

# Getting Ready

Reviews: [Foundations for Life](#), July 2016; September 2021

**Note on provider involvement:** This provider has agreed to EIF's terms of reference, and the assessment has been conducted and published with the full cooperation of the programme provider.

**Getting Ready is an ecological, child and parent-focused, strengths-based intervention.**

The Getting Ready intervention is a process of interacting with families that occurs during all exchanges with them (eg home visits, conferences, informal interactions). It can be implemented in centre-based programmes (eg preschool) or home-visitation programmes (in which families receive weekly visits from a teacher). It is not a curriculum or a packaged, stand-alone programme but is implemented in coordination with existing programmes. It provides early childhood professionals with an approach to working with families to support parent engagement.

Practitioners trained in Getting Ready deliver services to families with children between the ages of two and five years old, and has been delivered as a targeted-selective intervention to low-income families.

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Evidence  
rating: **2+**

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Cost rating:  
**NA**

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## EIF Programme Assessment

Getting Ready has **preliminary evidence** of improving a child outcome, but we cannot be confident that the programme caused the improvement.

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Evidence  
rating: **2+**

### What does the evidence rating mean?

**Level 2** indicates that the programme has evidence of improving a child outcome from a study involving at least 20 participants, representing 60% of the sample, using validated instruments.

This programme does not receive a rating of 3 as its best evidence is not from a rigorously conducted RCT or QED evaluation.

### What does the plus mean?

The plus rating indicates that a programme's best available evidence is based on an evaluation that is more rigorous than a level 2 standard but does not meet the criteria for level 3.

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## Cost rating

**NA** indicates that the information required to generate a cost rating is not available at this time.

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Cost rating:  
**NA**

# Child outcomes

According to the best available evidence for this programme's impact, it can achieve the following positive outcomes for children:

## Supporting children's mental health and wellbeing

### Improved social and emotional competencies

Based on study 1

### Improved social skills

Based on study 2

## Enhancing school achievement & employment

### Improved language skills

Based on study 1

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## Key programme characteristics

### Who is it for?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to the following age-groups:

- Toddlers
- Preschool

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### How is it delivered?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to implementation through these delivery models:

- Home visiting

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### Where is it delivered?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to its implementation in these settings:

- Children's centre or early-years setting

The programme may also be delivered in these settings:

- Home
- Children's centre or early-years setting

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### How is it targeted?

The best available evidence for this programme relates to its implementation as:

- Targeted selective
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## Where has it been implemented?

United States

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## UK provision

This programme has not been implemented in the UK.

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## UK evaluation

This programme's best evidence does not include evaluation conducted in the UK.

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## Spotlight sets

EIF does not currently include this programme within any Spotlight set.

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## About the programme

### What happens during delivery?

#### How is it delivered?

- Getting Ready is delivered by early childhood professionals who work in early childhood (infant/toddler and preschool) classrooms (it can also be delivered on a one-on-one basis via home-visitation programmes) and occurs primarily during interactions with families.
- Getting Ready is delivered over the course of two years in 12 sessions (six meaningful contacts per year in addition to incidental interactions with families).

## What happens during the intervention?

- Getting Ready provides early childhood professionals with an approach to working with families to support parent engagement. It is not a curriculum or a packaged, stand-alone programme but is a process of interacting with families that occurs during all exchanges with them, implemented in coordination with existing programmes.
- The strategies that comprise Getting Ready are intended to:
  - strengthen relationships between the parent and their child, and between the parent and care educator. The purposes of the four relationship-building strategies are to establish the parent as a warm and sensitive adult who is responsive to their child's needs, solidify the attachment between parent and child, and create meaningful connections between the parent and educator.
  - build competencies in parents and educators, enabling them to support and scaffold children's positive development and learning. The purposes of the four competency-building strategies are to bolster parents confidence regarding their parenting practices, gently guide parents in methods for scaffolding their child's learning, and ensure parents have input on how their children's learning can best be encouraged at home and other settings.
- The strategies are used in a fluid manner and are not intended to be practiced in any sequence or order but instead are responsive and flexible, and they work together to support parents and children as they prepare for lifelong learning. The Getting Ready strategies are used across various contexts where parent and child learning occurs. Unstructured contexts include any chance encounters educators may have with parents or settings that are social or informal. Structured contexts or settings are where formal educational discussions and planning occur between an educator or educator and parent.
- Collaborative planning is a formal process used in structured contexts. The process establishes the notion that parents and educators are mutually responsible for scaffolding a child's learning and development. Many important topics can be explored through a structured, collaborative process, including individual child strengths, goals shared by parents and early childhood educators, plans for helping the child realise their goals across settings and assessments about whether a child is meeting important goals. Relationship-strengthening and competency-building strategies are embedded in the collaborative planning process.

## What are the implementation requirements?

### Who can deliver it?

*Not available*

## What are the training requirements?

*Not available*

## How are the practitioners supervised?

*Not available*

## What are the systems for maintaining fidelity?

- Training manual
- Other printed material
- Face-to-face training
- Booster training
- Fidelity monitoring

## Is there a licensing requirement?

There is no licence required to run this programme.

## How does it work? (Theory of Change)

### How does it work?

- Getting Ready is based on the assumption that parental engagement and active participation in learning is important for children's early social, emotional and cognitive development.
- Parents experiencing economic and social disadvantage may have more difficulty supporting their children's early learning at home and at school.
- Getting Ready to learn focuses on parent engagement with their child and the parent-educator partnership.
  - Parent engagement efforts focus on guiding parents to engage in warm and responsive interactions, encourage their children's autonomy, and participate in children's learning.
  - Parent-educator partnership efforts focus on supporting parents and educators in individualised, collaborative interactions to jointly facilitate children's cognitive, language and social-emotional development.
- In the short-term, Getting Ready aims to improve parenting behaviours and children's early social, emotional and cognitive skills.
- In the longer-term, Getting Ready aims to improve school readiness.



## Intended outcomes

## Contact details

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<http://www.cyfs.unl.edu/research/projects-page.php?id=5ddcdd323d04cb9d68aa08c495fd47c1>

<http://www.cyfs.unl.edu/research/projects-page.php?id=f280cb9841c1eb7ef603ccdba0c99a91>

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## About the evidence

Getting Ready's most rigorous evidence comes from two cluster RCT's conducted in the USA. Both studies identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child outcomes.

A programme receives the same rating as its most robust study/studies, and so the programme receives a Level 2+ rating overall.

### Study 1

**Citation:** Sheridan et al (2010); Sheridan et al (2011); Sheridan et al (2014)

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**Design:** Cluster RCT

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**Country:** United States

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**Sample:** 29 Head Start classrooms involving 217 children

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**Timing:** Post-test

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**Child outcomes:**

- Improved social and emotional competencies
  - Improved language skills
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**Other outcomes:**

- None measured
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**Study rating:** 2+

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Sheridan, S. M., Knoche, L.L., Edwards, C.P., Bovaird, J., & Kupzyk, K. A. (2010). Parent engagement and school readiness: Effects of the Getting Ready Intervention on preschool children's social-emotional competencies and behavioural concerns. *Early Education and Development*. 21, 125-156.

Sheridan, S. M., Knoche, L. L., Kupzyk, K.A., Edwards C. P., & Marvin, C. A. (2011). A randomized trial examining the effects of parent engagement on early language and literacy: The Getting Ready Intervention. *Journal of School Psychology*, 49, 361-383.

Sheridan, S. M., Knoche, L.L., Edwards, C. P., Kupzyk, K. A., Clarke, B. L., & Moorman Kim, E. (2014). Efficacy of the Getting Ready Intervention and the role of parental depression. *Early Education and Development*, 25, 746-769.

**Available at**<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10409280902783517>

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S002244051100015X>

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10409289.2014.862146>

### **Study design and sample**

The first study is an RCT.

This study involved random assignment of Head Start classrooms to a Getting Ready programme treatment group or a business-as-usual condition group.

This study was conducted in the US, with a sample of 217 children (mean age of 43.06 months) enrolled in Head Start and their parents. Slightly under a third of the child participants were White/non-Hispanic, 25% were Hispanic/Latino, and 18% were African American/Black. The majority (98%) of the parents received some form of public aid (i.e., welfare, Medicaid, child care or housing assistance, food stamps, or WIC).

### **Measures**

Child social-emotional outcomes and behavioural concerns were measured using the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) (teacher report) and the Social Competence and Behavior Evaluation short form (SCBE-30) (teacher report). Child language use, reading, and writing were measured using the Teacher Rating of Oral Language and Literacy (TROLL) (teacher report). Child expressive communication was measured using the Preschool Language Scale-4<sup>th</sup> ed (PLS-4) (direct assessment). Child learning-related social skills (Agency/enthusiasm, persistence, activity level, positive affect in response to task, distractibility, verbalisations) were measured using observational assessment (expert observation of behaviour).

### **Findings**

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on a number of child outcomes.

This includes:

- Improved social and emotional competencies
- Improved language skills

The conclusions that can be drawn from this study are limited by methodological issues pertaining to data assessors not being blind to group assignment, hence why a higher rating is not achieved.

## Study 2

**Citation:** Sheridan et al., 2019

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**Design:** Cluster RCT

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**Country:** United States

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**Sample:** 267 families, with children between 3.25 and 4.5 years, where families are socioeconomically disadvantaged and have children who are entering preschool at risk with early signs of developmental delay.

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**Timing:** Post-test

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**Child outcomes:**

- Improved social skills
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**Other outcomes:**

- Improved student-teacher relationship Improved parent-teacher relationship
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**Study rating:** 2+

Sheridan, S. M., Knoche, L. L., Boise, C. E., Moen, A. L., Lester, H., Edwards, C. P., ... & Cheng, K. (2019). Supporting preschool children with developmental concerns: Effects of the Getting Ready intervention on school-based social competencies and relationships. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 48, 303-316.

Available at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2019.03.008>

**Study design and sample**

The second study is a cluster RCT.

This study involved random assignment of children to a Getting Ready intervention group and a standard service, care as usual, group.

This study was conducted in the United States, with a sample of children between ages 3.25 and 4.5 years (average 3.84 years). All children in the sample were from socioeconomic disadvantaged backgrounds (i.e. low family income or family receipt of public assistance) and/or had a special educational status, and the majority were White (70.5%).

Children were eligible for participation if they were identified as being at risk of developmental delay on cognitive, language or social skills outcomes on standardised assessments (DIAL-4).

**Measures**

Children's social skills and problem behaviours were measured using the Social Skills Improvement System (teacher report)

**Findings**

This study identified statistically significant positive impact on children's social skills.

The conclusions that can be drawn from this study are limited by methodological issues pertaining to non-blind data collection and a lack of clarity in terms of attrition, hence why a higher rating is not achieved.

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## Guidebook

The EIF Guidebook provides information about early intervention programmes that have at least preliminary evidence of achieving positive outcomes for children. It provides information based on EIF's assessment of the strength of evidence for a programme's effectiveness, and on detail about programmes shared with us by those who design, run and deliver them.

The Guidebook serves an important starting point for commissioners to find out more about effective early interventions, and for programme providers to find out more about what good evidence of impact looks like and how it can be captured. As just one of our key resources for commissioners and practitioners, the Guidebook is an essential part of EIF's work to support the development of and investment in effective early intervention programmes.

Our assessment of the evidence for a programme's effectiveness can inform and support certain parts of a commissioning decision, but it is not a substitute for professional judgment. Evidence about what has worked in the past offers no guarantee that an approach will work in all circumstances. Crucially, the Guidebook is not a market comparison website: ratings and other information should not be interpreted as a specific recommendation, kite mark or endorsement for any programme.

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[How to read the Guidebook](#)

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[EIF evidence standards](#)

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[About the EIF Guidebook](#)

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## EIF

The Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) is an independent charity and a member of the What Works network. We support the use of effective early intervention for children, young people and their families: identifying signals of risk, and responding with effective interventions to improve outcomes, reduce hardship and save the public money in the long term.

We work by generating evidence and knowledge of what works in our field, putting this information in the hands of commissioners, practitioners and policymakers, and supporting the adoption of the evidence in local areas and relevant sectors.

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[www.EIF.org.uk](http://www.EIF.org.uk) | [@TheEIFoundation](https://twitter.com/TheEIFoundation)

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