Pre-Kindergarten Standards: Building the Framework for Learning  
Mikki Bixler M. Ed.  
Extension Educator

For years educators have known that if children know a variety of skills BEFORE they begin kindergarten, they will have a better chance for success in school. Now each state has created guidelines that identify specific skills all preschoolers should learn so that they will be better prepared for kindergarten. Although licensed preschools and daycares will be focusing on these guidelines in their classrooms, parents can also teach or reinforce these basic concepts to their children.

What is Pre-Kindergarten? These are the years before a child enters kindergarten, specifically, ages 3-5½.

What are the Pre-K content standards and concepts?  
These are specific skills that the State of Nevada and Nevada’s teachers have identified as very important for preschoolers to know BEFORE kindergarten. These basic skills are called concepts and children need to learn them so that they can understand the more complicated parts of math, reading, science and other school subjects. All children need to know these concepts for their everyday life.

There are six different content areas:
1. math  
2. language/literacy (reading)  
3. social emotional/social studies  
4. science  
5. creative arts  
6. physical development/health

Here’s one way to look at Pre-Kindergarten concepts. Think about building a house:

You will need to have a strong frame in place before you can add the plumbing, the windows and everything else that completes the house. Think of the Pre-Kindergarten concepts as the strong frame your child needs to have in place before everything else can be added.
Examples of some Pre-K content standards for each area:

**Math**
- Count to ten
- Sort different objects by size, shape and color
- Identify day and night

**Language/Literacy (reading)**
- Use pictures to understand a story
- Identify some letters in own name
- Identify the front of a book and know how to turn the pages when reading

**Social Emotional/Social Studies**
- Demonstrate self-help skills such as: puts blocks away, pours juice, uses soap when washing hands
- Uses toys and materials with care
- Follows directions

**Science**
- Identify hot and cold
- Identify humans, animals and plants
- Ask questions about their world

**Creative Arts**
- Make a variety of sounds with their voices
- Identify color, shape, and texture through creating art
- Know the difference between pretend and real

**Physical Development/Health**
- Demonstrate turn taking and cooperation during physical activities
- Interact positively with others regardless of personal differences such as skill level, gender, race and disability

**Where to Start:**
- Contact the local Cooperative Extension office for possible classes and additional information:  [http://www.unce.unr.edu](http://www.unce.unr.edu)
- Visit your local library and meet with the Children’s Librarian for suggestions
- To get a complete copy of the Nevada Pre-Kindergarten Content Standards go to the Nevada Department of Education website at:  [http://www.doe.nv.gov/standards/standprek/prek.html](http://www.doe.nv.gov/standards/standprek/prek.html)

**References**