

State Center Awarding “Texas Readiness Certification” to 450 Pre-K Classrooms for the '07-'08 School Year

HOUSTON – (Aug. 13, 2007)—The State Center for Early Childhood Development at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston is awarding over 450 classrooms across the state with the new “Texas Readiness Certification” for the 2007-08 school year.

The “Texas Readiness Certification: Ready for School, Ready for Life” program, developed by the State Center and 20 community partnerships from across Texas, evaluates pre-school, Head Start and childcare classrooms and supports teacher training.

The way it works: pre-schools and centers apply to the state center and provide the staff with information about its classrooms, such as the learning environment and curriculum. The children in those classrooms then are followed from pre-K into kindergarten and evaluated by the state center on their early reading and social development to determine if the pre-K classroom helped prepare the student for success in elementary school.

“This certification will most benefit families. For the first time, parents will finally have something very clear to look at, to see if the pre-K they are considering will help their child be prepared for kindergarten, to help their children start school ready to learn,” said Susan Landry, Ph.D., the state center’s director and the director of the [Children’s Learning Institute](#) at the UT Health Science Center at Houston.

A crucial part of the program is the Web-based training developed for teachers. “The goal is to link the training the teacher receives to the learning experiences they provide for preschoolers – to change what they do in the classroom to make sure it is helping the child get ready for school. The right teacher, with the right curriculum, can help a child develop a foundation for not just kindergarten, but for their entire education,” said [Landry](#), who also is the University of Texas Medical School at Houston’s Michael Matthew Knight Professor of Pediatrics.

Each year, pre-school, Head Start, and childcare centers can apply to the state center for this accreditation. Likewise, every center that received it this year will have to reapply for the next school year. “Each year new preschoolers enter these classrooms. Our goal is to help provide each of them with a school ready experience,” said Landry.

This certification program was set in motion in 2005 with passage of Senate Bill 76, which approved state funding.

For more information, to apply, or to find out which classrooms are accredited with “Texas Readiness Certification,” log onto www.TexasSchoolReady.org or call **1-800-315-7204**. Classrooms given this state award will also be given stickers and plaques to display their certification.

(Reporters can get a list of cities and towns with “Texas Readiness Certification” sites by emailing Melissa.E.McDonald@utht.mc.edu or by calling the Media Hotline at 713-500-3030.)

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