



An Overview of the Strong Beginnings Preschool Program Spring 2026

School Year	Children	Classrooms	Counties
2025-2026	476	34	19
2026-2027	780	52	31

Michigan's Strong Beginnings pilot preschool program supports three-year-old children from low-income families and children with other risk factors. The program aims to provide high-quality early childhood education to help address gaps in school readiness and promote healthy development.

Strong Beginnings works closely with Michigan's existing **Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP)** and is integral to the **PreK for All pipeline**. This allows families to start their school experience with **positive engagement** and support from the educational community. It creates a nurturing environment that **fosters social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth**. The program follows a **play-based, developmentally appropriate curriculum** and emphasizes **family engagement**, providing families with resources and opportunities to partner with their child's school.



Small class sizes with low teacher-to-student ratios



Certified early childhood teachers building foundational social and language skills



Dedicated family liaisons supporting improved family well-being & independence



Based on current research on how young children learn best

"My child was pretty non-verbal when they started the school year and now, they are able to communicate better with us with the words they have learned. The teachers have really taken time with my child to help develop my child in so many ways."
~Strong Beginnings Parent

Economic Impact

89% of families experienced at least one of the following benefits as a result of their child's enrollment in Strong Beginnings:

- I was able to **get a job or work more** because my child was at school (60%)
- My **health improved** because my child was at school (52%)
- I was able to **attend school or get career training** when my child was at school (25%)

Instructional Quality

- My child **loves going** to this program (96%)
- My child has **developed new skills** and abilities from attending the program (97%)
- My child's classroom has **plenty of toys and learning materials** (98%)
- My child knows the **rules and routines** of the program (97%)

Family Impact

- I feel teachers have a **good sense of my child's interests** and how to work with my child (97%)
- The teachers **design activities** that expose my child to the cultures and histories we care about (98%)
- This program makes me, the caregiver, **feel supported** and welcomed (95%)
- I am **well-informed** about what my child is doing at the program (95%)

Results based on a 2023–2024 family survey conducted by Michigan State University, Office for Public Engagement and Scholarship. Percentages indicate respondents who agree or strongly agree.

WHY STRONG BEGINNINGS MATTERS

- Strong Beginnings supports positive outcomes in **language and social-emotional skills**, essential for school readiness
- Early education models like Strong Beginnings are linked to **long-term academic success**, particularly in literacy and cognitive development
- A two-year preschool sequence, such as Strong Beginnings and GSRP, is found to have **significantly more impact than one year**, especially for children with low family income

WHAT MICHIGAN NEEDS TO DO

- Establish Strong Beginnings as a **permanent program** under PreK For All
- Provide funding to increase the capacity of Strong Beginnings to serve **all eligible three-year-old children**