

FIRST NATIONAL GUIDELINES DEVELOPED FOR PRE-KINDERGARTEN LEARNING AND TEACHING

*-- Education Experts Unveil Guidelines Addressing All Areas of Growth and Development
For Children Ages 3 – 5 --*

NEW YORK, NEW YORK, November 20, 2002 – A consortium of the nation’s leading academic and child development experts today released the first ever “Guidelines for Pre-Kindergarten Learning and Teaching.” The Guidelines, presented today at the annual meeting of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), provide a comprehensive approach to all areas of learning, growth and development for the pre-school child. Based on existing national and state standards, the Guidelines were developed for states, districts, private schools and education centers to use in formulating Pre-K policies, standards and curricula.

“Guidelines for Pre-Kindergarten Learning and Teaching” were put together over a three-year period in a public domain project underwritten by the McGraw-Hill Companies and led by a consortium of the nation's top early learning educators. Dr. Carol Seefeldt of the University of Maryland/College Park wrote the material, under the direction of the panel, whose members were: Dr. Amy Driscoll of California State University/Monterey Bay; Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan of Teacher’s College/Columbia University; Dr. Augusta Kappner of The Bank Street College of Education; and Dr. Dorothy Strickland, State of New Jersey Professor of Reading at Rutgers University. Dr. Juanita Copley of the University of Houston provided additional input in the mathematics area.

“There is mounting research evidence that early learning holds the key to continuing learning achievement for students in this country,” noted Dr. Carol Seefeldt. “The Guidelines clarify for the first time what children ages 3-5 years should be learning from a developmental perspective, and how these concepts should be taught. However, the Guidelines recognize that young children develop at different rates. They’re not intended to measure a pre-schooler’s ability at a particular point in time, but to help educators promote educational equity in preschools to enable all children to succeed.”

"The very early years of life are richly filled with learning. Children who are helped to focus their learning on skills that will support future learning gain the greatest advantages when they enter school. The Guidelines released today, developed by the nation's top scholars in the field, will be welcomed by preschool educators across the country. They will help children succeed in school and in life," said Dr. Daniel Fallon, chair of the Education Division, Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Many educators across the country agree that there is a growing need for pre-K standards.

"High quality pre-school benefits children at all income levels, but research clearly shows that disadvantaged kids profit most," said Dr. Michael Casserly, executive director of the Council of the Great City Schools. "So elevating the quality of pre-school programs is essential if we're going to assist urban public school systems in teaching all students to the highest academic standards and close identifiable gaps in the achievement of students."

The Guidelines describe what students need to be able to do in each of the areas, what kinds of experiences they need to have in order to achieve success, and how this achievement is manifest in clear and specific learning benchmarks. They promote foundational knowledge in the following areas:

- Knowledge of self
- Knowledge of others and social skills
- Intrinsic motivation for learning
- Literacy and language learning
- Concepts of mathematics
- Initial knowledge of world languages
- Scientific inquiry
- Physical, life and earth sciences
- Technologies
- Social sciences
- Health and physical education
- Visual arts, theater and music

The Guidelines will be discussed at the following NAEYC Sessions:

- Content standards for early childhood education--from ideas to implementation
11/20/2002 10:00:00 AM - 12:00:00 PM
- Setting early learning standards for young children: the state of the states
11/20/2002 12:30:00 PM - 3:30:00 PM
- Linking early literacy standards with developmentally appropriate practice with Dorothy Strickland
11/21/2002 10:00:00 AM - 11:00:00 AM
- Standards: help or hindrance for children and teachers in the classroom
11/23/2002 10:00:00 AM - 11:00:00 AM

"There's a growing consensus among educators and policy makers that the nation needs to do a better job of preparing our 3.3 million young children attending pre-school programs for Kindergarten. McGraw-Hill is proud to play a role in bringing experts together to address this important issue," said Dr. Charlotte Frank, senior vice president, McGraw Hill Education Research and Development.

The Panel on Pre-K Guidelines invites the education community to review the new Guidelines and provide critical input and recommendations by April 30th, 2003. The complete set of Guidelines is available at www.ctb.com.

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