

Frequently Asked Questions – North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten Program – Union County

Who is eligible to attend NC Pre-K?

Children who are four years old by August 31 of the school year. If you live outside Union County, click here to find the program in your area: http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/pdf_forms/NCPre-K_CountyContractorDirectory.pdf.

Is NC Pre-K free? Yes, NC Pre-K is free for families with household income of less than 75% of the State Median Income. If over income, children with documented needs for support (examples include support for speech services or IEP) may be eligible for placement if spaces are available after income eligible children are placed. Children with parent(s) on active military duty are eligible regardless of income.

How do I apply for NC Pre-K? See the NC Pre-K tab on www.theAllianceforChildren.org or visit our office at 105 Cedar St., Monroe NC 28110 for an application. Complete the application fully and supply **copies of all the documents** listed on the second page of the application. Please make sure to complete all information, sign and date the application.

What documents are required for proof of income? Documents that provide the best idea of your current income. If your hours and pay change from week to week, provide copies of four recent paychecks. Other options are a copy of the first page of your most recent tax returns or W-2 forms (mark through Social Security numbers). If you receive alimony or child support, provide copies of how much you receive. For families who work seasonal jobs and receive cash compensation, visit our office for a form.

What documents are required for proof of residency? Options include recent utility bills, phone bills, the first page of your current lease agreement, car registration, driver's license or mail with your name/address printed on the document. Your child's teacher will conduct a home visit when school begins.

What happens after I turn in the complete application and supporting documents? The Alliance for Children's NC Pre-K staff will process the application for eligibility. If your child is NOT eligible, you will receive an email within two weeks of application receipt. If your child is four by August 31 and your family meets income eligibility, it is likely that your child will be placed in NC Pre-K (subject to state funding). Make a doctor appointment to update your child's shots and have a Medical Report (forms on our website) completed before August 15 so your child can start school on time. You will give the shot records and Medical Report to your child's teacher or site director.

If classes don't start until July or August, why should I turn in my application early? To plan enough classrooms and hire the most qualified teachers, we need to know how many students we will have in school. Completing your application early will help us to best serve your student for NC Pre-K.

When will I know my eligible child's placement for NC Pre-K? For complete applications received **before May 1**, families served by sites in the Monroe/Year-Round School areas will be notified of site placement by June 30. For year-round sites, school begins in late July.

For complete applications received **before May 1**, families served in **traditional school areas** (participating sites in Wingate, Indian Trail, Stallings, Waxhaw, and Oakboro) will be notified by early August. School begins in late August.

Be sure to print your email address and phone number clearly on the application for notification purposes.

Applications are welcomed for NC Pre-K all year, but complete applications for eligible students received by May 1 will be placed first. Applications received after this date will be welcomed, but may be placed on a waiting list.

Will my child attend NC Pre-K at a school or childcare site? The Union County NC Pre-K program partners with child care sites and Union County Public Schools including: A+ Childcare and Learning Center, Childcare Network (Hilltop), Childtime Monroe, Childtime Indian Trail, Rainbow Child Care Center (Lawyers Rd.), Kids R Kids (Chestnut/Potter), Oakboro Kid's Club, Weekday Children's Ministries, and Wingate Baptist Church Childcare. Participating UCPS schools include the Walter Bickett Education Center (Lancaster Ave.), Indian Trail Elementary and

Waxhaw Elementary. Whether in a school or childcare site, all staff and classrooms are required to meet NC Pre-K standards for quality. Children are placed at sites by the Alliance for Children as close as possible to their homes. There is a space on the application to request a site but placement requests *are not guaranteed*. Classrooms are limited to eighteen students.

My older children attend school per UCPS attendance lines. Why is my child placed at another school for NC Pre-K? Funding for the NC Pre-K program is provided through the Alliance for Children in Union County. The non-profit agency subcontracts NC Pre-K services with elementary schools and child care sites having licensed four or five-star state childcare classrooms (see site list above). Your child may be placed for NC Pre-K at a different site than his or her siblings, but for Kindergarten your student will attend classes following UCPS attendance lines.

What are NC Pre-K hours? Most sites operate NC Pre-K classes from 7:30 am to 2:00 pm. Hours for the Walter Bickett Education Center are 7:00 am to 1:30 pm. Keep in mind that your child will not attend NC Pre-K on school workdays, holidays, and school breaks closely following the UCPS year-round or traditional school calendars. On-time, regular attendance is expected so your child will get the full benefit of NC Pre-K.

Is there a bus? No, parents are responsible for dropping off and picking up students each day for NC Pre-K classes at childcare OR school sites. If you know another family with a child who plans to attend NC Pre-K and you arrange a carpool, please note this on both children's application forms and turn in the applications at the same time.

What if I need before or after school care for my child? Working parents may be eligible for childcare subsidy to help with the cost of childcare outside of the NC Pre-K day. You must contact DSS at 704-296-4339 to apply (this is sometimes called a childcare voucher) as soon as possible.

How should my child dress for NC Pre-K? Please dress your child in weather appropriate clothing with closed toed shoes. Make sure your child can move comfortably in clothing that may get dirty or "painted" in the art center. Children learn through play in NC Pre-K and will enjoy outside learning every day.

Will I need to purchase any supplies? It is helpful if your child has a small backpack or bag to carry papers and personal belongings to and from school. Your child will need a blanket and crib sized sheet for rest time. If possible, provide a change of seasonally appropriate clothes in case your child needs to change clothes during the day.

Why should I place my child in NC Pre-K? Participating in NC Pre-K will help your child strengthen academic and social skills in preparation for Kindergarten. North Carolina is one of four states with a Pre-K program that meets all 10 [National Institute of Early Education Research](#) Benchmarks (NIEER). Benchmarks include comprehensive [Early Learning Standards](#); staff meet education/licensure requirements, professional development; 1:9 staff/child ratio; developmental screens and referral; evidence-based curriculum and formative assessments; monitoring and nutritional requirements.

Family Involvement One of the first calls you receive from your child's teacher is to set up a home visit. This helps the child meet the teacher in your home environment and helps the teachers to get to know your family, pets, and lifestyle. Family/teacher conferences are scheduled during the year and you will be invited to participate in family events hosted at your child's NC Pre-K site. Family participation and open, honest communication with your teachers is vital to the success of your child's NC Pre-K experience.

Homework Reading twenty to thirty minutes each night with your child is your homework assignment. It is one of the best ways to help your child build vocabulary and strengthen language skills. Reading nightly is a great habit that will serve your child well in later years, and is a good opportunity to have one on one time with your child. Visit your local library for a library card, and ask the children's librarian for age appropriate books that match your child's interests. <http://www.union.lib.nc.us/>

Parent Resources:

~Free videos and help to support for your child's social and emotional development and self-regulation skills: www.ConsciousDiscipline.com These tools are used in Union County NC Pre-K classrooms. Partner with your child's teachers by reviewing the videos and information for parents on this website and use the techniques in your home.

Why are self-regulation skills important? Read this study!

<http://research.msu.edu/many-kindergartners-struggle-with-self-regulation/>

~Ideas to have fun and help support your child's behavior, learning and development:

http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/PDF_forms/FamilyFoundations2013_Fours.pdf

http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/PDF_forms/FamilyFoundations2013_Spanish_Fours.pdf

<http://www.talkreading.org/>

<http://families.naeyc.org/songs>

<https://www.youtube.com/user/joinvroom> (check out the Daily Vroom app!)

<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/>

<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/family.html>

<http://www.first5california.com/>

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/reading-tips-parents-preschoolers>

~Resources if you have concerns about your child's development:

Easter Seals offers a free, comprehensive, and confidential online screening tool to help guide and keep track of your child's growth and development during these first five years.

Children develop skills and reach milestones at their own pace. How is your child doing? We encourage you to take 10–20 minutes to check with the Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition™ (ASQ-3). You can start at any time. Based on your responses, your results will help you see if your child's developmental progress is on time and alert you to any potential concerns that you can talk over with your health care provider. We will ask you to come back from time to time to check in and learn more about your child's development over time. You can use this tool when your child is at least 4-weeks- old through your child's fifth birthday. Depending on your child's age, you may need some props – like a ball, safety scissors or a toy. The sooner you address a developmental delay or special need, the better long-term success you can expect for your child's overall well-being. Early intervention is key.

**For the best experience, please take the screening on a desktop or laptop computer.*

<http://www.easterseals.com/mtffc/asq/?referrer=https://www.google.com/>

http://es.easterseals.com/site/PageServer/?pagename=ntlc10_mffc_homepageasq_espanol

http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/parents/pr_sn2_snr.asp

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html>

In addition to NC Pre-K, the Alliance for Children offers programs that support the education and well-being of children ages birth through five years old. See the programs tab on our website to learn more. For more information about NC Pre-K, contact Suzanne Walters at 704-226-1407 or 704-238-8917.



Alliance for Children ~ 105 Cedar Street ~ Monroe NC ~704.226.1407