

What is the difference between Head Start and Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP)?

Both preschool programs provide an excellent opportunity for children to learn in a safe, encouraging environment. Both programs are focused on giving children the best classroom experience possible to prepare them for kindergarten.

Head Start is a program that provides additional support for families beyond the classroom. The program works closely with families to help enhance the child's overall health and nutrition and help parents with their child's mental, social, and emotional needs. While Head Start gives priority for enrollment to four year-old children, some classrooms are available to three year-olds. Most children placed in a Head Start classroom have a family income below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level.

Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is only available to four year-old children. Eligibility for GSRP requires that family income is below 250% of the Federal Poverty Level with priority given to children based on family income. If all income eligible families are placed and additional seats are still available, children whose families income is over 250% of the Federal Poverty Level may be able attend if a tuition is paid before the child attends classes.

[Return to Top](#)

What is the age eligibility for Head Start and GSRP?

Four-year-old programs - Children must be 4 between September 2nd of the prior year and September 1st of the current year, to be eligible for a four-year-old Head Start program and/or the GSRP Program. If an age waiver is offered by the State for these programs (yearly decision made by the State) this would also allow children who are four between September 2nd of the current year and December 1st of the current year.

Three-year-old program - Children must be 3 to be eligible for a three-year-old head start program. Openings are limited. There are two organizations that offer three-year-old programming. They are: Head Start Head Start 616-453-4145 ext 4010 and ELNC ELNC Preschool Programs 616-608-0754.

[Return to Top](#)

What are the income requirements for Head Start and the Great Start Programs?

[Head Start Eligibility \(Click Here\)](#)

To qualify for the GSRP program families gross income (before taxes) must be between 0% - 250% of the FPL. [GSRP Income Guidelines 2019-2020](#). If all income eligible families are placed and additional seats are still available children whose families are over 250% of the FPL may be able attend if a tuition is paid before the child attends classes.

[Return to Top](#)

I receive food stamps, Medicaid or WIC. Does that mean I am eligible?

Not necessarily. If you receive government assistance, your child may be income eligible for preschool. However, you are not automatically eligible for preschool because you receive food stamps, Medicaid or WIC.

[Return to Top](#)

What counts as income?

You will need to provide income documents for everyone who contributes to the household income.

Income may include the following

- Wages or salary from a job
- Money earned from self-employment
- Retirement or disability payments
- Unemployment benefits
- Alimony
- Child support

[Return to Top](#)

When I complete the application, does that mean my child will be enrolled?

Completing an application does not guarantee enrollment in a program. The online application is the first step in the process to applying for preschool. It helps us connect you with the program that you feel is best for your family. After completing the application, you may still need to provide income, additional information to verify eligibility, and complete the enrollment process. Priority for enrollment is based on family income and additional life experiences.

[Return to Top](#)

How soon can I complete a preschool application?

We open preschool intake in early March for the following school year. Please go to <https://preschool.kentisd.org/Apply> to complete an application.

[Return to Top](#)

I filled out an application early. Does that mean I am more likely to get in?

While it is a good idea to fill out your on line application and send in all the required documents as soon as possible, it generally does not impact the chances of your child getting into a particular program. Decisions to accept students are made based primarily on family income and additional life experiences.

[Return to Top](#)

How to I check the status of my child's application?

You can check the status of your application by using the link [TrackingUrl] or by entering your tracking number [TrackingNumber] at <https://preschool.kentisd.org>. Your child's tracking number is included in the confirmation email you receive when you complete your child's online application. If you need help locating your child's tracking number please email KCPI@kentisd.org.

[Return to Top](#)

How do I make changes to my child's application?

To make changes to your child's application, please DO NOT complete an additional application. If you would like to update or change any information on a current application please email KCPI@kentisd.org.

[Return to Top](#)

How are children selected for the preschool programs?

Tuition free programs are required to follow prioritization guidelines when enrolling children into State and Federally Funded Pre-K Programs. Eligibility is primarily based on family income (federal poverty level), life experiences and child's age.

Head Start and Great Start Readiness programs are federally funded or funded by the Michigan Department of Education and have a defined list of eligibility factors. Preschool applications are reviewed for Head Start eligibility first. Each child must qualify for the preschool program based on guidelines that include income verification and documentation of other school readiness risk factors.

Prioritization

1. Children who meet the current age entry date (September 1), whose family income is between 0-100% federal poverty level (FPL), or meets one of the established categorical eligibility criteria (homeless, foster care or IEP specifying Pre-K enrollment).
2. Children who meet the current age entry date and whose family's income is between 0%-250% FPL.
3. Children who meet the current age entry date, whose family income is over 250% fpl and will pay tuition to participate only if seats are still available.
4. Children who are in the age gap entry date of September 2 to December 1 whose family income is between 0%-250% FPL.

[Return to Top](#)

What curriculums are used in the preschool programs?

All programs use evidence-based early childhood curriculums as approved by the Michigan Department of Education and the office of Head Start. These include:

- **Highscope** – for more information, visit [Highscope](#).
- **Creative Curriculum** - for more information, visit [Creative Curriculum](#).
- **Connect 4 Learning**- for more information, visit [Connect for Learning](#)

Additional curriculums may be used as approved by Michigan Department of Education on an individual basis

[Return to Top](#)

What is the adult to child ratio?

Programs use the State of Michigan child care licensing ratios. Head Start and GSRP have a minimum of one adult to eight children. No classroom may exceed 18 children. Tuition programs may differ.

[Return to Top](#)

Where can I find additional information on before- /after-school care and transportation?

Visit [Site Map](#). Here you will find information on before- and after-school care, transportation options, locations and contact information for each of the Head Start or Great Start Readiness program sites within the Kent ISD service area.

Please note that **transportation** is **only** available to families who met residential requirements. To see if your family qualifies for transportation to the site you are interested in, please call the site's transportation team directly at

- Cedar Springs = [Cedar Springs Transportation Team](#) (616) 696-1450
- Kelloggsville = [Kelloggsville Transportation Team](#) (616) 532-1574
- Lowell = [Lowell Transportation Team](#) (616) 987-2540
- Sparta = [Sparta Transportation Team](#) (616) 887-0136
- Grand Rapids Public = [Grand Rapids Public Transportation Team](#) (616) 819-3000
- Head Start = [Head Start Transportation Team](#) (616) 453-4145

Please note that all **Before and/or after care** is provided by the site, **not** by the GSRP program and may require additional cost. To ensure you site has openings please contact your site directly at

- Kent City Elementary = [Kent City Before and After School Programs](#) (616) 678-4181
- KinderCare – West River KinderCare = [KinderCare](#) (616) 361-0890
- Appletree Learning Center - Walker = [Appletree Preschool Walker West](#) (616) 735-4600
- YMCA – Yankee Clipper = [YMCA](#) (616) 885-9622
- YMCA – River City = [YMCA](#) (616) 885-9622
- YMCA Visser = [YMCA](#) (616) 885-9622
- YMCA – DDH = [YMCA](#) (616) 885-9622
- Bethlehem Intergenerational Center = [Bethlehem Intergenerational Center](#) (616) 456-7509
- Childtime – Byron Center = [Childtime of Byron Center](#) (616) 583-1888
- New Branches Charter Academy = [New Branches](#) (616) 243-6221
- Kelloggsville = [Kelloggsville Before and After Care](#) (616) 532-1585
- GRCC = [GRCC](#) (616) 234-4004
- ELNC -Steepletown [ELNC](#) (616) 608-0754
- Sparta White Early Childhood Center (No before and after available at Ridgeview Elementary) = [White Early Childhood Center](#) (616) 887-0068 X 6201
- Cedar Trails = [Cedar Trails Campus Kids](#) (616) 696-1716

[Return to Top](#)

How can I schedule a tour of a potential preschool program for my child?

Please visit the program websites you are interested in touring for their policy on tours.

[Return to Top](#)

Do I need to live in the school district or is a school chosen for us?

You do not need to live in the school district or area to apply for the school of your choice. The application online will have a list of sites that participate in the preschool programs. You will have to choose three sites to continue the application. If you wish to only apply for one school you will need to choose the school three times.