

Curriculum decision-making: Dimensions to consider ^[1]

NIEER Working Paper

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Abstract:

The educational effectiveness of preschool relies on a program's curriculum, or the content of what children learn in preschool and how it is taught. Given the multitude of available curriculum models, confusion regarding which ones are more appropriate for young children overall or specific populations of 3- and 4-year olds is easily possible. Although the field of early childhood education does recommend program practices within a broad range of acceptable methods called Developmentally Appropriate Practices, the field does not promote any single curriculum model as "best," and no state government or federal entity mandates use of just one particular curriculum in their publicly funded preschool programs. However, if one of the goals of preschool programs is to improve children's school success by enhancing their early abilities, programs do need to decide the content of what children should learn, as well as how they will best learn it. The purpose of this report is to provide a framework for decision-makers to use in evaluating which curriculum might be most appropriate for their specific preschool program. The framework consists of a series of questions focusing on the curriculum model and the supports the model developer provides.

Region: United States ^[3]

Tags: curricula and pedagogy ^[4]

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