they grow smaller in size and intellectual capacity, and are more vulnerable to life threatening diseases, perform worse in school, and ultimately, are less likely to be productive adults. Child poverty threatens not only the individual child, but is likely to be passed on to future generations, entrenching and even aggravating inequality in society. ECE Policy shall present evidence to substantiate calls for the widespread implementation for children in low income families in Sindh. When early childhood education shall administer comprehensively and shall meet the recognized standards of quality early childhood education programming shall produce lasting gains in a variety of development domains for children who otherwise may fall behind in schools as a result growing up in poverty with families who cannot provide the necessary resources and support for school success.

"Research in many parts of the world has found a direct link between poor early childhood development experiences in children and later involvement in crime, low paid employment and recurring poverty."  
(Maureen-Samms-Vaughan, 2011)

## EARLY EDUCATION AS A RESPONSE TO WELFARE AND THE WORKING POOR

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It has been recognized that the critical importance of the early years for children's development also represents an opportunity for effective early intervention. Early childhood education program shall respond to the urgent needs of the children, and most vulnerable group of the children in the Sindh because it will enhance their wellbeing by attending more effectively to their developmental needs; and will include their families and ECE teachers as valued and necessary allies in supporting healthy environment. Such as ECE emphasize attention to the presence and promotion of protective factors as well as the reduction of risk factors to guide caseworkers and their parents in child welfare in ensuring the healthy development of young children. The child welfare systems are not alone in their mission to improve outcomes for children and their families. Early childhood education, family support and other sectors have overlapping goals with child welfare systems and can serve as strengthening families' partners in this work.

## BUILDING CAPACITY

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The Reform Support Unit; Education and Literacy Department shall provide guidelines and directions for building capacity at the provincial and district, and field level. It will work to strengthen ECE teachers, policy planners, managers, parents, and institutions. It will coordinate with Training Resource Center

(TRC)/or other related training department; which provides training of personnel working with children. This will then complement the training for early childhood education personnel working with children in Sindh.

The training facility shall be imparted from Institutes; who already have inbuilt ECE component in training curriculum for early education, health, social mobilization and staff development. Therefore; such training facility shall be used for developing a cadre of master trainers to disseminate further training at different levels. Academic institutions including private sector offer certificate and bachelor courses as well as resources for training and capacity building of the ECE sector. Parents and ECE teachers shall be given appropriate and positive parenting knowledge and skills to provide care for children in the age range from three to five. The training shall include teaching methodology, health, and importance of learning through playing as well as skills to monitor children's progress in school. Information will also be provided to caregivers on health care of pregnant mothers in terms of nutrition, vitamin supplements and safe delivery. Health and nutrition service providers from both government and NGOs will be trained on effective preventive health care and counselling parents on appropriate stimulation. ECE teachers will be strengthened with knowledge, skills and resources to help children successfully transition from home to preschool and then from preschool to primary school. The ECE teachers will be trained on imparting lessons on domain specific competency based curriculum on all subjects. The capacity of program managers and supervisors will be enhanced with training on leadership, management and supervisory skills as well as technical and national and international exposure will also be given as per requirement for the learning from other's experiences.

## LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE: EVIDENCE OF POLICY AND PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

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For better understanding, we need to discuss best private as well as public ECE models in the context of lesson learned and their impacts. The different NGOs and INGOs has substantially improved funding and attention to the educational needs of children with disabilities, while being hobbled by criticism of inadequate funding and inaccurate identification of children needing "special education" or even their programs have not encompass the wide range of children but the early results are encouraging, though, they, too, may fall short of expectations created by more intensive model programs. Provincial child care funding has generally been piecemeal, pragmatic, and inadequate in assuring that children can stay in high-quality settings of care and education. Reform Support Unit efforts to build a coherent infrastructure for early education neglected since the earliest days of RSU establishment; however, thus have emerged only in recent years by the professional endeavor towards ECE of top management of RSU. In short, the goals of excellence, coherence, and equity endure as aspirations more than realities.

To assess the different programs which are being implemented by different NGOs, INGOs, must consider several standards of effectiveness. For our purposes, we take as the primary standard of effectiveness whether or not programs have improved outcomes for children, which include short and long-term cognitive, physical, social, and emotional results. It must be noted, however, that many studies use the standards of program quality; an assessment of the components of preschool programs that research has identified as predictors of positive child outcomes. We must distinguish between excellence, which



connotes positive change in child outcomes, and quality, which relates to the structural and process components of the program.

## MANAGING, MONITORING, SUPERVISION, RESEARCH & EVALUATION

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The Ministry of Education through the Education Officer with responsibility for Early Childhood Education will manage the day to day activities of the sector. There will be close networking with the Curriculum Officer as well as the Education Officer of the Primary schools. The EO ECE will directly report to the Director of the Education. Centrally Reform Support Unit; Education Department will responsible to monitor the overall staff and operations to ensure the quality ECE as well as accountability. RSU will monitor the Education Officer and ECE Teacher/Caregiver through different tools like; attendance by Bio-Metrics, POI Mapper for physical monitoring of attendance, ECE Teacher/Caregiver availability, physical infrastructure of the ECE School through Monitoring Officer. RSU will have overall responsibility for the development and inspection process working in conjunction with the all stakeholders. RSU will also conduct inspection for awarding licenses to the ECE Schools, assess the progress of the children with in the ECE Schools at least twice a year and produce annual report to the Secretary Education and Minister Education on the state of the sector. Head of the RSU will have the responsibility of advising the Minister Education and Secretary Education on the need for reviews and amendments to the sector whenever the landscape of ECE in Sindh so requires. This sector will continue to operate under the various sections of the Act and any other protocols of the Government of Sindh which so refer to the sector.

## DEFINING ROLES (FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, LOCAL COMMUNITIES- PUBLIC & PRIVATE SECTOR)

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The responsibility of providing holistic Early Childhood Education program for young children and ensuring their optimum development rests with various stakeholders. Recognizing that the fulfillment of children's needs requires inputs from various sectors, the various relevant ministries, agencies and organizations shall have the following roles and responsibilities;

### MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

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In order to operationalize ECE plans and strategies, the Ministry of Education shall;

- Create awareness and educate the population on ECE
- Incorporate and strengthen ECE component into the curriculum to enhance awareness amongst learners and out of school young children as well as youth
- Reinforce ECE through health education in terms of nutrition, health and sanitation by addressing care practices to improve the nutrition and health situations at the household, school, and community levels
- Sensitize and train primary school principals and teachers on ECE to enable them to provide developmentally appropriate teaching-learning environments in school for children aged 6-8
- Develop standards, guidelines and resource materials for use in all ECE program and ECE Schools
- Establish ECE Resource Centers at Tehsil level in over all province (Sindh) for capacity building, material development, and for replenishment of materials to the ECE Schools
- Strengthen capacity of all ECE professional including facilitators/trainers, ECE Teachers/Caregivers
- Ensure that all ECE Schools are registered and monitored for quality programs
- Ensure a smooth transition from ECE to formal schooling
- Make a provision for ECE within its budget

### MINISTRY OF HEALTH

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The Ministry of Health shall;

- Strengthen the BHUs to provide basic health services for families and young children
- Address special needs and health issues of young children
- Promote/strengthen nutrition related interventions for young children

### MINISTRY OF SOCIAL WELFARE

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The Ministry of Social Welfare shall;

- Organize workshops, seminars and training for the promotion and awareness of child rights at district, tehsil and union council level
- Provide authentic and verified data of Juvenile Justice, Violence against Children, Child abuse etc. which is being managed at ministry to the Reform Support Unit
- Established Child Protection Units at District and Tehsil level
- Establish Help Line for the Children with complaint redress mechanism

### MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

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The Ministry of Agriculture shall;

- Ensure its efforts to provide a wide range of agricultural products at the community level for providing best environment to the young children

### MINISTRY OF LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES

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The Ministry of Labor and Human Resources shall;

- Work to ensure that all working women have entitlement to full maternity leave during child birth
- Ensure that women workers at the lower rungs of employment are paid minimum wages as per labor law
- Encourage organizations and agencies to provide facilities such as crèches and nursing intervals in work places for women working away from home in both urban and rural areas

### MINISTRY OF LAW AFFAIRS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

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Ministry of Law Affairs and Human Rights shall;

- Ensure the protection of all children and the mothers to ensure that children grow up free from all forms of abuse, exploitation and neglect
- Initiate policy advocacy on the care and protection of children at provincial level

## EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Educational Institutions shall;

- Integrate, strengthen and/or review ECE components in the pre-service curricula of education and health professionals and initiate pre-service trainings
- Develop and offer high quality ECE short as well as certification courses
- Disseminate knowledge and information on ECE through various events like; workshops, seminars, classroom lecture etc.

## NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION & PRIVATE SECTOR

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Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs, NGOs) & Private Sector shall;

- Establish quality private ECE
- Assist in implementing ECE Programs, particularly to the most vulnerable and hard to reach sections of the society
- Mobilize and allocate adequate resources for the promotion and expansion of early childhood education
- Incorporate ECE Policy and plan of the government

## ECE TASK FORCE-SINDH

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ECE Task Force Sindh has been formed and was notified by the Education & Literacy Department; Government of Sindh which comprises on different stakeholders. Through consultative workshops recommendations were given to develop ECE Policy Sindh.

ECE Task Force Sindh shall;

- Advise to the Reform Support Unit; Government of Sindh regarding issues
- Propose amendments to the policy as and when necessary
- Examine current laws as they affect parents and young children and make recommendations for amendments, where necessary
- Monitor and ensure implementation of the ECE Policy
- Ensure co-ordination of efforts among those providing ECE, especially in the training of ECE Teachers/Caregivers

## COMMUNITIES

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Communities shall;

- Play an active role in ECE Program
- Continue to help put up ECE; and
- Continue to services of care-givers

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## FAMILIES

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Families shall;

- Families shall bear the primary responsibility for the survival, care, and development of their children

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## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE WAY FORWARD

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Although we broadly delineate provincial and local roles above, the focus of this paper is to use our knowledge to guide the development of provincial early education policy. To that end, we take the five roles posited for the provincial government above and make a set of recommendations for provincial actions. For some, these recommendations may seem too modest in cost, given the formidable challenges that characterized the field of early education. Indeed, the recommendations are more modest than we would have liked. Yet we are obligated to frame them this way given two contextual realities. First, we take into consideration the extraordinarily daunting fiscal environment and the competing provincial and local level challenges that face our new administration and Reform Support Unit; Education and Literacy Department. Second, given the already pervasive weaknesses of the current early childhood infrastructure, we seriously question whether an overly rapid expansion of direct services without a comparable focus on the infrastructure could be effectively accommodated.

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## VISION AND LEADERSHIP

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### ESTABLISH AND FUND A PROVINCIAL EARLY LEARNING COUNCIL

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Provincial Early Learning Council must be composed of representatives from diverse provincial agencies, INGOs, NGOs, and philanthropic leaders. The council will develop a 10 year plan for the provincial government's role in advancing ECE. Such a plan will address governmental roles and responsibilities to young children and their families; it will determine how best to handle the diverse provincial streams and how to assure that all early education efforts meet standards of excellence, coherence, and equity.

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## STANDARDS

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### ESTABLISH COMPREHENSIVE PROVINCIAL GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN, ECE TEACHERS, PARENTS, AND PROGRAMS

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In order to promote greater consistency across the province, guidelines must be established that specify what children should know and be able to do, how ECE teachers should be qualified to teach young children, and what foundational elements of quality should characterize early childhood programs. Comprehensive guidelines must be developed for the parents in the context of early stimulation and development of children.

Strengthen Task Force; which already been formed by the Reform Support Unit; Education and Literacy Department and best recommendations were given by the members of Task Force for the development of ECE Policy. The time period should be extended of the Task Force for five years for the best recommendations and suggestions through consultative workshops, conferences.

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## INFRASTRUCTURE

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### SET ASIDE AN ADDITIONAL 10% OF ALL BUDGET

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Irrespective of funding streams for children should have a 10% earmark for infrastructure and quality enhancement. These funds would be used by Reform Support Unit; Education and Literacy Department to enhance; personnel preparation, development, compensation and implementation, and credentialing services and systems, standard development and implementation, coordinated assessment, monitoring, and accountability systems, coordinated governance systems

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### SUPPORT PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

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Parents are their children's first and most important teachers, but many young low income women become parents without the obligatory support and knowledge to advance their children's development. The provincial government should provide parenting education and support in shape of cash amount to low-income mothers with infants and/or toddlers.

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## SCHOOL READINESS

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### SCHOOL READINESS

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In order to promote a continuity of experience for children as they transition from early childhood education into schools; Government of Sindh should assure that; Government align their standards, curricula, and assessment across these age groups. Primary Schools become ready for young children and their families

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#### PRIORITY ACTION PLAN FOR NEXT FOUR YEARS

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The priority action plan for next four years of the Reform Support Unit (RSU) Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh is;

- Ensuring that both public and private schools are following ECE standards as per ECE Policy
- Establish 121 ECE model resource centers in target schools
- Notifying establishment of ECE teachers' cadre
- Recruit and train 8121 ECE teachers
- Design comprehensive ECE teachers' professional certification
- All sanctioned ECE teachers undergo Professional Development
- Develop and disseminate ECE transition to Class I with Children's enrolment report cards with support of teachers, parents and communities
- All ECE teachers receive guidelines for transition to Class I
- Parents receive transition orientation for timely enrolment/transition to class 1 through ECE teachers

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## COST AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

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Early childhood education program entail some financial and/or resource cost. These costs, however, differ from locality to locality, and will depend also on the type of program, whether it is central based, home-based, or parent education. Whatever the cost, it is expected that it will be borne by Government of Sindh, NGOs, INGOs, funding agencies, development partners' philanthropic personalities. ECE costs will be incurred at three main levels;

- Provincial level
- District level
- Village/community level

The main costs to be incurred in the implementation of this policy shall include, but not be limited to, the following areas; Monitoring, evaluation & Research, policy formulation/review, advocacy, capacity building, empowerment of parents, implementation of projects, coordination.

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### PROVINCIAL LEVEL COST

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- Support all levels to perform their ECE functions
- Establish and support training centers to enable them and train ECE teachers
- Development of sector capacity in their new roles
- Development of training modules for comprehensive ECE Program
- Monitoring and Evaluation & Research

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### DISTRICT LEVEL COST

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Some specific costs to be incurred at the district level are the following;

- Support of district offices
- Training district level ECE Task Force Members
- Start- up costs (including the cost of infrastructure, equipment, supplies etc.)
- Staff training
- On-going costs, including maintenance of facilities, replacement of worn-out equipment, ECE teacher salaries, transportation etc.
- District level advocacy



### VILLAGE/COMMUNITY LEVEL COST

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Community level costs include the following;

- Infrastructure provision and maintenance
- Sponsoring training of ECE teachers
- Contribute of equipment, toys, etc.
- Provision of basic health facilities to children
- Transportation
- Salaries
- Other on-going costs

### FINANCING

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The financing of ECE Program will be spread in various forms among the key participants, namely; The Government of Sindh, NGOs, INGOs, funding agencies, development partners' philanthropic personalities. The Government will ensure accessibility, equity, and quality so that children in need of special attention, including low income families and disabled, can benefit. Thus, Government will national and international co-operation, where necessary, towards the provision of basic ECE services.

In addition to the above, NGOs, INGOs, funding agencies, development partners' philanthropic personalities will be encouraged to complement and supplement the Government's efforts.

For purposes of the above, the broad financial roles of the key players shall be the following:-

### GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

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The Government of Sindh is realizing that Early Childhood Education forms an integral part of the provincial development priorities shall, upon coming force of this Policy, direct the Ministry of Finance, in its budgetary guidelines to the relevant sector Ministries, request for the retention of a certain proportion of their regular budgets for ECE Program.

In addition to the above, the Government will;

- Provide incentive to private sector establishments contributing above a certain minimum level of funds or kind support to early childhood education
- Direct the Reform Support Unit; Education and Literacy Department to contribute to early childhood education
- Provincial Assembly shall allocate a percentage of their total budget expenditure to ECE Program
- Provincial Assembly shall be responsible for the payment of salaries of ECE teachers under their jurisdiction

### COMMUNITIES, FAMILIES, AND PARENTS

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Communities, families, and parents shall provide support to ECE Program through;

- The contribution of labor to build facilities
- Provision of food for children
- Provision of raw material for the construction of ECE Schools at competitive rates

### PROPRIETORS

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Private proprietors shall;

- Be encouraged to provide quality ECE Program
- Where necessary, the proprietors should provide support and services to children with disabilities

### NGOS, INGOS, FUNDING AGENCIES, DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS' PHILANTHROPIC PERSONALITIES

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The above will be encouraged to;

- Continue to provide technical as well as financial assistance. Technical assistance could be in the form of research, dissemination of research findings and best practices from other countries, networking, developing appropriate curriculum, capacity building and professional training and exposures
- Support ECE Program to train Master Trainers
- Support the initial start-up cost of ECE Program including providing relevant infrastructure

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## CONCLUSION

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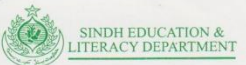
The Policy sets out the Vision and objectives of Early Childhood Education as the foundation of Sindh's human resource development and of creating social capital for the near future. The framework, strategies, and specific actions, have been outlined. Similarly, its institutional pattern, roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders, and the financial implications have been stated. Through this policy, the Government of Sindh is putting into practice its constitutional obligation after 18<sup>th</sup> amendment of enhancing the fundamental human rights and freedom of citizens, and promoting provincial legislation, as well as confirming international Conventions and Agreements concerning children.

The Government shall therefore, take measures to expand access and improve the quality of ECE Program in that direction to 100 percent children aged 3-5. Quality, equity in delivery, cost sharing, holistic approach, community and parent's participation will be the guiding principles. The implementation strategy for the policy shall involve the creation of a conducive environment for developing ECE Program, promotion of integrated services, establishment of ECE System, training of ECE teachers, capacity building of individuals and institutions towards the growth and sustenance of the system and mobilization of resources. The institutional framework is modeled on the existing of decentralization. Provision is therefore made for Task Forces from Province to District at the community, provincial, district and village levels. Community members, Provincial Assembly members, District coordinators, Task Force members, INGOs, NGOs, parents, philanthropists and Government shall be actively involved. The policy should be seen as both a challenge and an opportunity to continue to develop the human resource base for the present and the future. Its successful implementation, thus, depends on the several and collective responsibilities of all stakeholders who share the clear view that early childhood education is a strong foundation for the development of individuals, children, society, and as a nation whole.

## ANNEXURE

### Annexure 1:

Notification of Early Childhood Education Taskforce by the Education and Literacy Department, Government of Sindh for introducing Early Childhood Education in Sindh

24790-NOT-SO

**NO.SO(G-DE&L(Committee) 1-1/2014**  
**GOVERNMENT OF SINDH**  
**EDUCATION AND LITERACY DEPARTMENT**  
**Karachi the dated: 03<sup>rd</sup> March, 2014**

### NOTIFICATION

A task force comprising of officers, notable practitioners and experts on Early Childhood Education is constituted for introducing Early Childhood Education in Sindh.

1	Chief Program Manager, Reform Support Unit.	Chairman
2	Program Manager, Teacher Performance Management, Reform Support Unit.	Secretary
3	Representative of Sindh Teacher Education Development Authority (STEDA).	Member
4	Representative of Provincial Institute of Teacher Education (PITE) Sindh.	Member
5	Representative of Bureau of Curriculum and Extension Wing (BC & EW), Sindh.	Member
6	Representative of Sindh Textbook Board (STBB).	Member
7	Representative of Sindh Education Foundation.	Member
8	Representative of Education Fund for Sindh.	Member
9	Representative of UNESCO.	Member
10	Representative of Indus Resource Center (IRC).	Member
11	Representative of Right to Play.	Member
12	Representative of Save the Children.	Member
13	Representative of Plan International Pakistan.	Member
14	Representative of HANDS.	Member
15	Representative of AKU-IED.	Member
16	Representative of AKU-HDP.	Member
17	Representative of DEVCON.	Member
18	Representative of Teacher Resource Center (TRC).	Member
19	Representative of Notre Dame Institute of Education (NDIE).	Member
20	Representative of Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA).	Member
21	Representative of National Commission for Human Development (NCHD).	Member
22	Representative of Rupani Foundation.	Member
23	Representative of Catco Kids.	Member
24	Representative of UNICEF.	Member

**3. Terms of Reference (ToRs) of the Task Force are as under.**

- i. To review the existing ECD/ECE models being implemented in Sindh and keeping in view the ground realities
- ii. To develop ECE policy and standards in line with National Curriculum 2007
- iii. To propose criterion for selection of schools in public sector where ECE classes may be introduced
- iv. To propose selection/ hiring mechanism of ECE teachers in public schools
- v. To devise a professional development mechanism of the ECE teachers
- vi. To suggest the monitoring and support system for the appropriate utilization of the ECE resources
- vii. To identify the areas for technical support needed to the provincial government for implementation of ECE policy in public schools
- viii. To oversee the progress of the implementation/ activity plan of the policy
- ix. To have authority to up-date and/or revise the Terms of Reference of the task force
- x. To come into force immediately and till further orders.

4/3/14

PM (TPM)

SINDH EDUCATION REFORM SUPPORT UNIT

INWARD NO: 9238 DATE: 4/3/14

OUTWARD NO: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**-SECRETARY TO GOVT. OF SINDH-**

**NO.SO (G-I) E&L (Committee) 1-1/2014**

**Karachi the dated: 03<sup>rd</sup> March, 2014**

**A copy is forwarded for information and action to:-**

- 01. The Attached Wings, Education and Literacy Department (Concerned)**
- 02. The Private Organizations (Concerned).**
- 03. PS to Secretary, Education and Literacy Department.**
- 04. For Official Website.**



**(FAHEEM AHMED CHACHAR)**  
**SECTION OFFICER (ADMIN/G-I)**

**Annexure 2:**

Abilities acquired in the pre-school years as per developmental domains.

*2.1 Gross Motor Abilities Acquired in the Preschool Years<sup>26</sup>*

By the end of the preschool years, children usually can...

Walk up and down stairs, alternating feet.

Walk in straight and circular line.

Balance while walking on tires or balance beams.

Climb ladders and climbers, alternating feet.

Run with both feet leaving the ground.

Stop, start, and change directions quickly when running.

Leap off a hill or climber and land squarely on both feet.

Jump over blocks, tires, or other obstacles, leading with one foot.

Hop on one foot for 10 or more repetitions.

Gallop using one lead foot.

Ride tricycles or other riding toys, using the pedals

Stop and start riding toys and steer around barriers.

Throw balls and other objects using the whole body and stepping forward with the leg that is opposite the throwing arm

Catch objects using only the hand and arms and bending the elbows to absorb the impact of a throw.

Kick objects using a bent knee and a back and forward swing.

Swing on a swing independently.

**SOURCE:** TRAWICK-SMITH, J., (2010). EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT: A MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE FIFTH EDITION, PP. 199. UPPER SADDLE RIVER, NJ: PEARSON EDUCATION INC.

### Annexure 3

3.1 The following chart describes the mathematical processes that should be occurring in preschool classrooms every day so that young children have ongoing opportunities to explore and develop their mathematical thinking.

Common core standards for mathematical practices	Mathematical Practices
1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers model for and work with children to think about, make plans, and follow through to solve a mathematical problem using objects or pictures.</li> <li>Children informally experiment with math problem solving strategies using objects or pictures</li> </ul>
2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers model for and work with children to solve number stories using objects or pictures (to ten).</li> <li>Teachers introduce number symbols to describe number stories (to five)</li> <li>Children draw pictures to begin to represent simple number stories (to five) and may begin to use number symbols in their drawings</li> </ul>
3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers use objects, drawings and actions while modeling mathematical thinking.</li> <li>Children begin to use objects, drawings and actions to represent how they approached a mathematical problem</li> </ul>
4. Model with mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers point out math in everyday situations and model using math to solve everyday problems.</li> <li>Children begin to use objects, pictures, words (and may begin to use number symbols [to five]) to solve simple everyday problems (to ten)</li> </ul>
5. Use appropriate tools strategically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers model and use tools (e.g., a clock, paper and pencil, dice, two- and three-dimensional geometric shapes) and standardized objects (e.g., cubes, unit blocks)</li> </ul>
6. Attend to precision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers use mathematics vocabulary during classroom activities and routines.</li> <li>Teachers model data collection for authentic purposes (e.g., attendance, lunch choices).</li> <li>Children begin to use mathematics vocabulary during classroom activities and routines.</li> <li>Children organize information by collecting and entering data on charts and graphs (e.g., conduct simple surveys, record results of a science activity)</li> </ul>
7. Look for and make use of structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children use materials that give them experience with parts and wholes (e.g., filling egg cartons, combining shapes [tangrams, puzzles, and pattern blocks], and combining two groups to make one group [combining a group of plastic zoo animals</li> </ul>

	with a group of plastic farm animals]).
8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers model for and work with children to develop simple patterns (e.g., ab, abb, abc) using objects, pictures, actions and words.</li> <li>Children identify, repeat and extend simple patterns started by the teacher.</li> <li>Children begin to intentionally make their own simple patterns using objects, pictures, actions and/or words</li> </ul>

### 3.2 The Preschool Mathematics Standards

Preschool Standard	Preschool Standard Content	Common Core Domain Alignment
1. Children begin to demonstrate an understanding of number and counting	Standard 1 is about number sense: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children understand of numbers and quantities.</li> </ul>	Counting and Cardinality
2. Children demonstrate an initial understanding of numerical operations	Standard 2 is about number sense: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-children's understanding of number relationships and operations.</li> </ul>	Operations and Algebraic Thinking
3. Children begin to conceptualize measurable attributes of objects and how to measure them	Standard 3 is about children's ability to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>compare,</li> <li>order; and</li> <li>begin to measure.</li> </ul>	Measurement and Data
4. Children develop spatial and geometric sense	Standard 4 is about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>children's ability to identify and use geometric shapes; and</li> <li>A child understands of position in space.</li> </ul>	Geometry



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