

## **The HighScope Preschool Curriculum Course (PCC)**

### **A Prospectus**

#### **Purpose and Participants**

The four-week Preschool Curriculum Course (PCC) is designed to prepare teachers and caregivers to implement the HighScope educational approach in their early childhood programs. Using carefully selected training materials, participants focus on child development, developmentally appropriate practice, and their own educational development.

#### **Outcomes and Benefits**

- The training program provides comprehensive coverage of the five major topics in the HighScope Wheel of Learning: Active Learning, Adult-Child Interaction, Learning Environment, Daily Routine, and Assessment.
- The training program offers active participation and study for participants to engage them in the learning process and help them become more effective teachers.
- Those who complete the program are qualified to implement the HighScope educational approach in their programs and assess its enhancement of children's development. They receive certificates of participation and are encouraged to apply for HighScope teacher certification through the International HighScope Registry.
- Those who complete the 20 days (120 hours) of training and all of the study assignments receive a transcript for 12 Continuing Education Units (CEUs).
- PCC teachers who want to move into supervisory and training roles at their agencies could enroll in the HighScope Trainer of Trainers Program (ToT) to qualify them to provide training to others on staff.
- The PCC plus the ToT combines training in the educational model with the development of skills to train adults. Participants who meet the requirements for both curriculum knowledge and adult-training skills become HighScope certified trainers with an endorsement in preschool.

## **Key Features**

- Training sessions. The PCC is composed of 20 six-hour days of instruction distributed over 4 five-day weeks. Training sessions are usually conducted in a single central location for groups of 20–40 participants. The training weeks are separated by three to four weeks to enable the teachers to practice what they have learned.
- Ongoing participation. Participants are actively involved in group work during the training weeks. At the beginning of each training week, the consultant discusses implementation issues and concerns that teachers faced during the intervening weeks before moving on to new material. Together they develop strategies for enhancing implementation at their site.
- Training assignments. To actively study the material covered, participants complete reading and reflective writing assignments during the training sessions and in the weeks between sessions. These assignments help them to learn the central components of the curriculum presented in the written and audio-visual materials and to practice their implementation through activities they complete in their own classrooms.

## **Prerequisites**

- There are no prerequisites for teachers to enroll in the PCC.
- Teachers in different positions and at varying levels of experience may participate in the PCC. Evaluation has shown that the PCC can effectively improve teaching skills of those with college degrees as well as those with high school diplomas. Experienced teachers who participate in the PCC not only improve their own teaching skills but are also in a position to serve as mentors for novice teachers.

## **Roles and Responsibilities of Participants**

- Teachers are expected to attend all training sessions and complete all assignments.
- To become certified, teachers must meet the requirements for demonstrating a high level of curriculum implementation and child observation and assessment skills in their own classroom settings.

## Feedback and Evaluation Procedures

PCC participants receive extensive feedback from consultants on their curriculum implementation and assignments but they are not formally evaluated and do not receive grades in the courses. However, those completing the PCC who choose to continue their training with the ToT must demonstrate their mastery of the PCC content and fulfill the trainer certification requirements. These requirements and the grading system are described in the TOT prospectus.

During the PCC, the HighScope consultant provides guidance and feedback to participants in the following areas:

- Understanding the HighScope educational approach. Consultant-led workshops and assigned readings from HighScope's preschool manual, *Educating Young Children: Active Learning Practices for Preschool and Child Care Programs* by Mary Hohmann and David P. Weikart, along with other resources, provide participants with ample opportunity to learn about and study the HighScope Curriculum. With guidance from the consultant, participants work in teams and individually to understand the curriculum components and their relation to child development theory and practice.
- Assessing child development. Participants learn how to observe children and take objective anecdotal notes using the *HighScope Key Development Indicator Note Forms*. They practice using these notes to complete the *HighScope Child Observation Record (COR)*. The consultant reviews these and provides feedback to participants on the objectivity of their anecdotal notes and the accuracy of their completed COR ratings.
- Assessing program quality. To learn about the elements of program quality, participants become familiar with the *HighScope Program Quality Assessment (PQA)*. With guidance and feedback from the consultant, participants practice using the PQA to evaluate the central components of the HighScope educational approach — learning environment, daily routine, adult-child interaction, and assessment.
- Implementing the HighScope educational approach. In the weeks between training sessions, participants practice using the HighScope educational approach in their own classrooms or in a cooperating classroom at their home agency. Participants implement the principles of the approach by arranging and labeling the learning environment, establishing a consistent daily routine that includes the plan-do-review sequence and small- and large-group times, and engaging in supportive adult-child interactions that enhance and extend children's learning.

## Teacher Certification

Teachers who complete the PCC are encouraged to apply for teacher certification. The certification process, conducted by the International HighScope Registry, recognizes teachers whose practice reflects a high degree of knowledge about child development and its application in using the HighScope educational approach. To be certified, teachers must demonstrate their competence in two ways in their own classrooms:

- Program implementation. Teachers must be observed and rated by a certified teacher-trainer using the *HighScope Program Quality Assessment (PQA) Instrument*. To be certified, a teacher must achieve a rating of 4 or above (out of 5) on all the certification scales and an average rating of at least 4.5 on the PQA.
- Child assessment. Teachers must use the *HighScope Child Observation Record (COR)* to observe and rate two children for a period of three months. They must submit a full set of anecdotal notes and the completed COR assessment for both children.

If all of the teachers (that is, those with full teaching responsibilities, not including assistants) at a single location in an early childhood agency are certified by the International HighScope Registry, the agency can apply for program certification at that location. To achieve program certification, the agency must submit the required documentation that its policies and practices support the implementation of the HighScope educational approach.

## Course Content

The PCC consists of 20 days (120 contact hours) of training workshops and seminars distributed over four week-long courses. One or two topics are addressed each day. Some topics require two or more sessions. Participants are expected to prepare themselves for each topic by studying the relevant materials and completing the assignments.

Following are the course titles and a summary of their content along with a detailed training schedule.

**Course TE511 (Week One) — Fundamentals of the HighScope Preschool Approach**

- Course overview
- A model of active learning
- Cognitive processes: Thinking and reasoning in children
- Principles of effective learning environments
- Fundamentals of adult-child interaction
- Methodology of observation and anecdotal record keeping

**Course TE512 (Week Two) — Children in the HighScope Preschool Learning Environment**

- Fundamentals of the HighScope Daily Routine
- Basic principles of plan-do-review
- Basic principles of small-group time
- Basic principles of large-group time
- Program assessment: *The HighScope Program Quality Assessment (PQA)*

**Course TE513 (Week Three) — Adults' Responsibilities in the HighScope Preschool Learning Environment, Part 1**

- Framework of the HighScope Key Developmental Indicators in early childhood development
- Strategies for supporting children: Encouragement versus praise
- Program management: Problem-solving approach to conflict

**Course TE514 (Week Four) — Adults' Responsibilities in the HighScope Preschool Learning Environment, Part 2**

- Developmental principles in movement and music
- Child assessment: *The HighScope Child Observation Record (COR)*
- Principles and practices of daily team planning
- Fundamentals of working with parents

**Schedule for Preschool Curriculum Course (PCC)  
120 Contact Hours plus assignments**

	<b>Week 1 TE511</b>	<b>Week 2 TE512</b>	<b>Week 3 TE513</b>	<b>Week 4 TE514</b>
<b>Day 1</b>	Introduction to HighScope and the Lead Teacher Training Project (LTTP)  Active Learning	Implementation Review  Introduction to the HighScope Daily Routine	Implementation Review  HighScope Key Developmental Indicators — Part One	Movement and Music
<b>Day 2</b>	Thinking and Reasoning  Introduction to the HighScope Key Developmental Indicators	Daily Routine: Plan-Do-Review Sequence	HighScope Key Developmental Indicators — Part Two	Movement and Music
<b>Day 3</b>	Indoor Learning Environment	Daily Routine: Small-Group Times	HighScope Key Developmental Indicators — Part Three  Encouragement vs. Praise	Implementation Review  <i>Child Assessment: HighScope Child Observation Record (COR) — Part One</i>
<b>Day 4</b>	Adult-Child Interaction Strategies	Daily Routine: Large-Group Times	Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict — Part One	<i>Child Assessment: HighScope Child Observation Record (COR) — Part Two</i>  Daily Team Planning
<b>Day 5</b>	Observation and Anecdotal Record Keeping  Elements of Quality	Program assessment: <i>HighScope Program Quality Assessment (PQA)</i>	Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict – Part Two	Working With Parents  HighScope Review: Questions and Answers