

Family Guide to the Pre-K Quality Snapshot



What is the Pre-K Quality Snapshot? The Pre-K Quality Snapshot is a tool that can help you understand different elements of quality at Pre-K for All programs across New York City. Our goal is to give you information to help you find the program that best meets your child's and your family's needs.

The Snapshot is one of many ways to learn about quality. We also encourage you to visit pre-K programs to observe, ask questions to pre-K leaders and teachers, and talk to other families about their experiences in pre-K.



How can I use the Pre-K Quality Snapshot? The Pre-K Quality Snapshot is one source of program quality information that you can use when you are deciding where to apply to pre-K. There are many factors that go into a high-quality program and the Snapshot can be a handy way to see some important assessment and survey information in one place.

You can use the Snapshot in conversation with leaders and teachers at the pre-K programs you are considering. We encourage you to visit pre-K programs you're interested in and speak with program leaders and teachers to understand more about each pre-K program. Program staff will be able to speak to you about particular program strengths. We also expect program leaders to answer questions about the Snapshot.

Visit nyc.gov/prek for a list of suggested questions that you can ask program leaders and teachers about their program.

How can I access the Pre-K Quality Snapshot? To access the Pre-K Quality Snapshot:

- Visit the Pre-K Finder at maps.nyc.gov/prek
- Click on the pre-K program you'd like to learn more about
- Click the "Pre-K Snapshot" button

What does pre-K quality look like? Research shows that children who have a high-quality pre-K experience thrive in elementary school and are more likely to graduate from high school and college. In high-quality pre-K, children learn by playing, exploring, and developing relationships with teachers and peers. Pre-K teachers set up classrooms so children can use toys and materials, work in small groups, and become more independent throughout the year. Pre-K is a time when children learn to play together, share and take turns, and use their words to describe their thoughts and feelings. Children build, pretend, draw, and play indoors and outdoors using a wide variety of toys and other materials. They learn to ask questions and explore new ideas. Pre-K programs help build the foundation for success in school, at home, and in life.

All pre-K programs, including NYCDOE District Schools, Pre-K Centers, New York City Early Education Centers (NYCEECs), and Charter Schools, are held to the same [Pre-K for All Program Quality Standards](#).

How do we measure quality on the Snapshot? The Snapshot includes results from the [NYC School Survey of Families and Teachers](#) as well as data from program assessments. "Program assessments" are based on observations that happen in pre-K classrooms. NYCDOE assessment specialists are trained to measure quality and give programs their assessment scores. Assessment specialists use the following three measurement tools:



- The **Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)** is a national tool that looks at the kinds of interactions that happen between teachers and children in pre-K classrooms.
- The **Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS-R)** is a national tool that looks at the pre-K learning environment. This includes things like the classroom and playground layout, the way children are supervised, the materials they have to use, and the amount of time they have to play.
- The **Quality Review** is a process developed by the NYCDOE that looks at how well district schools are organized to support student learning and teacher practice. The Quality Review looks at the entire school, not just the pre-K program.

CLASS, ECERS-R, and the Quality Review do not happen every year for each program, but you can find the most recent information from the past three school years in the snapshot, including the date that each assessment happened.

What do the ratings in the Snapshot mean? The ratings in the Snapshot show a program’s strengths and areas for growth. For areas that are measured by the CLASS and ECERS-R assessments, results are shown on a four bar rating scale. Four bars means the program is “Excellent” in that area, three bars means “Good,” two bars means “Fair,” and one bar means “Needs Improvement.” The bar ratings in the Pre-K Quality Snapshot are based on results of the program assessments discussed above.



For areas measured by the NYC School Survey, the Snapshot shows the percentage of families who answered that question positively.

The Pre-K Quality Snapshot shows each of the program’s ratings next to the average rating for other programs in the same school district. This allows you to compare each program to the other programs nearby to help you to find the program that best meets your child’s and your family’s needs.

Why do some programs not have Snapshots or have “N/A” on their Snapshots? If a program does not have a Snapshot, it means that we do not have any available data for that program. If a program has “N/A” on its Snapshot, it means that program assessment data is not available for that specific area. This can happen in programs that are new to Pre-K for All.

Having an “N/A” or not having a Snapshot does not mean that the program is not high-quality; it simply means we have not yet measured it.

Helpful Links

- [Pre-K Application Information](#)
- [Pre-K Finder](#)
- [Framework for Great Schools](#)
- [Pre-K for All Program Quality Standards](#)
- [Program Assessments Information](#)
- [NYC School Survey](#)
- [Quality Review](#)

