

High/Scope

High/Scope curriculum has been around since 1967. It was originally developed to serve at-risk kids but is now used in many settings that serve a full range of infants to preschool-aged children. The central principles of the High/Scope program are;

1. Active Learning (which incorporates the Key Developmental Indicators(KDI's)
2. Adult-Child Interaction
3. Learning Environment
4. Daily Routine
5. Assessment

Active Learning is the core of the High/Scope Curriculum (see attached "Wheel of Learning"). Young children construct knowledge that helps them make sense of their world through active learning-having direct and immediate experiences and deriving meaning from them through reflection. The power of active learning comes from personal initiative. Young children act on their innate desire to explore; they ask and search for answers to questions about people, materials, events, and ideas that arouse their curiosity; they solve problems that stand in the way of their goals; and they generate new strategies to try.

Active learning depends on positive **adult-child interactions**. Teachers working with the High/Scope curriculum practiced positive interaction strategies-sharing control with children, focusing on children's strengths, forming authentic relationships with children, supporting children's play, and adopting a problem-solving approach to social conflicts. This interaction style enables children to express thoughts and feelings freely and confidently, decide the direction and content of the conversation and experience true partnership in dialogue. Teachers rely on a problem-solving approach to deal with everyday classroom situations rather than a child-management system based on praise, punishment, and reward.

Because the **learning environment** has a strong impact on the behavior of the children and teachers, High/Scope places a strong emphasis on the planning of the layout of the classroom and selection of the materials. An active learning environment provides children with ongoing opportunities to make choices and decisions. Play spaces are divided into specific interest areas to support children's abiding interest in such areas as sensory play, block play, pretending and role play, drawing and painting, "reading" and "writing", counting, sorting, etc. These areas contain a wide and plentiful assortment of easily assessable materials children can choose and use to carry out their intentions and ideas for play.

A **consistent daily routine** that supports active learning enables children to anticipate what happens next and gives them a great deal of control over what they do during each part of their day. A High/Scope daily routine incorporates a plan-do-review process which enables the children to express their intentions, carry them out, and reflect on what they have done. This process helps children develop a sense of initiative and pro-social disposition that positively affects their subsequent learning and life decisions.

Assessment of the children is the last principle of the High/Scope program. Key Developmental Indicators, or “Key Experiences”, are the building blocks of thinking and reasoning at each stage of development. These indicators are based on the latest child developmental research and decades of classroom practice. They were developed with the entire early childhood spectrum from infancy to age 8 in mind. (see “key experiences” attached) Throughout the day, teachers are taking anecdotal notes based on what they see and hear, analyzing their observations in terms of KDI’s, and making plans for the children or the class for the next day. KDI’s are also used when creating lesson plans or setting up their environment.

In sum, the High/Scope approach encourages children to;

- Develop initiative within a supportive social context
- Express, carry out, and reflect on their intentions
- Develop their own interest
- Generate ways to answer their questions and discuss their ideas with others
- To be able to construct their own understanding of the world around them
- To gain a sense control and personal satisfaction which will serve children throughout their lives.