



Preschool Program

The Preschool Program is an inclusive educational program designed to provide a rich learning environment for all young children.

Our program offers a community of highly experienced teachers and education researchers who partner with parents and families to maximize opportunities for child development. We create individual goals for each child as we follow a well-rounded education curriculum that promotes learning across many areas. The inclusive nature of the Preschool Program challenges children to engage with the world around them, approach each other with care, and graduate well-prepared to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

Because of our high teacher-to-student-ratio, as well as our personal approach to teaching, we are just as successful in supporting children with autism as those without developmental concerns. We focus on meeting the social and emotional

needs of all children, promoting independent participation in classroom routines and activities and nurturing their emerging communication skills as they learn together.

The Preschool Program is a collaboration of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Emory University and Marcus Autism Center. We operate as both a school and a place of research on preschool education. As a result, the Preschool Program continuously creates new and better ways of supporting families and meeting the learning needs of all children.

The Preschool Program offers half-day classroom hours from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., and full-day classroom and aftercare hours from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. We operate on a year-round schedule from August to July.



Our unique approach

Our classrooms provide an inclusive educational environment where children with and without autism learn together. By enrolling in our program, you and your child will discover that all children have their own unique ways of playing, thinking, feeling, relating and learning. Children learn best when they engage with others who experience and participate in different ways, and this diversity reflects the world we live in. Our Preschool Program teachers create flexible classroom environments that accommodate and embrace each child's unique way of learning.

To better understand our Preschool Program, it helps to have a basic understanding of autism. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects a child's social skills, communication or behavior. It often means that a child's brain develops and works a little differently and can affect how that child understands and relates to others.

True to its name, autism is a spectrum. No two children with autism are exactly alike; some kids may have severe challenges while others do not. While toddlers and preschoolers with autism may face some unique challenges, overall they have more in common with their typically developing friends than not. Most differences tend to be subtle and are best understood as part of the range of personalities and learning styles in the class. All children with autism admitted to our program are ready to learn and contribute to the learning of their friends.

Is my child ready to learn in this environment?

Children are ready to learn in the Preschool Program if they:

- Pay attention to and show interest in other children.
- Have started to communicate using gestures, eye contact and short phrases.
- Have started to engage in pretend or dramatic play such as feeding a doll or dressing up.

How is the Preschool Program structured?

Children ages 2 to 5 years participate in one of three classrooms: Early Preschool, Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten. At this point, only the Early Preschool classroom (serving two- and three-year-olds) is enrolling children. The Preschool classroom (serving three- and four-year-olds) will launch in August 2018.

Our classrooms at a glance

Classrooms	When can my child start?	How old do children have to be in order to enroll in each classroom?	How many children per classroom?	How many teachers per classroom?	What is the monthly full-time tuition*
Early Preschool	Today	2 years old on September 1 or 2 years old on day of enrollment	12	3	\$1,250
Preschool	Aug. 1, 2018	3 years old on September 1	16	3	\$1,200

* Half-day enrollment is possible at a reduced rate; we grant tuition subsidies based on economic need.

Next steps

The Preschool Program is located at Marcus Autism Center, 1920 Briarcliff Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30329.

Email marcuspreschool@choa.org or call **404-785-6511** if you are interested in enrolling your child, scheduling a tour or learning more about our program. Visit marcus.org/preschool to learn more.