

BEST PRACTICES in EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
Comparison of Elements – International, National & State Programs

NAME	POPULATION SERVED	PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	DISTINGUISHING ELEMENTS & BEST PRACTICES	TEACHER CREDENTIALS	GEORGIA PROGRAMS and NUMBER OF CHILDREN SERVED (if known)
INTERNATIONAL Municipality of Reggio Emilia, Italy www.reggiochildren.it	Children from birth to age 6.	Preschools, ages 3-6, started 1963. Infant-toddler centers, ages three months to 3 years, started 1970.	The program includes: an elected and widely representative Community-Early Childhood Council and regular parent meetings and day-to-day involvement; collegial relationships of staff; specially-designed center physical environments, including on-site kitchens and ateliers (spaces for daily visual creativity), and (in the preschools) a teacher for the atelier. The overarching theory is based on emergent, child-centered curriculum; operations are guided by a pedagogical-didactic team. Has been studied and visited (and replicated around the world) since the 1980s. A North American Reggio Emilia Alliance was established in 1992.	Teachers are certified and there is also a studio teacher or “atelierista” who has formal education in the arts, typically the visual arts.	North American Reggio Emilia Alliance www.reggioalliance.org Reportedly using the “Reggio approach.” Grant Park Cooperative Preschool & St. Anne's Day School (Atlanta, GA)
INTERNATONAL Country of Chile, Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles (JUNJI) www.junji.cl/	Disadvantaged children age 2 through 4 years and 11 months; some centers serve infants and toddlers.	Jardines Infantiles or “children’s gardens.”	Policy and curriculum decisions are made at the federal level, based on national goals. Curriculum model allows educators to design curriculum and learning experiences based on the specific region within Chile and its cultural mores - with a focus on Chilean culture in the children’s families and local community.	Preschool teachers must have four years of university preparation, including degree and teacher certification. Continued in-service training is required.	N/A

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<p>INTERNATIONAL Country of the Netherlands</p> <p>The most comprehensive description of the Netherlands educational system in English can be found at Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: www.oecd.org/dataoecd/16/19/37423677.pdf</p>	<p>Pre-primary education is available free to all children from age 4. Prior to that, children are in a variety of settings, including registered day care.</p>	<p>Pre-primary phase starts at age 4 and continues up to age 6 at a primary school.</p>	<p>Pre-primary classes run from 4-6 hours per day, year-round.</p> <p>National curricula do not exist, but two programs have been “validated for use:” Pyramide (<u>Pyramid</u>) and Kaleidoscope.</p> <p>The Pyramid program was developed out of a three-year experiment (1996-1999) by Dutch educator Dr. Jef J. van Kuyk with 3- to 6-year-olds from “deprived situations” in six cities. Teachers were trained in the program during the experiment. The principles are now in use worldwide.</p> <p>The Pyramid approach uses a series of intentional steps to move a learner through levels of understanding. The approach is organized in Projects built around themes which build over a three-year cycle of learning.</p> <p>Parent engagement is promoted in both policy and programming.</p>	<p>Registered day care teachers are required to have (“in principle”) an MBO (vocational education of 2-3 years).</p> <p>Primary teachers are trained for 4 years in PABOs, or primary teaching training colleges, and certified for age groups 4-8 years or 5-12 years.</p> <p>Presumably, Pyramid teachers receive Early Childhood Educationive specialized training.</p>	<p>www.pyramidprinciples.com</p> <p>Southeast pilot sites reportedly trained in 2008: Georgia State University Child Development Center (Atlanta, GA); Jefferson County Committee for Economic Opportunity Head Start (Birmingham, AL); Sheltering Arms Early Care and Education Model Center (Atlanta, GA); FIO360 eco-child learning center (Atlanta, GA)</p>

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<p>NATIONAL Head Start www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/</p>	<p>Disadvantaged children, ages 3 and 4</p>	<p>Comprehensive center-based child development services. Created to break the cycle of poverty and improve opportunities for low-income children.</p>	<p>Half-day or full day during academic year. Preschool education; medical, dental and mental health care; nutrition services; social services for parents and parent involvement. Locally-developed curriculum within federal guidelines.</p>	<p>Fifty percent of teachers must have a BA/BS degree in Early Childhood Education and preschool teaching experience by fall 2013.</p> <p>Assistant teachers must have CDA (Child Development Associate) or be enrolled in program leading to AA or BA/BS by fall 2013.</p>	<p>Number of Head Start slots in Metro Atlanta: 5,530.* <i>*Bright from the Start, March 2008.</i></p> <p>Reported total of 24,696 children served in Georgia in Head Start:* 3-year-olds: 13,712 4-year-olds: 10,984 <i>*As of 2006-2007, Georgia Head Start Association website, www.georgiaheadstart.org</i></p>
<p>NATIONAL Early Head Start www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/ http://www.ehsnrc.org/</p>	<p>Low-income pregnant women and families with children under age 3</p>	<p>Promotes pre-natal health outcomes; the health, cognitive and language development and socio-emotional well-being of infants and toddlers; and family</p>	<p>Services in centers and/or through home visits. Mixed approaches (center and home-based) have demonstrated strongest impacts. Started in 1994 as extension of Head Start, with which it coordinates to ensure continuity of services.</p>	<p>Teachers must have minimum of CDA (Child Development Associate) credential by fall 2010.</p> <p>Assistant teachers must have CDA (Child</p>	<p>Number of Early Head Start slots in Metro Atlanta: 502.* <i>*Bright from the Start, March 2008.</i></p> <p>Reported total of 1,510 children served in Georgia in Early Head Start.* <i>*As of 2006-2007, Georgia Head</i></p>

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		development.		Development Associate) or be enrolled in program leading to AA or BA/BS by fall 2013.	<i>Start Association website, www.georgiaheadstart.org</i>
<p>NATIONAL Get Ready To Read!, <i>in partnership with the National Center for Learning Disabilities</i> www.getreadytoread.org/</p>	<p>Children from 36 months through 5 years and 11 months</p>	<p>Screens children for pre-reading skills before kindergarten. Based on screening results, GRTR! activities can be used by caregivers, parents or anyone working with young children to enhance the probability of reading success.</p>	<p>Normed research-based 25-item screening tool. Short, quick, and easy to use indicator of early literacy skills. Designed for professionals as well as parents. Includes skill-building activities to ensure future success.</p>	<p>Online and classroom training is available to professionals and parents on how to use the tool.</p>	<p>Screened more than 93,000 children in SE Region (primarily in Georgia) through DEarly Childhood Education number 2008.</p> <p>A grant program of Smart Start, Early Childhood Division, United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta www.smartstartga.org</p>

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<p>NATIONAL Early Reading First, a grant program funded by U.S. Department of Education www.ed.gov/programs/earlyreading/index.html</p>	<p>Low-income preschool children with risks for reading difficulties.</p>	<p>Part of the President's "Good Start, Grow Smart" initiative. Designed to transform existing early education programs into centers of excellence that provide high-quality, early education.</p>	<p>Program objective: Enhance the early language, literacy and pre-reading development through strategies and professional development that are grounded in scientifically-based reading research.</p> <p>Aspects include: implementing Opening the World of Learning (OWL), a curriculum designed to develop language and early literacy skills; providing teachers with new ways to help children improve their language skills; providing coaching and early literacy training for teachers to help them fully integrate literacy throughout their classrooms; engaging families in their child's early reading experience to reinforce learned skills at home; enhancing classroom learning environments; linking preschools and public schools to smooth children's transition into kindergarten.</p>	<p>As a grant program, ERF operates through existing preschools which each have their own standards for certification.</p>	<p>816 children served in three Metro Atlanta ERF grant projects in 2007-2008 school year.</p> <p>A grant program of Smart Start, Early Childhood Division, United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta www.smartstartga.org</p>
<p>NATIONAL SPARK Supporting Partnerships to Assure Ready Kids, a national initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation www.wkkf.org</p>	<p>Children ages 3-6 not ready to make the transition from early care to kindergarten and vulnerable to poor achievement.</p>	<p>Based on a "community based hub" model, SPARK builds strategic partnerships between</p>	<p>Program Objective: Utilizes national best practices in school readiness and early literacy and utilizes "hubs", parents and community leaders to inform and advocate for policy and systems change.</p> <p>Key Program Components include:</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>A grant program of Smart Start, Early Childhood Division, United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta www.smartstartga.org</p>

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		neighborhoods, childcare providers, elementary schools and social service organizations.	Parents As Teacher (PAT) home visits, Get Ready to Read! (GRTR) screenings, School Readiness and Transition Teams and hub coordinators that are trained as parent educators and who connect families to local resources.		
<p>STATE Georgia’s Pre-K, administered by <i>Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, and funded by the Georgia Lottery for Education</i> www.decal.state.ga.us/PreK/PreKMain.aspx</p> <p>Georgia program for 4 year olds began in 1993. The program operates primarily in public schools and private and non-profit child care centers. Programs also operate in charter schools, technical colleges and universities, military bases, and Head Start programs.</p>	<p>Children with proof of Georgia residency who turn 4 on or before September 1 of the current school year.</p>	<p>Georgia’s Pre-K program is a full academic year, full day program. The program operates 180 days per year, five days per week, 6.5 hours per day.</p> <p>Lead teacher’s salary is determined by level of credential.</p> <p>Pre-K programs are awarded through a competitive grant process.</p>	<p>The program is monitored by specialized staff. All teachers undergo professional development that exceeds licensing standards.</p> <p>Class size limited to 20; staffed at a 10:1 ratio.</p> <p>An additional, competitive Resource Coordinator grant program serves families of low-income children enrolled in Georgia’s Pre-K.</p> <p>Providers choose from a list of state approved curricula. Curricula are reviewed every three years.</p>	<p>Lead teachers must have a minimum of an associate’s degree in Early Childhood Education. Over 81% of teachers exceed the requirement (61.8% certified, 19.4% with a four-year degree).</p> <p>Assistant teachers are required to have a minimum of a CDA (Child Development Associate). There is a three-year phase-in process.</p>	<p>Currently 78,310 children are being served in Georgia’s Pre-K. This is 99.13% of the slots funded.</p> <p>Approximately 34,000 children are served in Metro Atlanta.</p>