

Extending Learning to Home

Pre-K for All programs are encouraged to offer meaningful extended learning opportunities that support and encourage families to be partners in their child's education.

What You Need to Know

Extending Learning Overview

The Division of Early Childhood Education (DECE) is committed to ensuring that all students leave pre-K with the foundation they need for Kindergarten and a lifetime of learning. Programs are expected to provide opportunities for families to contribute to and participate in their child's learning experiences beyond the classroom.

- The DECE encourages you to offer activities as an extension of the pre-K curriculum for students. These activities are an opportunity for your instructional staff to partner with families in understanding their child's learning and development.
- Extended learning opportunities should provide a variety of ways for families to engage with their child using developmentally appropriate practices and supportive adult-child interactions grounded in the [Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core \(PKFCC\)](#) guiding principles and standards.
- Extended learning opportunities offered to families and students should be based on authentic learning activities. Students should not be provided with worksheets.
- Students and families must not be required to complete extended learning opportunities. Additionally, family participation in extended learning opportunities must not be used as a condition of enrollment or participation in classroom or program-wide activities.

Please note that programs enrolled in the Pre-K Explore Instructional Track should also utilize the specific extended learning activities from the Building Blocks math curriculum.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice When Extending Learning to Home

Programs are encouraged to design activities for families and students that extend upon the learning in the classroom.

Appropriately designed extended learning opportunities should:

- Be grounded in research about how young students benefit from active learning and interactions with others
- Allow for differences in students' individual characteristics, abilities, and needs

- Build on students' interests and curiosities
- Build on families' strengths and interests
- Relate to units of study and themes being covered in the classroom
- Be used in a positive way to provide support to students

Extended learning opportunities must be communicated with families as optional and enriching experiences that can help pre-K students extend their learning outside the classroom. A benefit of providing extended learning opportunities for home is building capacity of families as their child's primary teacher and advocate for their learning.

Some examples of meaningful extended learning opportunities that align to the developmental domains outlined in the [Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core \(PKFCC\)](#) are:

Focus Skills	Learning Activity
Identifying letters and numbers (Communication, Language, and Literacy)	Ask students and families to look for letters and numbers on the vehicles (e.g., buses, trains, cars) they see outside.
Using a variety of tools and materials to test predictions through active experimentation (Cognition and Knowledge of the World- Scientific Thinking)	Invite families to try a "sink and float" experiment. They can gather an assortment of small items, predict which items will sink and which will float and test their theories by placing each item in a container of water.
Counting objects (Cognition and Knowledge of the World- Mathematical Practices)	Invite families to count the number of squares they can find at home. Repeat with other shapes.
Finding and observing different plants (Physical Development and Health; Cognition and Knowledge of the World- Scientific Thinking)	Invite families to go on a plant scavenger hunt together. Provide a list of things for them to look for such as a patch of grass, a tree taller than they are, something with petals, or other plant parts or types that can be found in the program's neighborhood.
Developing an understanding of emotional competence (Social and Emotional Development)	Send home a page with the pictures used for the class feelings chart. Families can display it at home and discuss the way they feel and what they can do when they experience these emotions.
Develop an understanding of how people and things change over time and how to relate past events to present and future activities (Approaches to Learning; Social and Emotional Development)	Ask families to talk about important milestones in the child's life and create a timeline that reflects a few of these experiences. Ask families to think of two to four noteworthy events in the child's past such as when a child was born or took his/her first steps or an important family event such as a new home or sibling, etc. If desired, families can also draw or include pictures on the timeline. For children who are with different families now than when they were babies, this activity can be focused on more recent events.

The DECE's research-based interdisciplinary [Units of Study](#) support student learning in all domains using developmentally appropriate practice. They include ideas for inviting families to share their experience and knowledge with the class, or for extending learning outside the classroom. The DECE encourages Pre-K for All programs to utilize these recommended activities.

If you have questions, please contact the DECE by emailing preinstruction@schools.nyc.gov.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are some examples of activities not appropriate for pre-K?

Pre-K programs should extend learning to home by supporting families to engage their child in developmentally appropriate, "hands-on" learning activities. Some examples of inappropriate activities that do not meet these guidelines include asking students to:

- Circle 5 stars on a worksheet
- Trace letters by connecting the dots
- Draw lines to connect pictures of things that start with the letter "H"

2. Are teachers permitted to send home worksheets with pre-K students?

The DECE expects that Pre-K for All programs offer extended learning opportunities based on authentic learning activities. The DECE does not recommend sending home worksheets.

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