



✚ **What is the Army Strong Beginnings Pre-K Program?**

The Army Strong Beginnings Pre-K is a program designed to prepare children to be successful to enter school. Curriculum focuses on the social, emotional, and physical development of children; equips them with basic academics and “Kindergarten Classroom Etiquette” skills to enhance “school readiness.”

✚ **Who is eligible for the Program?**

Children who will be entering Kindergarten the following fall (4 years old prior to 1 Sep) are eligible to attend Strong Beginnings Pre-K.

✚ **If I live off post, is my child eligible to attend the Strong Beginnings Pre-K?**

Yes, unlike DODEA Pre-K, the CYS Services Pre-K Program is open to children who are 4 years old prior to 1 September, regardless of where they live.

✚ **When is the Strong Beginnings Pre-K Program ? I need care before and after?**

POLK CDC operates from 0530-1800 Monday – Friday. The Strong Beginnings portion starts at 0830 and ends at 1130.

✚ **When does Strong Beginnings Pre-K operate?**

The Strong Beginnings Pre-K program follows the DODEA School Kindergarten calendar.

✚ **What will the Strong Beginnings Pre-K program cost?**

Fees will be based upon total family income.

✚ **Will the teachers be allowed to teach children?**

In all CYS Services Programs, staff teaches children. In the Strong Beginnings Pre-K Program, there is an emphasis on kindergarten readiness skills; therefore the teaching methods used will more often resemble those of a kindergarten classroom.

✚ **What curriculum is used and why was it chosen?**

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool is the only authorized curriculum for Strong Beginnings Pre-K supplemented by Teaching Strategies Literacy, Social Studies, and Math publications. The Creative Curriculum is the most widely used Curriculum for Pre-K Programs in the US.

✚ **What assessment system is used and why was it chosen?**

The Developmental Continuum is the only authorized assessment system used in the Strong Beginnings Pre-K Program. The Developmental Continuum was chosen because: It is part of the whole “Creative Curriculum Package” and our staff is used to using it It has a web-based application as a “Labor saving device”

Using the web-based application, it charts each child’s programs and offers individualized activities for that child or group of children needing the same skill development.

Its web-based application is used to send e-mails, pictures, and child progress reports to parents/guardians.

Additional assessment tools help determine competency in literacy and math skills and are used to supplement the Developmental Continuum. For example, the Developmental Continuum charts whether a child knows the letters of the alphabet. This is generally done (for example) by observing the child and noticing that the child has picked out the letter “B” in a word in a story. The supplemental tool is used to verify that each child can distinguish the letter “B” from all other letters by saying to the child, “Show me the letter “B”” and having the child point to an alphabet chart. Information gathered from the supplemental tools will be placed in your child’s Developmental Continuum folder.

✚ **Is there no more free choice of activities during Strong Beginnings Pre-K?**

There is still free choice; however, during free choice time in the Strong Beginnings Pre-K Program, teachers will be focusing more intently on child outcomes. This is evident in planning. For example, on Tuesday, we may focus on building math skills. So instead of just playing with blocks, we will have a teacher specifically focusing on math concepts in the block area. An example of a question posed to children could be “How many of these square blocks does it take to equal the length of that long rectangular block?”

✚ **What is the difference between Preschool and Strong Beginnings Pre-K?**

Preschool helps to develop the “whole child” from birth to age 4. Focus is on social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth of children. We nurture children and help them grow. Children are always free to explore and take risks in a safe environment. In preschool a child is encouraged to develop friendships, learn how to play with others, take turns, is introduced to math, science, reading and writing, etc. While Strong Beginnings Pre-K still does all of those wonderful things for children, there is more focus on academics skills, learning self control and following directions, learning numbers, colors, shapes and simple mathematical concepts, writing, reading. Strong Beginnings Pre-K focuses on kindergarten readiness and moving toward the idea that we must get children ready for school.

Also, as a part of the Strong Beginnings Pre-K Program, one day a week the children will have a “Jr. SKIES*Unlimited* class. SKIES*Unlimited* is an acronym for “School of Knowledge, Inspiration, Exploration, and Skills”, with the word Unlimited referring to the unlimited possibilities this program can offer Army children. Some of the classes that could be offered include: cooking, crafts, sewing, language, dance, tumbling, etc.

✚ **What’s different about the Strong Beginnings Pre-K classroom?**

Currently, all CDC facilities have multi-age modules that accommodate a wide range of children’s ages and developmental abilities. Therefore, each classroom is stocked with materials suitable for 3 – 5 year olds. From now on, the Strong Beginnings Pre-K classroom will have only equipment and materials suitable for children preparing for to kindergarten. Strong Beginnings Pre-K classrooms will look more like a school room. There will be more small tables for 4 children placed in the learning stations. Word boards, alphabets, and calendars will be on the walls (along with children’s art work which should still be a focus!)

✚ **How will we celebrate the end of the school year?**

We recognize that leaving Strong Beginnings Pre-K and going to Kindergarten is a big deal for you and your child. We will celebrate the end of Strong Beginnings Pre-K with a “Graduation” type ceremony that will be fun and meaningful for the children and parents.



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