



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY

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Resources

DoDEA Sure Start Program

Sure Start is an exemplary, research-based preschool program that serves four-year-old dependents of military service members and civilian equivalent and their families living in overseas locations. In addition to offering a high-quality educational program that reflects best practices in the field, Sure Start also provides health and nutrition, social services, and parent involvement components. Close collaboration between families, schools, and the installation community is valued and viewed as essential and is a required part of the program.

This multi-pronged approach to the delivery of services distinguishes Sure Start from all other DoDEA programs. At the same time, Sure Start ensures that participating children receive the same uncompromisingly excellent education that all DoDEA students are guaranteed.

Who Can Apply?

Sure Start's foremost responsibility is to eligible children who turn four by 1 September of the enrolling school year. Priority enrollment is given to the children of Servicemembers whose rank is Enlisted (E) E1 to E4, GS1 to GS4 or NAF1 or NAF 2. Any sponsor in the rank of E5 to E9, GS5-GS8, NAF 3-4, who wishes to apply for the program is eligible to do so with the understanding that first priority is given to those children whose sponsor is in the E1 to E4 rank.

Please reach out to the school to obtain the Sure Start Application and learn about the application process.

Parent Participation Requirements

Sure Start parent participation is valued and integral to the success of the program. Parents must agree to participate in their children's class as a precondition to their child's enrollment. Thirty hours per parent are required for each participating family. Both parents in two-parent families are expected to contribute their time equally. Parents who are deployed for an extended period of time are still expected to volunteer, but will have a modified schedule during the time of deployment.

Sure Start Components

Sure Start is an educational program, which offers a comprehensive approach for preschool children with the following components:

Education Component:

Thoughtful and intentional planning ensures that the program environment, curriculum, materials, routines, and activities are appropriate to the children's ages, individual needs, and cultures.

Health and Nutrition Component:

Medical, dental, and developmental screenings are provided for all enrolled children. Immediate follow-up assessment and services are provided if problems are identified. Nutritious lunches and snacks are also provided at no cost to families of enrolled Sure Start students. Enrollment in the School Meal Program is required. Click the link below to access your school's Food Services Page.

Social Services Component:

The Sure Start program establishes and maintains an outreach and recruitment process that systematically ensures enrollment of eligible children regardless of race, sex, creed, color, national origin, or disability. This component assists with improving the condition and quality of family life and makes parents aware of community services and resources, and facilitates their use.

Parent Involvement Component:

Families of all children enrolled in the program are actively involved through required participation in classroom activities, parent education meetings, conferences, and home visits.

Preschool Services for Children with Disabilities (PSCD)

Preschool Services for Children with Disabilities (PSCD) offers eligible young children with disabilities specially designed instruction, support, and services to meet their identified individualized learning needs. The purpose of special education services is to enable students to successfully develop to their fullest potential by

providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as implemented by DoD Instruction 1342.12, "[Provision of Early Intervention and Special Education Services to Eligible DoD Dependents.](#)"

Preschool Services for Children with Disabilities (PSCD) are provided for children beginning at age three who demonstrate an unexpected delay in developmental functioning when compared with the functioning of a non-disabled children of the same chronological age or who has been identified as having a specific disability. Eligibility for PSCD is determined through a comprehensive evaluation process that includes standardized evaluation instruments and is confirmed by observations and professional judgement of early intervention or related services professionals.

DoDEA does not offer programs for three-year-olds outside of PSCD. For typically developing children, DoDEA prekindergarten programs begin at age four.?

Universal Prekindergarten Program

The Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) is pleased to announce the implementation of [Universal Prekindergarten](#) in 80 locations for School Year 2024-2025. This initiative marks the first phase of a comprehensive three-phase plan to enhance early childhood education within the DoDEA school system.

For additional information please contact your school's registrar.

Contacts

[Enrollment Contacts \(Europe\)](#)

The DoDEA Regional Office Eligibility Coordinator

Registrar

[Registrar](#)

Registrar

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