

VPK Fact Sheet for Families

Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program

Florida's Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program or VPK is a free educational program that helps your 4-year-old be ready for success in kindergarten and beyond.



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Florida VPK

If you have a child who will soon be 4 years old, you know how curious she is or how much he may already know. VPK is a free educational program that helps your child be ready for kindergarten.

Children must live in Florida and be 4 years old on or before Sept. 1 of the current year to be eligible.

The program helps build a strong foundation for school using educational materials appropriate for different stages in your child's development.

Your choices

Private child care centers, private, public and charter schools, and specialized instructional services providers may offer VPK. As a parent, you can choose from one of the following program options:

- School-year program—540 instructional hours. Class sizes of 20 or fewer students. Instructors must hold a *Birth through Five Florida Child Care Professional Credential* and complete special training on early literacy and performance standards.
- Summer program—300 hours of instruction. Class sizes of 12 or less. Instructors must hold a bachelor's degree.
- Specialized Instructional Services program—hours vary based on services provided. For children with disabilities who have current individual educational plans developed by local school districts.

Providers

VPK providers who offer school-year or summer programs must meet these quality standards.

- Employ qualified instructors.
 - Use developmentally appropriate curriculum emphasizing early literacy skills.
 - Maintain required class sizes.
- Private VPK providers who offer school-year or summer programs must also have
- A director with a *Florida Department of Children and Families Director Credential* with a *VPK Director Endorsement*.
 - A valid child care license or recognition by an approved child care accrediting agency.

Information for parents

Here is some information to help you choose a VPK provider to best suit your family.

- Your local early learning coalition can provide you with VPK Provider Profiles that show provider readiness rates and licensing reports.
- ***Kindergarten Readiness Rates*** show how well VPK providers prepare students for kindergarten using results from the Florida Kindergarten Readiness Screener.
- FLKRS is aligned with the *Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards for Four-Year-Olds (2011)* that describe what a 4-year-old should know and be able to do by the end of their prekindergarten year.

Did you know that...

- ✓ 77 percent of Florida 4-year-olds were in VPK last year?
- ✓ 82 percent of children who completed VPK in 2013 were ready for kindergarten compared to 53 percent who did not attend?