



Educare Chicago Virtual Learning Programming

Mission

At Start Early and Educare Chicago, our mission is to advance quality early learning and care for families with children before birth through their earliest years to help close the opportunity gap.

Vision

Educare Chicago envisions that every child has an equitable opportunity to reach their full potential to thrive in school and in life.

General Operations

Our ultimate purpose is to support families to achieve goals they establish for themselves and their family while partnering with them to close the persistent achievement gap to ensure their child has the same school success that their peers of other socio economic status experience. We are now faced with the challenge of doing this while experiencing a global pandemic. Due to the uncertainty of the pandemic and access to a cure or medications that can prevent the spread, Educare Chicago will need to be flexible, innovative, and adaptive to community needs. For the 2020/2021 school year, Educare will provide a dual program service option of center based and virtual programming.

Virtual Learning Programming gives parents the opportunity to demonstrate their role as their child's first and primary teacher. Virtual learning for children 0 to 5 needs to be structured in a way that supports parent engagement, limits screen time, provides more active engagement versus passive engagement, and stresses parent/child interactions while supporting parents in understanding their child's development and providing opportunities for the parent to facilitate learning in the home. Virtual Learning Programming is not sitting a child in front of a TV, Computer Screen, or tablet to watch others entertain them.

Educare Chicago will implement virtual learning using evidence based practices that support parents as the primary teacher. Educare will implement Parents As Teachers, Creative Curriculum, and Ready Rosie as curriculum supports to guide the home experiences. An Interdisciplinary Team will support families by demonstrating learning experiences, providing background knowledge and explanations of what children learn and they engage in developmental activities.

Educare prides itself on implementing evidenced based practices. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) study that began in 2018 indicates that children who spent more than two hours a day on screen-time activities scored lower on language and thinking tests. Caring For Our Children defines screen time/digital media as: media content viewed on cell/mobile phone, tablet, computer, television (TV), video, film, and DVD. It does not include video-chatting with family. Caring For Our Children recommends screen time/digital media should not be used with children ages 2 and younger in early care and education settings. For children ages 2 to 5 years,

total exposure (in early care and education and at home combined) to digital media should be limited to 1 hour per day of high-quality programming, and viewed with an adult who can help children apply what they are learning to the world around them.

Virtual Learning Platform

Educare will use Class Dojo as its virtual learning platform along with Zoom. ClassDojo connects teachers with students and parents to build amazing classroom communities. This tool allows Educare to share information with families, post education resources, video demonstrations, communicate with parents, and there is a portfolio feature where both parents and virtual teachers can share child progress.

Zoom will be used for both small group and individualized learning interactions with families. Zoom will also be used for socialization and other family engagement experiences.

Virtual Learning Requirements

To be successful in a virtual learning program, the parent will need to protect time to regularly engaged with their interdisciplinary work team on behalf of their child's learning and family goals. The parent will need to have access to WIFI, computer/IPAD/Tablet, and a working knowledge to access internet, and different virtual learning platforms.

Parents will be asked to sign a written agreement stating that they will be actively engaged in the following:

- 1) Participate in daily small group experiences.
- 2) Meet daily with a member of the interdisciplinary virtual team.
- 3) Facilitate Parent/Child Learning Activities for 60 minutes each day.
- 4) Upload child progress documentation in Class Dojo, or send documentation to the child's virtual teacher.
- 5) Participate in the screening and assessment process
- 6) Participate in two virtual home visits and two parent staff conferences.

Additionally, parents are required to submit current physical examinations, immunization records, dental assessments, follow up with any outstanding health outcomes, and ensure children's health outcomes are current.

Virtual Schedule

Being a child's first and primary teacher is hard work especially while balancing other family needs. It is best practice to have a set routine for your child that includes regular mealtimes, a rest period, outdoor/physical gross motor experiences, and a set time for parent child engagement. Educare staff will work with families to develop a consistent routine for virtual learning that meets the family's home schedule. The Daily Schedules for families with children 0-3 and families with children 3-5 are listed below:

Daily Schedule for Families with Children 3-5

15-30 Minutes Morning Meeting

15-30 Minutes Small Group Experience

Optional Office Hours with Child's Virtual Teacher

15-30 Minutes Comprehensive Supports

1. Parents As Teachers with Family Support Specialist
2. Individualized Lesson Plan with Virtual Teacher
3. Wellness and Disabilities Support with Disabilities Team
For children with Individual Education Plans (IEP)
For children with Individual Family Service Plans
For Children with social emotional needs

60 Minutes Parent/Child Experiences

Daily Schedule for Families with Children 0-3

15-30 Minutes Individualized Learning Experience

15-30 Minutes Comprehensive Service Supports

1. Parents As Teachers Experience with Family Support Specialist
2. Wellness and Disabilities Support with Disabilities Team
For children with Individual Education Plans (IEP)
For children with Individual Family Service Plans
For Children with social emotional needs

60 Minutes Parent/Child Experiences

Families with Children 0-3 will also be engaged in a weekly group socialization experience.

Other Virtual Supports

An addition to education, wellness/disabilities, and family engagement supports, Educare offers additional health and nutrition services. Educare has a nutritionist, and a nurse to support health and nutrition needs. To access these supports, parents can reach out to their Family Support Specialist and or the Comprehensive Service Manager. See the staff list in the Parent Handbook for contact information.

Educare also provides music and story times with our Librarian on virtual Fridays, access to fresh vegetables and herbs from our community garden, and a wealth of family engagement opportunities like Parent Committee, Parent University, Cooking Matters, Mother's Support Group, and Male Involvement.

Participation/Attendance Requirements

The Office of Head Start and the Department of Family Support Services requirement participation be captured for virtual learners. Daily participation is required. If participation falls

below 85%, a Family Participation Plan will be developed to ensure engagement. Attendance will be taken during each learning experience. Only live participation counts as attendance.

Supplies and Resources

By participating in virtual learning, families will receive resources at least twice a month to support implementation of learning in the home. Parents will be notified in advance of when to pick up resource kits. Resource Kits will be distributed every 1st Monday and 4th Monday from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm. If this time does not work for a family, a different pick up time can be arranged by appointment only.

Hatch and Read Ask Chat:

Educare subscribed to the Hatch web-based computer system, Ignite. Ignite provides educational computer games for children age 3-5. As the children play the games, the system tracks children's developmental accomplishments and feeds that data into our assessment system, Teaching Strategies. Each preschool family in virtual learning will receive a free Ignite subscription for their Head Start child. The Hatch system will allow Educare to capture necessary developmental data for children in the virtual learning while providing children with educational computer-based experiences.

All virtual families will receive a free subscription to ReadAskChat. ReadAskChat is an app that provides age appropriate stories for parents to read to their children. Additionally, the app guides parents with open ended questions and other learning experiences that promote language, communication, and cognitive skills.

Parents will receive training on the Hatch and ReadAskChat systems to support learning experiences in the home.

Virtual Screenings

Within the first 45 days of participation, parents will collaborate with their child's virtual teacher to complete a developmental, and behavioral screening. Educare uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire Social Emotional screening tools. These tools are used to get a general impression of a child's development from the parent's perspective. The results of the screening will be used in partnership with the Disabilities and Wellness Team to determine if additional supports are needed to assist children's development.

Educare also conducts vision and hearing screenings. Due to the pandemic, Educare will not use outside or internal consultants to conduct these screenings. Educare will be relying on parent observations and children's current well child check-ups to document vision and hearing screenings.

Virtual Interdisciplinary Team

Each family in the Virtual Learning Program will be assigned to a Virtual Classroom with a Virtual Teacher. The Family will also be assigned a Family Support Specialist. If the child has an

IEP or an IFSP, the child will also be assigned an Inclusion Aide. This team will work collaboratively to meet the needs of the child and family unit. The team will coordinate services and daily programming and individualized learning experiences to support family goals while addressing the child's learning needs.

Delivery of programming will be facilitated through the lens of the parent being the child's primary teacher. Delivery strategies will focus on the following:

- 1) Building knowledge and skill of child development and the developmental benefit of the experience identifying Teaching Strategies Gold Objectives for Learning and Development, Head Start Early Learning Framework Outcomes, and the Illinois Early Learning Standards.
- 2) Ensure the family has the resources in the home to follow along with the experience.
- 3) A visual demonstration
- 4) An observation time to observe the parent implementing the experience with the child.

Virtual Teacher Daily Schedule: Head Start

45-90 Minutes	Facilitate Three 15-30 minute Small Group Morning Meeting Sessions Small Groups should include no more than three families.
45-90 Minute	Facilitate Three 15-30 minute interactive Small Group Activity
60 Minutes	Office Hours For Parent Needs
90 Minutes	Individualized One on One Meetings to Support Individualizations and Parent Child Experiences (Connect with 2-3 Parents a Day)
120 Minutes	Interdisciplinary Prep, Lesson Planning, Prep for Demonstrations, Administrative Tasks (Assessments, Class Dojo, etc)

Virtual Teacher Daily Schedule: Early Head Start

240 Minutes	Individualized One on One Meetings to Support Individualizations And Parent Child Interactions
60 Minutes	Weekly Socialization
120 Minutes	Interdisciplinary Prep, Lesson Planning, Prep for Demonstrations, Administrative Tasks (Assessments, Class Dojo, etc)
60 Minutes	Office Hour

Family Support Daily Schedules

Daily

60 Minutes	Office Hours
60 Minutes	Parents As Teachers 1 on 1 or Group Experiences, one activity per family each month. At least 8 activities this school year.
90 Minutes	Family Engagement Goal Setting and Weekly Check Ins, Providing Resources
120 Minutes	Data Entry, Family Follow Up on Health and Attendance, Interdisciplinary Prep, Prep for Demonstrations

Weekly

60 Minutes	Classroom Team Meetings
90 Minutes	Virtual Fridays
60 Minutes	Reflective Practice Group

Monthly

180 Minutes	Parents As Teachers Virtual Friday Learning twice per month (1 st & 4 th Friday)
120 Minutes	Break Through to Family Engagement Coaching
120 Minutes	Family Service Team Meeting
120 Minutes	ERSEA Team Meeting

Inclusion Aide Weekly Schedules

Inclusion Aides are an integral part of the Virtual Learning Team. They will work collaborative with the Virtual Teacher to plan learning experiences for children with IEP's and IFSP's. Inclusion Aides will conduct one on one weekly experiences with the children on their caseloads. They will also assist in implementing Interim Plans for virtual learnings including incorporating weekly experiences using sensory bags and supporting the weekly socialization experiences for Early Head Start virtual learners and Virtual Fridays.

Reflective Practice Supports

Biweekly there will be interdisciplinary virtual meetings for staff supporting virtual programming to plan and reflect on virtual learning work with children and families. This may include a check in with Wellness Consultants, etc.

