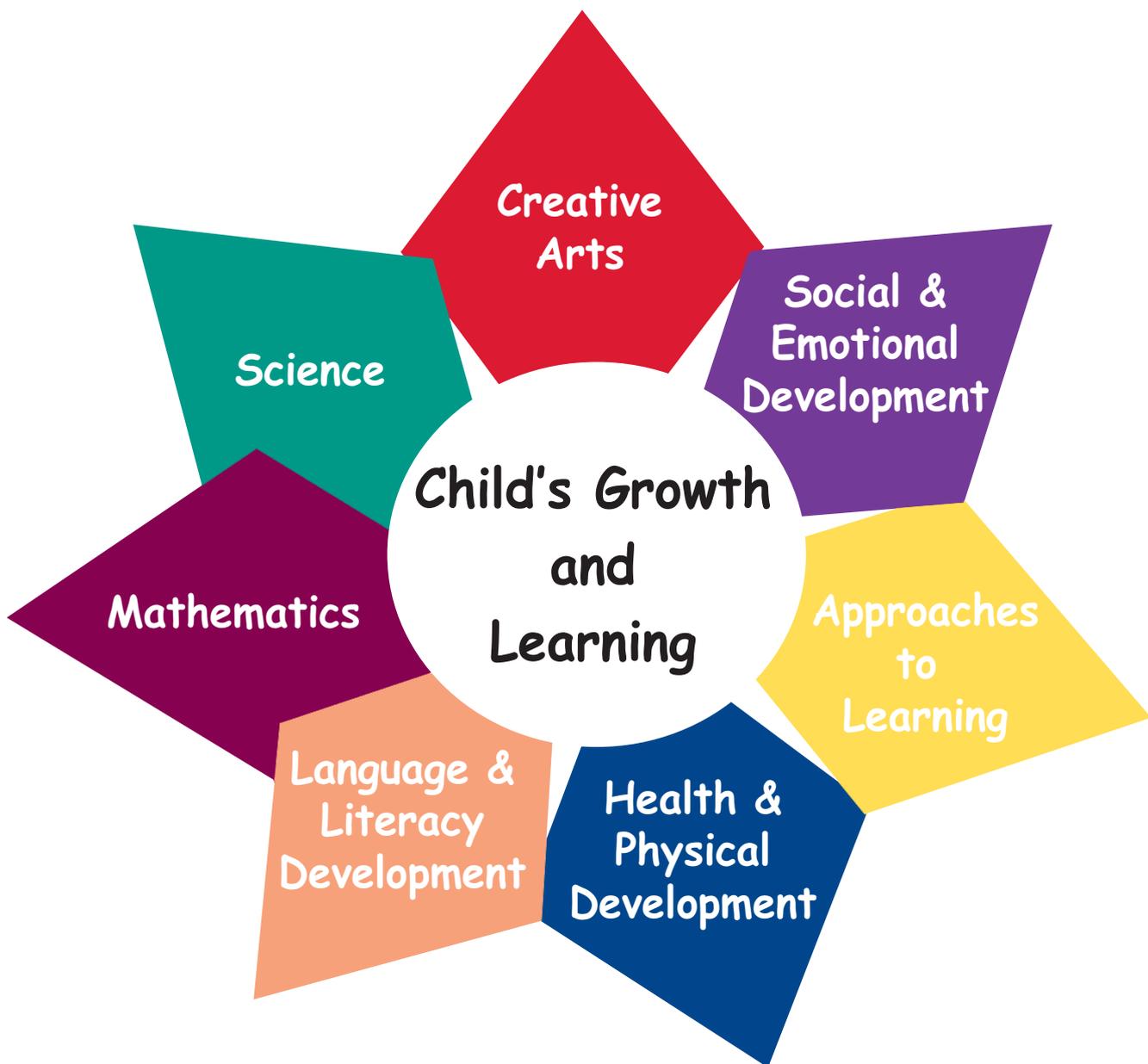


# Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



A Resource to Support Young Children's  
Development and Learning

Revised 2013



# Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



A Resource to Support Young Children's  
Development and Learning

To Nebraska's parents, caregivers, teachers, child care and early education professionals:

Nearly ten years ago, Nebraska published the first version of the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines. Since then, families, caregivers, teachers, child care and other related service professionals have used the Guidelines with many, many children in a variety of settings. In 2011, the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), the Nebraska Head Start-State Collaboration Office (HSCCO), the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and numerous community partners and families of young children began the process to thoroughly revise the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for children ages three to five. This new document is aligned with:

- 2007 National Education Goals Panel School Readiness Domains,
- 2011 Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework,
- Teaching Strategies GOLD,
- 2012 Nebraska Department of Education K-12 Standards,
- Nebraska Department of Education Rule 11 regulations,
- 2013 Nebraska Child Care Regulations.

The Guidelines have been updated with more emphasis on meeting the diverse needs of children, new formatting for easier use, current research based recommendations, and strategies to support teaching with intent throughout the day.

To access the embedded website links within this document, visit <http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/elg.html> or scan the QR code located on the back of this document.

We hope you will find this updated Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for ages three to five to be a resource you turn to again and again to assist you in helping the children in your life flourish. We encourage you to share this information with others who work to make a difference in the lives of children in Nebraska.

Respectfully,



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Nebraska Department of Education



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# Welcome to the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5

The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3-5 (hereafter referred to as the Guidelines) is a resource to provide information about young children’s learning and development. The Guidelines are intended to assist adults in planning and providing meaningful learning experiences and environments for children in their care.

## The Guidelines provide information about:

- 1) what children can typically be expected to know and do by the age of five; and
- 2) what adults can do to provide experiences and environments that support learning across the developmental and learning domains:
  - Social and Emotional Development
  - Approaches to Learning
  - Health and Physical Development
  - Language and Literacy Development
  - Mathematics
  - Science
  - Creative Arts

All of these individual learning and developmental domains are considered to be equally important and should be integrated into all activities within the daily routine. Each domain can be addressed every day in the natural environment that surrounds the child, through the materials provided for the child’s exploration, and the support that adults provide the child.

## The purpose of the Early Learning Guidelines

The Guidelines are not a curriculum. Rather, they are a framework to guide decisions about planning developmentally appropriate activities for young children and

the early childhood setting. The expectations provide a map from which adults can understand the developmental “path” that children will follow on their way to kindergarten. It is important to remember that not all children will attain all of the expectations by age five. The individual needs of each child must be met on a daily basis. Use of the Guidelines promotes continuity and consistency across all settings, and provides a foundation for success in school and in life.

## How were the Guidelines developed & revised?

The development and revision of the Guidelines was guided by the leadership of several partners:

- Nebraska Department of Education and the Early Childhood Training Center
- Nebraska Health and Human Services System
- Nebraska Head Start Association
- Nebraska Head Start-State Collaboration Office

To support the Guidelines as a tool to be used by any adult, working with any child in any environment, input from parents, higher education, center- and home-based child care providers, and other services providers was included. For a listing of contributing individuals, see pages 113-118.

## What tools were used in the development and revision of these Guidelines?

The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines are built upon several Nebraska documents, and other documents and policies that are recognized as high quality, inclusive and family-centered. For a list of resources and tools used in the original development and revision of these Guidelines, see page 103.

# Guiding Principles Supporting Children's Learning and Development

## **Children are learning every moment**

The environments we create and the interactions we provide have a direct impact on children's learning and development. This is true throughout the child's entire day including home environments, neighborhoods, and early childhood settings. Working together to provide the best possible learning opportunities is in the hands of all the adults in children's lives. Secure relationships with parents, family members, teachers, caregivers, and other children help children to feel emotionally safe and confident as learners and in their interactions with others.

Decades of child studies and more recent brain research have consistently identified key principles that influence our work with children. These principles guide adults in supporting optimal learning opportunities for all children. Listed below are some general guiding principles identified as best practice.

## **Children are active learners**

Children learn through experiences with people, objects and things in their world. Experiences through play, knowledge, curiosity and sense of wonder are foundations for children's learning.

Young children are concrete learners and need to be able to relate what they're learning to their own lives for it to make sense. They need to be able to manipulate and explore using their senses: to touch, taste, smell, hear as well as see what they're learning. This is one reason why worksheets and flashcards are not effective in teaching young children.

## **Children develop in predictable steps, but at their own pace**

There are sequences of development that all children go through which build upon previous experience and understanding, from simple to more complex, such as standing, walking, and then running. The rate of development and learning, however, varies for each child based on genetics, temperament, interests, the environment and experiences.

## **Learning is most meaningful when it is integrated across all areas of development**

Each area of learning influences other areas and cannot be taught in isolation. When reading to a child, the obvious areas of language and literacy are impacted; however, the experience of the book reading impacts the child socially and emotionally as well. Depending on the content of the book, other areas can be influenced, such as math or science. When engaging children in activities, all aspects of learning and development must be considered.

## **Development and learning are rooted in culture and supported by family**

The child's language, knowledge, traditions, and family expectations are the primary influences in development. Respect for family culture and language is essential for children to feel pride in themselves and their heritage. Learning is enriched by stable, nurturing relationships within the family and community.

# The Adult and the Learning Environment

The role of the adult is to promote and stimulate children’s development and facilitate their learning. The adult guides learning experiences using strategies that encourage children to think creatively, problem-solve, make decisions, and expand their thinking skills.

## The adult gets to know the child by:

- Building relationships with each child and their family, using warmth, sensitivity, and caring to establish and sustain a climate in which learning is joyful.
- Focusing on the ongoing learning of each individual child using developmentally appropriate assessment and evaluation procedures.
- Using the information gained through observation, assessment, and evaluation to make thoughtful and informed interventions as needed.

## The adult directs the child’s learning by:

- Using a range of teaching methods to maximize each child’s individual learning style.
- Structuring opportunities for children to learn throughout the day, in both group settings and individually.
- Making maximum use of space and integrating a variety of materials and equipment that stimulate active learning.
- Assuring that environments are predictable and promote consistent and nurturing relationships.
- Using intentional teaching strategies that embed learning into everyday activities

and making connections to previous experiences.

- Drawing upon the cultural and linguistic skills and knowledge each child brings with them.

## The adult guides the child’s learning by:

- Providing encouragement, support, guidance, and appropriate challenges to help children achieve goals.
- Creating a rich, stimulating environment which encourages interaction, exploration, and investigation by all children, and invites them to participate in planning.
- Supporting the child’s participation in learning activities by asking open-ended questions such as “I wonder what will happen...” and “How did you decide that?”
- Modeling and demonstrating enthusiasm for learning, and helping children to enjoy learning as meaningful, relevant, and personally satisfying.
- Modeling respect for people, materials and equipment in the environment.

## The adult promotes the child’s success by:

- Partnering with other adults and the children to plan, create, and sustain a safe climate in which children may work harmoniously, creatively, and productively.
- Valuing one another’s contributions as teachers, caregivers, and families by partnering in each child’s development and having on going communication.

# The Child and the Learning Environment

The learning environment includes materials, experiences, and the physical setting, and supports each child's individual development. Accommodations may need to be made to allow children with diverse abilities and backgrounds to fully participate.

It is important that the learning environment shows respect and value for the diversity and uniqueness of each child and family so that all have a sense of belonging and can learn to appreciate themselves and each other.

A learning environment that is thoughtfully designed and arranged acts as a second teacher. When children have access to the materials and tools they need within their environment, and know how to use them, they can explore with little adult assistance.

The learning environment should be extended outdoors as much as possible. To learn how to access the *Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children (Birth to Five) to Nature*, see page 13.

## The value of high quality programs

High quality programs draw upon the knowledge and experiences of the families and community to create a responsive, effective, and high quality environment for the children in their care.

Quality programs provide a challenging but achievable curriculum, with adult guidance and support, to encourage children's active engagement with materials to acquire important skills and concepts across all domains of development.

Research confirms the value of high quality early childhood programs: children in higher quality care scored higher in their ability to express and understand language, which is a strong predictor of school success (NICHD, 1999).

## The value of play in children's learning

Children learn best through play, which allows them to try out their ideas and make sense of what they are learning. It is through purposeful, adult interactive play that young children learn about themselves, others, and their world.

Play is also a primary way for young English language learners to develop language skills and for native English speakers to develop cultural competence and appreciation for their peers who are linguistically diverse (Espinosa, 2005).

Play is important for enhancing children's physical skills, and for the development of self-regulation, cognition, executive functions, language, social skills, problem solving, and creativity.

## Use of technology

The use of technology and interactive media with young children has become more popular. Adults must carefully consider how the use of technology enhances the curriculum and assure that it is used in a way that is appropriate for the age, developmental level, needs, linguistic background, and abilities of each child.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents and caregivers work together to ensure that children over two years old have no more than two total hours per day of quality screen time (television, computer, smart device).

For more information, click on this link for NAEYC's Position Statement: [Technology and Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs Serving children from Birth-Age 8.](#)

# Inclusive Learning Environments

Early childhood programs serve children from a wide variety of cultural, economic, and linguistic backgrounds. Within any of these groups, children will have a wide range of abilities, including children who have developmental delays and disabilities.

Inclusion of children with differing abilities and diverse cultures teaches all children about interdependence and acceptance of human differences. In high quality early childhood programs, inclusion of all children is an expectation. This expectation requires programs to work collaboratively with families to develop the supports and services necessary to meet the individual needs of each child.

## Children with a wide range of abilities

Learning opportunities for all children occur as part of typical everyday activities, both planned and spontaneous. Some children with delays or disabilities may need additional support to actively and meaningfully engage in activities.

Effective supports provided by adults, which sometimes require adaptations to routines or activities, are designed to allow all children to be as independent as possible. The following are examples of effective supports that can help support inclusion:

- Ensure that all areas of the environment are accessible to all children, regardless of the need for equipment or physical support.
- Provide visual supports (pictures, drawings, labels, color coding, picture schedules) to give children additional information about activities and how to participate.
- Provide opportunities for children to initiate an action or communicate a desire, give adult assistance/support as

needed, and reduce support as the child shows more independence.

- Make suggestions that give children clues or choices for next steps in an activity to promote problem solving.
- Provide opportunities for interaction with typically developing peers using appropriate supports.
- Reduce background noise, visual stimulation, and clutter as much as possible, and have quiet places available.
- Keep transitions to a minimum, providing advanced warning and flexibility to allow children to finish tasks, or offer an alternative activity.
- Add new or different activities only as needed to allow children with different abilities to participate at their level of development.



Resources that may be helpful include:

- CARA's Kit-- Creating Adaptations for Routines and Activities: Guide and CD-ROM for Planning and Implementing Adaptations and Increasing Participation in Activities and Routines: a resource, which may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center.
- Embedded Instruction-- Show Me: videos showing real examples of teachers, during a variety of activities, helping children with their learning objectives on the Head Start Center for Inclusion website, or click on link.
- Learn the Signs. Act Early: characteristics of developmental disabilities and tip sheets from the Centers for Disease Control website, or click on link.

When minor program accommodations or adaptations are not making a difference or if a child is not typically developing, early care and education programs should partner with families, to make a referral for an evaluation.

A referral for a free special education evaluation can be made by calling the local school district or by contacting the statewide Childfind hotline at 1-888-806-6287 or <http://www.childfind.ne.gov/index.html>.

Children who are determined to be eligible for special education services will have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The plan will outline the goals for the child and the supports and services necessary to meet those goals. Early educators and care providers may be invited to participate in team meetings or be asked to provide information about the child prior to a meeting. Input from all who are caring for and working with the child is valued. Adults should be prepared to share the following types of information:

- Any assessment or screening information for the child.
- What the expectations are for all children during activities within the daily routine.
- Concerns and hopes for how the child will participate in the activities within the daily routine. For example, "I am worried that she isn't talking to the other children during play time" or "I cannot get him to stay during circle time."
- Questions and need for information, strategies, and ideas about how to help the child be as independent and engaged as possible.

Remember that all children have the right to be as engaged and independent as possible within all program activities and routines. The role of the IEP team is to collaborate with the child's family and care providers to make that happen.

For more information, see the additional resources section on inclusion on page 105, and visit the Assistive Technology Partnership website, or click on link.

## High ability learners

High ability learners develop in different ways from their peers; they may display gifted characteristics in one area and not in another, making it critical for educators to provide programming that is flexible and individualized.

For more information and support click on link, or visit the National Association of Gifted Children.

The Nebraska K-12 Academic Standards can provide guidance on challenging high ability learners in specific academic areas on the Nebraska Department of Education website, or click on link.

## Children from a variety of cultures and English-language learners

For the curriculum to be developmentally appropriate, it must be individually and culturally relevant to each child. Therefore, the children, their families, and teachers/caregivers are important resources. It is important to create an environment that reflects diversity in our society, using items that represent the people and objects that accurately reflect children's languages and cultures in a respectful and authentic way.

The following are some of the ways to help children from a variety of cultures feel accepted and included. Each domain of these Guidelines offers more specific guidance as well.

The learning environment should include:

- Materials, curriculum, interactions and assessment that reflects value for children's home languages and culture in a respectful and authentic way.
- Books and images of people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and religions interacting with each other, including people of different ages, and of people with a range of different abilities and body types engaged in a variety of activities and free of stereotypes.

Adults should:

- Foster children's learning of other languages, including sign language.
- Be respectful and mindful of each child's culture and uniqueness.
- Support families to continuously share information about their children's interests and infuse the information into activities, curriculum, and assessment.
- Offer opportunities for children and families to experience their home language in written and spoken language whenever possible.

- Strive for bilingual staff to facilitate dual language instruction and family communication.
- Extend children's learning of their home language while extending their learning of English.
- Integrate linguistic and cultural diversity through stories, songs, dances, art, traditions, celebrations, food and health practices, etc.

For more information and support, click on links below, or visit these websites:

- [The National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness](#)
- [Supporting Dual Language Learners and Their Families](#)
- [Early Childhood Research Institute on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services](#)
- [Young Dual Language Learners: A Key Topic Resource List](#)



## Children with challenging behaviors

Challenging behaviors can be trying for adults and children alike. Many times, children use challenging behaviors to communicate their needs and they don't have the skills to behave any differently. Challenging behaviors can be the effect of a child's exposure to toxic stress. Adults can help children by seeking to understand the reasons for the challenging behaviors, then teach and model the pro-social skills that they want children to use.

- **Build positive teacher-child relationships.** Help children understand expectations. Listen to children and encourage them to listen to others. Acknowledge children for their accomplishments and effort. Use a pleasant, calm voice and simple language while making eye contact.
- **Promote positive peer social interactions.** Group children, who exhibit pro-social skills, with children who are learning these skills. Provide cueing (remind them to play together, share with friends). Provide additional assistance to children to ensure that peer social interactions are successful by modeling, giving physical assistance, and giving specific verbal cues ("Ask if you can have a turn next"). Give positive attention and reinforcement to children who are playing together.
- **Help children learn to manage their own behavior.** Ask questions to help the child notice his or her own behavior ("Raise your hand if you are sitting on the rug. Put your thumbs up if you worked at the sand table and swept up the sand when you were finished"). Clearly describe what you want children to do. Visually display wanted behaviors using photographs or drawings. Use checklist and charts to assist children in assessing their performance of behaviors. Provide positive attention ("Patty, you are sitting on your space and have your hands in your lap. Thank

you for sitting and waiting for your friends").

- **Adapt the environment to promote social interactions.** Limit the number of open centers to increase social interactions, but maintain enough space to avoid crowding. Keep materials interesting by rotating them.
- **Use classroom/group activities to support peer interaction.** Ask children to greet friends and invite a peer to do an activity with them. Take pictures of children demonstrating positive interactions. Label and post these pictures in the learning environment, ensuring that all children are represented. Offer toys and activities that require children to cooperate.
- **Help children make transitions between activities.** Provide cues before transitions, allowing children to finish projects ("We have 5 minutes before clean up," signal with lights or music). Individualize transition strategies using photos, directions in child's home language, individual warning to a child that soon it will be time to begin a new activity. Limit transitions between activities. Plan a gradual increase or decrease in the level of activity (start out with very short large group times and gradually lengthen them.)
- **Help children understand routines and schedules.** Follow a consistent routine. Children are less likely to engage in challenging behavior when they are aware and can anticipate changes in the routine. When planning activities, consider children's attention spans and the balance of activities (outside vs. inside, active vs. passive.) Include blocks of times where children have choices between different activities.

For more information and support click on link, or visit: [Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior.](#)

## Supporting social and emotional competence in young children using the Pyramid Model

The social and emotional well-being of all young children is essential to their optimum development and success as learners. Providers who are trained in the Pyramid Model implement strategies which help children learn how to successfully regulate and express emotions in a positive manner.

The research-based Pyramid Model has four different levels of support, which build upon each other:

### ▪ **Nurturing and responsive relationships**

This is universal support for all children. The behavioral needs of 80% of children can be met at this level. Positive, nurturing, and responsive relationships are a central component in children's social, emotional, and cognitive development. The child's adaptation to school, success at school, and the ability to function in the learning environment, are all linked to relationships with parents, teachers, and peers. Adaptation in school leads to exploration for young children, which means higher achievement, further cognitive development, and further exploration. Additionally, competent peer interactions relate to fewer problems, greater high school achievement, and peer acceptance. A child's positive interactions and relationships with teachers can function as a protective factor that buffers children from the effects of known developmental risk factors in their lives.

### ▪ **High quality environments**

High quality environments promote positive outcomes for all children. Included in the environment is the physical arrangement of space, meaningful activities that are engaging to each child, predictable schedules, and helping children understand expectations. The environment, along with curriculum, builds the framework for effective learning.

### ▪ **Targeted social emotional supports**

Specific strategies are identified to systematically support children in developing competence in emotional literacy, problem solving, impulse control, and building and maintaining friendships. These strategies are used intentionally to prevent problem behaviors and to modify or change them if they do occur. There is a need to be intentional in teaching children how to best “use” their emotions through various strategies.

### ▪ **Intensive intervention**

All children exhibit challenging behavior at some time. Children with severe and persistent challenging behavior are a small percentage. These children benefit from an *Intensive Individualized Intervention*. Using a *functional behavior assessment*, a team writes a plan for a particular child, carries it out, and continually reviews and updates the plan. Not addressing challenging behaviors in young children can increase the likelihood that their behavior will escalate as they grow older.

For more information and support, click on links below or visit these websites:

- [The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning \(CSEFEL\)](#).
- [Nebraska Early Childhood Pyramid Model for Supporting Social / Emotional Competence \(EC-PBIS\)](#).
- [UNL Extension: The Pyramid-Promoting Social/Emotional Competence](#).



*Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Nebraska's Young Children*

# Preparing for Children's Success in Kindergarten and Beyond

## Ready children

Use of the Guidelines provides children with a strong foundation for future success:

- rich experiences that are encouraging and challenging to keep them motivated to learn,
- supportive learning environments,
- positive relationships.

The joy of learning is the best attribute children can bring with them as they enter kindergarten. Adults nurture that joy by providing many different kinds of experiences for children, such as exploration, as well as one-on-one direct teaching, both individual and group activities, and through carefully planned activities and materials as well as taking advantage of spontaneous teachable moments.

### **School readiness is about more than what children know. Kindergarten teachers describe successful children as being:**

- healthy, rested, and well fed,
- able to pay attention, follow directions and communicate their thoughts and needs without being disruptive,
- curious and enthusiastic about new activities,
- confident, cooperative, and able to practice age-appropriate self control.

Children enter kindergarten with a wide variety of skills and knowledge. All areas of a child's development should be considered, not just her/his academic skills. Science has established a link between social emotional development, behavior and school success.

### **Social skills that are essential for academic success:**

- getting along with others (parents, teachers, and peers),
- following directions,
- identifying and regulating one's emotions and behavior,
- thinking of appropriate solutions to conflict,
- persisting on task,
- engaging in social conversation and cooperative play,
- correctly interpreting other's behavior and emotions,
- feeling good about oneself and others.

Executive functioning skills (working memory, inhibitory control, and cognitive or mental flexibility) predicts academic success better than IQ, socioeconomic background, or math/literacy knowledge, and the effect is cumulative.

For more information and support, click on links below, or visit these websites:

- [Nebraska Department of Education Ready for Success: What Families Want to Know about Starting Kindergarten in Nebraska.](#)
- [Center for Social Emotional Foundations of Early Learning Linking Social Development and Behavior to School Readiness.](#)
- [Harvard University Center on the Developing Child Executive Function: Skills for Life and Learning.](#)

**There are many things adults can do to help children be successful in school and in life:**

**Promote good healthy habits by making sure children:**

- Follow a routine which includes a balanced diet and plenty of activity and rest.

**Encourage social and emotional well-being by giving children chances to:**

- Take care of own needs, such as dressing and toileting.
- Play with others, learning to share and cooperate.
- Express emotions in safe ways, learning to regulate own behaviors and reactions.
- Pay attention, make choices, and follow directions and rules.

**Support language and learning by giving children chances to:**

- Be read to every day and talk about words you see.
- Practice drawing, writing, and recognizing numbers, shapes, colors, letters, sounds and their own name.
- Work on a task until it's done, with support as needed.
- Play! Children learn best when they're having fun, so use games, toys, natural events and routines to teach, rather than using flashcards and worksheets.

Play contributes to school success by helping children develop the skills necessary for the development of logic, literacy, self-regulation and social negotiation, critical thinking, and leadership. For example, pretend play encourages children to use their imagination, a skill needed to be able to understand that one thing represents something else, like a letter represents a sound.

When children play with materials, they explore cause and effect, and experiment with sorting and classifying, which are skills needed to understand math and science concepts. When children play with other children, they learn communication and social skills such as cooperation, sharing, problem solving, empathy, and emotion regulation. Research has shown that these social skills can predict school success.

For more information on how play supports school readiness, click on link or visit [Play in the Early Years: Key to School Success](#), and [Play: It's the Way Young Children Learn](#).

## Ready schools

In Nebraska, children are entitled to attend school when they reach age five on or before July 31. The wide range of abilities and experiences of children entering kindergarten creates a diversity that can be both exciting and concerning to schools who are responsible to meet the individual learning needs of all children.

Each of the Domains within the Guidelines is aligned with specific K-12 standard to show how that developmental area connects to the continuum of learning in achieving Nebraska's state standards. For example, experiences with stories, books, rhymes, music and rhythm, communication through conversations, and play in the early years are important in learning to read. Environments that provide everyday experiences for counting, comparing and manipulating objects, and finding out how things grow and how things work help children develop knowledge and skills in mathematics and science.

For more information about kindergarten that is deeply grounded in years of research, early childhood science, and best practices for young children click on this link to the Nebraska Department of Education's Position Statement: [A Kindergarten for the 21st Century](#).

## Ready families

Children benefit when family members participate in ongoing communication about what is happening in their child's early education program through parent-teacher conferences, open houses, parent-child activity times, parent education, transition-to-kindergarten activities and volunteer opportunities.

Families engaged in their children's learning, both in the home and through educational programs, have a positive impact on outcomes for their children. Research continues to demonstrate the direct connection between family engagement and children's success in school. Some of the benefits include higher academic achievement levels and healthy development of social and emotional skills.

Educational programs that partner with families have the potential to support the greatest gains for children, directly impacting school readiness. Developing respectful and responsive relationships support families in their role as their children's most important teachers and advocates.

For more information on developing effective partnerships to support children's school readiness, click on this link to the [National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement](#).



## Transition to kindergarten

Transitioning is a shared responsibility between parents, schools, and early care providers, and is key for children to be ready to be engaged in their new learning environment, which sets the stage for a lifelong love of learning.

Participating in school activities, such as “kindergarten round-up,” prior to the time their children enter kindergarten, helps families to have a sense of being part of the school community. Schools can provide additional, meaningful opportunities for families to become familiar with the school and establish connections with staff. Open communication between kindergarten teachers, preschool teachers, caregivers, and families help to establish relationships that lead to increasing opportunities to work together.

Activities to help children and families feel more comfortable and provide opportunities for the school to learn about the child, and the child to learn about the school. Schools can share expectations, routines, and daily schedules with parents and preschool providers so they can begin to practice them prior to beginning Kindergarten. Parents and preschool providers can work together to share information about where children are on their continuum of learning, and any special accommodations that have helped the child.

The Guidelines help guide best practices that support learning and development in the years prior to kindergarten, and are also supportive of best practices of kindergarten teachers in meeting the learning needs of all of the children in their learning environment.

# Using the Early Learning Guidelines

Each domain covered in the Guidelines contains information specific to the development of skills and knowledge in that area, including:

**Widely Held Expectations:** Generalizations about most children’s development and learning over time

**Learning in Action:**

- **The Child:** Examples of what the Widely Held Expectations look like
- **The Adult:** Examples of what adults could do to support children’s growth and learning
- **The Environment:** Includes considerations for the indoor and outdoor settings and materials intentionally set up (arranged) to support children’s independent learning, including physical space, furniture, surfaces, location of centers, etc.

**Strategies to Support (the domain)**

- **Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:** Ideas to support learning through every day routines, and informal “teachable moments.”
- **Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities**
- **Supporting English Language Learners**
- **Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures**

**Resources:** More information within each domain

- **Print Resources:** Books, periodicals, kits, DVDs
- **Online Resources**
- **Alignment:** Each domain is aligned with many other commonly used tools/resources

**Companion documents to these Early Learning Guidelines include:**

- Foundations for School Success: What Nebraska’s Children Need Us to Know- A companion to Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Birth to 5 (English and Spanish)
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Three to Five (English and Spanish)
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to Three (English and Spanish)
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children (Birth to Five) to Nature
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Kindergarten: Mathematics
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Kindergarten: Language & Literacy
- Early Childhood Literacy Calendar: Birth – Kindergarten (English and Spanish)

To obtain copies and other information about using these guidelines please contact the Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood at <http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/elg.html> or by calling 402-471-3184. For information on workshops and self-study modules, please contact the Nebraska Department of Education, Early Childhood Training Center at <http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/ectc.html> or by calling 402-557-6880 or 1-800-89CHILD.



# Social & Emotional Development

Self Concept SE.01

Self Control SE.02

Cooperation SE.03

Social Relationships SE.04

Knowledge of Families & Communities SE.05

**One of the primary goals of a quality early childhood program is to foster social and emotional development in young children.** By learning how to appropriately express and manage their feelings, children will learn to get along with others. This includes learning to take turns, to lead and follow, etc. Preschool children benefit from adult support and modeling to develop the ability to work through interactions and utilize appropriate problem-solving skills.

**The key to social and emotional development is strong, positive, secure relationships.** Young children need parents, extended families, teachers, caregivers and other adults who are supportive and attentive, and who provide safe and predictable environments. Such environments promote a healthy sense of self and connections with others. High quality environments provide experiences to foster independence, cooperation, and appreciation of diversity. Children who have special needs need to participate in daily routines and activities as independently as possible to develop positive self-esteem and social skills.

**Young children who can listen, pay attention, remember directions, and control their behavior will benefit more from preschool and be better prepared for kindergarten.**



# Self Concept

## (SE.01)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Child develops independence, confidence, and competence
  - Likes self and shows pride in accomplishments
  - Joins other children in various play activities
  - Shows growing independence in a range of activities, routines, and tasks
  - Chooses from a range of materials and activities within the program
- Child identifies own characteristics (name, age, gender, family)

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Is willing to try a new activity (soap painting, cooking project) and pursues it for a meaningful period of time
- Introduces self and family members to others
- Initiates interactions with others
- Selects and participates in chosen activities independently
- Points to body parts when asked
- Draws a self-portrait including unique characteristics and detail

#### The Adult:

- Plans and allows for individual learning styles (temperaments) of the children
- Allows children to experiment with their growing competence and independence
- Supports children's developing appreciation of their gender and cultural identity
- Models self confidence in interactions with children and others
- Encourages child to help another child pour and serve snacks and meals, or select partner for an activity

#### The Environment Includes:

- Materials that encourage children's interaction, involvement, exploration and experimentation (mirrors, clay, paint, paper)
- Materials for children to learn about their own culture and the culture of others (music, family photos, books, posters, dramatic play materials)
- Displays that celebrate all children and all families, including people from diverse backgrounds other than the children and community

## Strategies to Support Self Concept

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Whenever possible, provide enough of the same type of materials so children are not preoccupied with having access to them. This allows them to focus on working with the material while learning independence and confidence.
- Provide opportunities for children to be leaders; for example, ask them to suggest movements at group time or ways to transition from one activity to another.
- Encourage children in what they are doing by using art materials the same way they do. If the child is drawing circles, get another piece of paper and draw circles too. By imitating, you are telling the child that you accept and value that they child is doing. This imitation often prompts conversation.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Promote use of gestures, simple signs, pictures, and technology for children who are not yet speaking to allow expression of name, family members, gender, etc.
- Use visual schedules to allow children to predict what happens next.
- Provide materials that allow children who have special needs to participate independently such as large-handled or differently-sized scissors or pencils.
- Divide skills and behaviors into smaller steps.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Adults learn how to pronounce and write each child’s name correctly.
- When describing the home languages and communication styles of families and children whose home language is other than English, avoid negative words.
- Display pictures with words in children’s home language.
- Provide opportunities and encouragement to develop and maintain the home language while learning English.
- Work with interpreters, cultural mediators and/or other community members if staff does not speak the children’s home language.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Provide a variety of books representing diverse cultures, and a variety of dolls representing multiple ethnicities.
- Depictions and representations of diverse ethnicities should be authentic, and not, for example, just a brown-colored cartoon character with Caucasian features.
- Create an environment in which children encounter objects, pictures, and people that they can identify with, including non-traditional families.
- Avoid stereotypic or outdated depictions of ethnic groups. For example, people wearing only traditional clothing (Native American Indian in a headdress), or directing children to “sit Indian-style.”
- Provide a variety of materials that portray men and women of all ages and different ethnic groups engaged in jobs that are familiar to most children in the community.

# Self Control

(SE.02)

## Widely Held Expectations



- Child expresses feelings and shows concern for others
  - Shows awareness and responds appropriately to the feelings of others
  - Calms self after excitement, expresses strong emotions constructively and learns to control aggression and impulses
  - Manages fears by expressing concerns and accepting support from adults
- Child follows rules, routines, and directions
  - Attempts to solve problems with other children independently, by negotiation or other socially acceptable means
  - Participates in daily routines without being asked
  - Builds awareness and ability to follow basic health and safety rules
- Child transitions between tasks with minimal direction from adults

## Learning in Action: Examples

### The Child:

- Follows simple program rules with few reminders
- Moves from free play to clean up with ease and purpose
- Uses words and other means of communication to describe feelings (excitement, happiness, sadness, and fear)
- Learns coping and self-regulation skills to manage disruptive, aggressive, angry, defiant and impulsive behaviors

### The Adult:

- Models and helps children recognize feelings and find appropriate ways to express them
- Maintains a relatively stable schedule or sequence of activities during the day; talks about what is going to happen, prepares children for changes and prepares for smooth transitions between activities
- Establishes trusting, caring relationships with each child
- Provides words, and positive, consistent and fair responses to guide children's self-control
- Helps children set goals and develop follow through with plans
- Helps children understand and appreciate individual personalities
- Promotes a feeling of community by involving children in developing classroom/group rules
- Looks for what is motivating the child's behaviors that interferes with learning (physical or medical needs; attention-getting; avoidance of task; or sensory issue)

### The Environment Includes:

- A posted daily schedule, including pictures of activities, which provides a variety of active and quiet times, group activities and alone times, and lets children know what is available and what comes next
- Clear program rules that provide supportive guidance for development of self-control, such as 1)Be Safe, 2)Be Respectful and, 3)Be Responsible
- Adequate amount of accessible materials with supportive encouragement for turn-taking
- Visual representations(social cue cards, posters and stories) to support social strategies

## Strategies to Support Self Control

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Provide clear behavioral expectations and use effective methods to prevent and redirect misbehavior. Emphasize problem solving rather than blame or punishment.
- Take a photo of each child and cut it out like a paper doll. Attach the photo to craft stick. Children put their stick in the labeled container that demonstrates how they feel. Get free downloadable patterns for “emotion faces” and other activity ideas for teaching social emotional skills from the [Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning \(CSEFEL\)](#).
- Teach children that there are multiple ways to solve problems, and how to respond to different situations. Download the free “Scripted Stories for Social Situations” and “Solution Kit Cards” from the [Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning \(CSEFEL\)](#), post or laminate them, punch one corner and attach them together with a ring. When children have a problem, help them find the best solution that will work for them.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Support self-regulation through “plan/do” or “first/then” activities, using picture schedules when appropriate (“First we wash our hands, then we eat breakfast”).
- Provide alternative activities for transitions and wait time.
- Provide photos or videos to demonstrate how each step of an activity/task is completed.
- Facilitate turn taking through modeling, prompting, and coaching peers.
- Provide choices so children make decisions and feel more control over their environment.
- Communicate with parents for their ideas about what works best with their child.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Explain rules and social strategies; teach feeling words in both the home language and English with the help of an interpreter.
- Display pictures with words in children’s home language.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Include a variety of cultures and physical characteristics in visual representations.
- Lead discussions of similarities and differences among different cultures to help children understand and appreciate diversity and to develop of sense of community. For example, everyone experiences the same emotions but they may be expressed differently.
- Consult with families about cultural norms and behavior expectations.

# Cooperation

## (SE.03)



### Widely Held Expectations

- Child increases ability to sustain relationships
  - Uses compromise and conflict resolution skills
  - Plays actively with other children
  - Attempts to solve problems with other children independently, by negotiation, or other socially acceptable means
  - Uses language to engage others in meaningful conversation
  - Recognizes how actions affects others and accepts consequences for own actions

### Learning in Action: Examples

#### The Child:

- Works on projects with other children (shares labor, follows rules)
- Waits to take a turn in activity
- Plays side by side with other children
- Works cooperatively with another child who is painting on the same side of the easel
- Sits next to a new child and helps the child with snack routine
- Turns pages of book while adult reads/tells the story

#### The Adult:

- Provides materials that encourage interactive play with others
- Encourages children to rely on each other
- Provides opportunities for children to work in small groups in which each child has a specific responsibility
- Provides peer mentors to learn cooperation skills
- Models cooperation by asking, “Can I have that when you are done?”

#### The Environment Includes:

- Picture instructions demonstrating appropriate behaviors during routine times
- Adequate amounts of materials and equipment for children to take turns in conversations with peers and group discussion
- Time and space for group project work (building a block tower, painting a large box, planting a garden,) as well as quiet, private time to work alone
- Materials such as trays, placemats, or rugs to allow children to define their space
- Open-ended toys such as blocks and doll houses that create opportunities for turn taking and encourage cooperation and problem solving
- Visual cues for social strategies (conflict resolution steps and emotions chart)

## Strategies to Support Cooperation

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Plan opportunities for children to interact with one another and show concern if one of their peers is upset. Teach children to respect each other, cooperate, and share materials.
- Anticipate problems and plan so you can predict and support all children. Say, “I know everyone wants a turn when we play our game, so we are going to draw names for whose turn it is. That way everyone will get a turn,” or, “This can be hard when you are first learning. No worries, I will be here to help if you need it.” Adults help resolve problems effectively and in a timely manner.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Use gestures, simple signs, pictures, and technology for children who cannot yet speak, and facilitate/support use with all children to communicate with each other.
- Facilitate turn taking through modeling, prompting, and coaching peers to recognize the “turns” of children who may not be speaking.
- Use existing daily routines to provide times for natural social interactions with others.
- Include multisensory supports, sign language, technology, Braille dots, and other adaptations to allow access for all children.
- Provide visual schedules and supports (cues and prompts) for following directions.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Provide and teach language for cooperation and social interactions in both the home language and English if possible.
- Provide and teach language to engage others in meaningful conversation. For example, if a child initiates a conversation in the home language, supply the language in English through an interpreter if possible.
- Use pictures and actions to teach the language needed for conflict resolution through an interpreter if possible.
- Use first/then picture boards to help children transition between activities more smoothly.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Provide materials from a variety of cultures for cooperative play such as cooking and eating utensils, play food, dress up clothing, jewelry, scarves, multiethnic books, dolls and puppets, musical instruments, and baskets made of different materials in all areas of the learning environment.
- Label cubbies so newcomers know where their belongings go.
- Introduce new children to all others and help them make connections.

# Social Relationships

## (SE.04)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Develops secure relationships with adults and other children
- Child interacts empathetically and cooperatively with adults and peers
  - Receives social support and shows loyalty to a friend
  - Solves problems with other children independently
  - Shows awareness of and responds to the feelings of others
  - Knows how to join a group of playing children
- Adapts to new environments with appropriate emotions and behaviors

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Uses words to express anger, such as “I don’t like it when you push me!” or “That makes me mad!”
- Responds to adults’ questions
- Notices who is absent from circle time and asks about it, showing concern for others
- Shares by taking turns with materials and toys with other children
- Develops close friendships with one or two children as well as plays with many children
- Initiates conversations with adults and other children
- Accepts and requests guidance from adults

#### The Adult:

- Provides opportunities for children to develop an awareness of feelings, ideas, and actions of others, such as “Susie looks really happy today!”
- Provides opportunities for children to practice communicating with others (signing, cues, listening and talking)
- Supports children to develop relationships with peers and adults
- Explains the power of words, that some words can hurt or can have both positive and negative meanings depending on how they are used
- Carefully observe child-to-child and child-to-adult interactions and provide opportunities that will promote positive relationships

#### The Environment Includes:

- Individual opportunities to discuss appropriate behavior in real situations, as they occur
- Constructive means of working through frustration so it doesn’t interfere with relationships

## Strategies to Support Social Relationships

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Ensure you are in close proximity to children. Smile, laugh, and show enthusiasm with children, provide physical contact, give verbal support (“You are working so hard, I know you are going to be able to figure this out!”) and positive expectations. Provide assistance and attention to children who need extra support.
- Make scripted stories with the child’s photos. Scripted stories for social situations help children understand social interactions, situations, expectations, social cues, unfamiliar activities, and/or social rules. See more information and examples you can download from the [Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning \(CSEFEL\)](#).
- Explain the reasons for your actions and decisions that involve moral matters such as fairness, “I’m making sure everyone has one before giving out seconds because it’s not fair if someone gets two before someone none.”

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Provide adaptations to support self-regulation in children; include sensory fidgets, picture charts, and individually modified items to aid in participation.
- Support interactions with other children by using gestures, simple signs, pictures, and technology; children who cannot yet speak need ways to make their wants and needs known, and exchange information with others.
- Use existing daily routines to provide times for natural social interactions with others.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Pair up children who speak languages other than English with English-speaking children to help ease transitions and to help English speaking children learn new words in another language.
- Encourage children who speak the same language to play and work together to help each other negotiate meaning.
- Provide a quiet area in the learning environment where children can relax and take a break from the pressure of learning a new language.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures

- Be aware of gestures, touch, and other social rules of the cultures of the children. For example, a pat on the head is not acceptable in some Asian and East African cultures; snapping fingers is used for animals in some Hispanic cultures and is insulting to use with people.
- Learn from the families what is, and what is not, acceptable in their culture to help children build relationships with those who are similar and different from them.

# Knowledge of Families & Communities (SE.05)

## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child understands and respects similarities and differences among adults and children in their program, home, and community
  - Begins to understand various family roles, jobs, and rules
- Child expresses some understanding of familiar locations in community such as where people live, and where stores, parks, and restaurants are located
- Child uses familiar words to identify family members and workers in their community
- Child understands that events happened in the past and how these events relate to, and can change self, family and community
- Child understands the reason for rules in the home, classroom, and laws in the community

## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Reads/looks at books and writes/dictates/shares or dramatizes stories about families/events
- Participates in activities to help others in the group or community
- Sees self as a family member and as a boy or girl in the family
- Recognizes familiar places in their environment (stores, parks, restaurants, roads, buildings, trees, gardens, bodies of water and land formations)
- Recognizes a variety of jobs and the work associated with them
- May recognize other children's family members: who they are, where they work
- Differentiates between the past, present and future

### The Adult:

- Helps children describe and appreciate their own characteristics and those of others
- Invites leaders and workers in the community to come to the program
- Takes group on field trips to various places in the community
- Invites families to share their uniqueness (traditions, holidays, food, games, interests, and hobbies)
- Helps children understand how people live and what they do changes over time

### The Environment Includes:

- Props and materials for children to explore a wide variety of roles and career possibilities
- Props, materials, and displays that depict the community, all types of families, and cultures

## Strategies to Support Knowledge of Families & Communities

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Take photos of familiar businesses in your community. Attach them to wood blocks so children can construct your community while working with blocks.
- Display photos of each child's home and family members, including pets.
- Invite parents to share their job roles by showing photos of where they work, work clothing they wear and have them explain why their job is important to the community.
- Greet all family members by name. You are not only demonstrating to children important social skills, but you are also showing that you respect and value the child's loved ones.
- Provide non-stereotyped visual examples, and props to encourage children to role-play different occupations.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Support communication for children who cannot yet speak by using pre-recorded messages on voice output devices, or pictures/photos to tell about their families.
- Provide technology adaptations to support children, such as picture communication boards of family members.
- Communicate with parents for their ideas about what works best with their child; encourage parents to provide written information or materials from home that the child can show.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Include materials and visuals that accurately reflect the cultures and languages of children and families, such as books that include authentic photographs, illustrations that accurately reflect the cultures of the children.
- Learn how to pronounce and write each child's name correctly.
- Invite parents or other members of the language minority community to school to share their languages with the children.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Invite family or community members to share and teach children about the stories from their culture, traditions, and music, and tell why they are valued (children may learn to make tortillas, make paper or bread dough flowers, weaving, paper maché, pottery, painting, embroidery or gardening).
- Help children develop and preserve pride in their heritage, language, and culture.
- Embed diverse cultures and languages in the environment and the curriculum: materials, teaching strategies, projects, spoken and written language, the ways families and community are involved.
- Provide a variety of materials that portray men and women of all ages and different ethnic groups engaged in jobs that are familiar to most children in the community.

## Print Resources

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*50 Strategies for Communicating and Working with Diverse Families* (2nd ed.), Mena J. Gonzalez (2010).

*Anti-bias Education for Young Children and Ourselves*, L.D. Sparks & J.O. Edwards National Association for the Education of Young Children (2010).

*Behavior: A Beginnings Workshop Book*, Bonnie Neugebauer (editor) (2005).

*Beyond Behavior Management: The Six Life Skills Children Need to Thrive in Today's World*, Jenna Bilmes (2004).

*Caring Classrooms/Intelligent Schools: The Social Emotional Education of Young Children*, Jonathan Cohen (2001).

*Challenging Behavior*, Holly M. Bishop and Douglas S. Baird (2007).

*Challenging Behavior in Young Children: Understanding, Preventing, and Responding Effectively* (3rd ed.), by Barbara Kaiser and Judy Sklar Raminsky (2011).

*Child, Family and Community: Family Centered Early Care and Education* (5th ed.), Mena J. Gonzalez (2009).

*Child With Challenging Behaviors: Strategies for Reflective Thinking*, Linda and Tom Brault (2005).

*Don't Expel That Child! Addressing Challenging Behavior*, Linda Crisalli (2006).

*Dual Language Learners with Challenging Behavior*, Karen Nermeth and Pamela Brillante. NAEYC Young Children (July 2011) <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/Full%20DLL%20collection%20%20-%20interactive.pdf>.

*Easy to Love, Difficult to Discipline: The 7 Basic Skills for Turning Conflict into Cooperation*, Becky A. Bailey (2000).

*Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, (10<sup>th</sup> ed.), Daniel Goleman (2006).

*Extending the Dance in Infant and Toddler Caregiving: Enhancing Attachment and Relationships*, Helen Raikes (2009).

*Guiding Behavior in Young Children: Expert Approaches for Caregivers & Parents DVD*, Learning Seed (2011).

*Guiding Children's Behavior: Developmental Discipline in the Classroom*, Eileen Flicker (2006).

*Highly Successful Strategies to Guide Young Children's Behavior DVD*, Educational Activities, Inc. (2011).

*Let's Be Friends: Peer Competence and Social Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs*, Kristen Mary Kemple (2004).

*Making It Better: Activities for Children Living in a Stressful World*, Barbara Oehlberg (2002).

- Managing Everyday Challenges Through Positive Guidance DVD, Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices*, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2011).
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children to Nature* (2008), [http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature\\_education.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature_education.pdf).
- Pathways to Competence: Encouraging Healthy Social and Emotional Development in Young Children*, Sarah Landy (2009).
- Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture in Early Childhood Programs*, S. York (2005).
- Second Step: Social-Emotional Skills for Early Learning*: self-regulation and executive-function skills that help children learn and manage their feelings, make friends, and solve problems (2011) <http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step/early-learning.aspx>.
- Seven Skills for School Success: Activities to Develop Social and Emotional Intelligence in Young Children*, Pam Schiller (2009).
- Socially Strong, Emotionally Secure: 50 Activities to Promote Resilience in Young Children*, Bruce Nefertiti (2011).
- Teaching Children to Care: An Empathy Curriculum for Preschoolers*, Nancy Mullin-Rindler and Maureen Crowley (2002).
- The Emotional Development of Young Children: Building an Emotion-Centered Curriculum*, Marilou Hyson (2004).
- The Kindness Curriculum: Stop Bullying Before it Starts* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Judith Ann Rice (2013).
- The Power of Guidance: Teaching Social-Emotional Skills in Early Childhood Classrooms*, Dan Gartrell (2003).
- Use Your Words: How Teacher Talk Helps Children Learn*, Carol Garhart Mooney (2005).
- You Can't Come to My Birthday Party: Conflict Resolution with Young Children*, Betsy Evans (2002).
- You, Me, Us: Social-Emotional Learning in Preschool*, Ann Epstein (2009).

These resources, and many others, may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center by visiting <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/mediactr.html> or by calling 1-402-557-6885 or 1-800-89CHILD.

## Online Resources

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Annotated Bibliographies (click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center):

[Early Childhood Mental Health](#), updated on 10/4/11

[Guidance of Young Children](#), updated on 3/5/12

Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior

<http://www.challengingbehavior.org>.

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning- Book Nook: guides created for teachers/caregivers and parents to provide hands-on ways to embed social emotional skill building activities into everyday routines

<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#list>.

Conscious Discipline, Dr Becky Bailey <http://consciousdiscipline.com>.

Encouraging social and emotional development at home and at preschool

<http://www.getreadytoread.org/early-learning-childhood-basics/early-childhood/understanding-social-and-emotional-development-in-preschoolers>.

*Social and Emotional Development in Young Children*: How parents and providers can support social skills

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Social\\_Emotional\\_Development\\_in\\_Young\\_Children\\_Guide\\_88553\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Social_Emotional_Development_in_Young_Children_Guide_88553_7.pdf).

Developing Self-Regulation in Young Children:

<http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/developing-self-regulation> ;

<http://www.education.com/reference/article/development-self-regulation> ;

<http://www.pbs.org/wholechild/parents/index.html>.

Executive Function: Skills for Life & Learning (Video & info sheet):

[http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/inbrief\\_series/inbrief\\_executive\\_function/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/inbrief_series/inbrief_executive_function/).

Executive Functioning Skill Development and Support- videos of children at play and suggestions for skill development

[http://www.deltraining.com/courses/Executive\\_Function/content-frame.htm](http://www.deltraining.com/courses/Executive_Function/content-frame.htm).

Understanding Child Traumatic Stress, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network

<http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/parents-caregivers/understanding-child-traumatic-stress>.

UNL Extension: The Pyramid Model- Promoting Social/Emotional Competence: Resources for Early Childhood Professionals and for Families

<http://liferaydemo.unl.edu/web/child/teachingpyramidresources>.

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Standards	NE Rule II Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Standards
Social & Emotional Development	Social Emotional Development: Self Concept (SE.01)	Cognitive 11a.6.	Approaches to Learning: Persistence & Attentiveness	LA 0.3.3c SS 0.1.2a	004.05A1 004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Discipline  Prohibited Language, Materials and Actions  Child Development Program
		Social Emotional 1c.6.	Social & Emotional Development: Self Concept & Self Efficacy			
		Social Emotional 2c.6.				
		Social Studies 29.				
	Social Emotional Development: Self Control (SE.02)	Social Emotional 1a.8.	Social & Emotional Development: Self Regulation	LA 0.3.1a LA 0.3.3a LA 0.4.1c SS 0.1.2b	004.05A1 004.05A 004.05D 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Discipline  Prohibited Language, Materials and Actions Child Development Program
		Social Emotional 1b.6.				
		Social Emotional 2b.6.	Social & Emotional Development: Social Relationships			
	Social Emotional Development: Cooperation (SE.03)	Social Emotional 3a.6.	Social & Emotional Development: Emotional & Behavioral Health	LA 0.3.1a LA 0.3.2a LA 0.3.3a LA 0.3.3b LA 0.3.3c SS 0.1.2a	004.05A2 004.05D 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Prohibited Language, Materials and Actions  Child Development Program
		Social Emotional 3.b.6				

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Standards	NE Rule 11 Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Standards
	Social Emotional Development: Social Relationships (S.04)	Social Emotional 2c.6				Discipline
		Social Emotional 2a.8	Social & Emotional Development: Social Relationships	LA 0.3.2a	004.05A2	Prohibited Language, Materials and Actions  Child Development Program
		Social Emotional 2b.6.		LA 0.3.3a	004.05D	
		Social Emotional 2d.6.		LA 0.3.3b	004.06C	
	Social Studies 30.	Social Studies Knowledge & Skills: Self, Family & Community	LA 0.3.3c	004.06D		
Cognition & General Knowledge	Social Emotional Development: Knowledge of Families & Communities (SE.05)		Social Studies 32.	SS 0.1.2a	004.06E	
		Social Studies 30.	Social Studies Knowledge & Skills: Self, Family & Community	SS 0.1.2b	004.05C	Not Applicable
	Social Studies 32.	SS 0.3.1f		004.06C		
	Social Studies 30.	Social Studies Knowledge & Skills: Self, Family & Community	SS 0.3.4a	004.06D		
	Social Studies 32.		SS 0.3.4b	004.06D		
	Social Studies 30.	Social Studies Knowledge & Skills: Self, Family & Community	SS 0.3.6a	004.06E		
	Social Studies 32.		SS 0.4.1d	004.06E		

Sources: Teaching Strategies, Inc.: [www.TeachingStrategies.com](http://www.TeachingStrategies.com). Revised Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS\\_Revised\\_Child\\_Outcomes\\_Framework\(rev-Sept2011\).pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework(rev-Sept2011).pdf). Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 391- Children's Services Licensing: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\\_childcare\\_childcareindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx). Nebraska K-12 Academic Standards: <http://www.education.ne.gov/academicstandards/>. Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations: <http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf>.

# Approaches to Learning

**Initiative and Curiosity AL.01**

**Reasoning and Problem Solving AL.02**

**For young children, growing and learning begins with each child's personal experiences and understanding of the relationship of self to home and family.**

Their understanding gradually expands to include the people they meet through activities such as early childhood care and education programs, their neighborhood, the community, and the larger world.

**Adults need to identify children's current knowledge and understanding of their world, and use it as a basis for making new experiences, ideas, and concepts meaningful.**

The learning experiences for young children need to focus on concepts that are related to the child's everyday life, and provide encouragement for the child to successfully try new things.

**Adults need to allow children to learn how to solve problems with their support, rather than solve their problems for them.** With just the right amount of support and information (scaffolding), adults guide children into their own discovery and sense of accomplishment. This gives them confidence as learners, and critical thinking skills to draw upon in future situations.

**When adults nurture children's natural sense of initiative, curiosity, and encourage their reasoning and problem-solving skills, they set them up for school success.**



# Initiative and Curiosity (AL.01)



## Widely Held Expectations

- Child engages in activities with imagination and creativity
- Child engages in a wide range of new and familiar learning experiences in their daily lives
  - Explores ways to use new materials
  - Carries out complex and varied sequences of activities independently
- Child increasingly uses communication to ask questions and seek answers
- Child follows through with activities with persistence and focused attention
  - Plans and carries out activities with motivation and flexibility
  - Works through frustration and challenges to complete an activity

## Learning in Action: Examples

### The Child:

- Asks adults to read stories, signs, or notes
- Participates with different art materials, dramatic play, and puzzles/toys/blocks
- Shows a willingness to listen to a new story or song
- Notices new displays and materials and discusses them with the adult
- Tries alternative methods to solve a problem and is highly involved and persistent
- Plans steps and organizes materials to create a project, such as making a car out of an empty box

### The Adult:

- Explores the outside world and engages in learning experiences along with children
- Asks open-ended questions, which requires more than a one-word response and has no one right answer, to engage children's imagination and expand children's understanding, "What do you think will happen next?"
- Asks questions and helps children find answers through active, hands-on exploration and problem solving
- Responds to children's curiosity and questions with enthusiasm and encouragement
- Provides materials for open-ended activities, manipulation and choices for explorative play
- Provides a substantial amount of time throughout the day for child-initiated activities
- Provides children with feedback and just enough guidance to support children in their attempts to use critical thinking skills and accomplish tasks
- Encourages hands-on and sensory experiences such as touching, holding, exploring, tasting, smelling and manipulating to allow for deeper understanding

### The Environment Includes:

- A safe, natural space for children to visit and explore
- Opportunities for sand and water play, clay, paints, markers, books and blocks
- Consistent and new materials for children to explore (empty boxes, various containers, recycled materials children are familiar with, etc.)
- Open-ended computer software programs/smart devices to encourage creative thinking, problem solving and extended interest in the activity

## Strategies to Support Initiative and Curiosity

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Plan and reenact favorite stories. Guide planning through questions and by writing down the children's plans and ideas. Some questions they may come up with include, "What costumes do we need? What materials do we need to make the costumes? Who will play what part? Where will we put on the play?" As children begin to prepare for their play, encourage them to reflect on their progress. "Do the costumes show the characters of the story? Did we include all the characters? Is there something missing to show the setting?"
- Encourage children's involvement and persistence by focusing on the child's effort. Say, "You really tried hard to figure this out." "Tell me about your building. How did you decide that?"
- Offer encouragement when children are frustrated by saying, "That looks hard. Keep going because I think you can do it." When children learn to persist even when working on more difficult tasks, the child will continue to try new strategies.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Adapt routine times to increase participation.
- Start with what the child can do and wants to do, to work towards independence.
- Use special or adaptive tools to increase a child's level of participation.
- Provide opportunities for natural, ongoing interactions with typically developing peers.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Use vocabulary and phrases in the child's native language when introducing new ideas/concepts.
- Use parallel talk to narrate the child's actions, "Patti, you are using the paintbrush to paint your circle red."
- Repeat new vocabulary, ideas, and instruction using simple sentences.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Use books, materials, and posters that include authentic photographs/ illustrations that accurately reflect the cultures of all children and families.
- Ask families to continuously share information about their children's interests and infuse the information into classroom/group activities and curriculum.
- Create a welcoming environment that reflects children's backgrounds. Include pictures, music, posters, toys, and books that portray children's languages and cultures in a respectful and authentic way.

# Reasoning and Problem Solving (AL.02)

## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child shows increasing ability to classify, compare and contrast objects, events and experiences (past, present, and future)
- Child recognizes cause and effect relationships
- Child tries several methods to solve a problem and is highly involved and persistent
  - Uses active exploration and trial and error to solve problems
  - Increases ability to make predictions and find more than one solution
- Child recalls and reflects on experiences and information, and interprets or draws conclusions based on the information
- Child uses drawings, movement, and objects to represent people, places, or things
- Child uses symbols/images/objects to represent something not present

## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Makes comparisons among objects that are observed
- Describes and explains reasons for classifying and sorting different items
- Asks for assistance after trying for a minute or two to put together a difficult puzzle
- Tries several methods to solve a problem before asking for assistance
- Constructs a bridge with blocks using past experiences as a guide
- Adjusts the force used to throw a ball in order to get closer to the target

### The Adult:

- Helps children identify characteristics of objects or events in their environment
- Provides opportunities to increase the child's ability to make independent choices
- Encourages and provides materials for a variety of sensory experiences
- Gives children time and encouragement to problem solve without intervening
- Listens to children's responses and explanations to understand their thought processes
- Asks "why" and "how" questions to support concept development
- Provides feedback to support expansion and/or clarification of concepts
- Connects learning to children's prior knowledge and life experiences
- Ensures the curriculum promotes diverse perspectives, values, attitudes and beliefs

### The Environment Includes:

- Opportunities to observe and make predictions about natural events (growing seeds, caring for animals, charting weather)
- A variety of tools that can be used for exploring and investigating (scales, magnifying glasses, measuring cups and spoons, wide range of items to create three-dimensional objects)

- A variety of materials to support planning, reflection and the development of thought processes (writing materials, chart/graph paper)
- A variety of materials and activities to explore cause and effect (water play, technology, wheels, ramps, pulleys, marbles, tubes)

## Strategies to Support Reasoning and Problem Solving

### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Provide a variety of balls (hard, soft, some that bounce and others that don't, different textures) and a variety of materials to maneuver the balls through, over, under and around (different sizes of tubes, planks, hard and soft surfaces, different textured surfaces) and plenty of time for children to explore freely with the materials provided.
  - Ask questions to spark children's interest, "What do we have in our basket today? What can you do with these materials?"
  - Ask questions to encourage comparisons of the materials, "Why did this ball bounce and this one didn't? Which ball do you think will bounce higher?" "When you put balls in each tube at the same time, which ball do you think will come out first?"
  - Ask children to explain their thinking so others can learn from them by asking how they arrived at a particular answer, "Why do you think this ball will bounce higher?"
- Make new learning meaningful by linking concepts and activities to previous learning, and to children's lives, "Yesterday it rained and we got wet when we went outside. In this story it is snowing. How is rain different from snow? Who has played in the snow?"

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Provide adaptations to support learning by using multisensory cues.
- Break instruction into simple steps, and demonstrate actions using simple words.
- Use verbal, visual (picture schedule/communication board) and physical cues (sign language/voice output devices) to support communication and participation.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Use vocabulary and phrases in the child's home language when introducing new ideas/ concepts and reflecting their thought processes.
- Learn how to read the meaning of body language, gestures, and facial expressions, to provide insight into what the child may be trying to communicate.
- Engage in sustained, language-rich activities with children, like a puzzle or playing with blocks, which provides opportunities to model language, and introduce vocabulary.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Use books, materials and posters that include authentic photographs/ illustrations that accurately reflect the cultures of all children and families.
- Provide opportunities for families and community members to share stories and information in their home language with teachers, staff and children.
- Develop knowledge of culturally and linguistically responsive practices.
- Ensure the environment represents diversity, supporting reflections on past experiences and allowing for opportunity to build on those experiences.

## Print Resources

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*A Mind at a Time*, Mel Levine (2002).

*Einstein Never Used Flashcards: How Our Children REALLY Learn, and Why They Need to Play More and Memorize Less*, Kathy Kirsch-Pasek and Roberta Michnick Golinkoff (2003).

*Educating Young Children: Active Learning Practices for Preschool and Child Care Programs (2nd ed.)* Mary Hohmann and David P. Weikart (2002).

*Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*, Lilian G. Katz and Sylvia C. Chard (2000).

*From Play to Practice: Connecting Teacher's Play to Children's Learning*, Marcia Nell (2012).

*Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn: Building Essential Skills in Young Children*, Mary RenckJalongo (2008).

*Making Learning Visible: Children as Individual and Group Learners*, Project Zero and Reggio Children (2001).

*Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs*, Ellen Galinsky (2010).

*Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children to Nature (2008)*,  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature\\_education.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature_education.pdf).

*Powerful Interactions: How to Connect with Children to Extend Their Learning*, Amy Laura Dombro, Judy Jablon and Charlotte Stetson (2011).

*Reconsidering Children's Early Development and Learning Toward Common Views and Vocabulary: Report to the National Education Goals Panel*, U.S. Department of Education (2001).

*What About Having All My Themes and Projects Revolve Around Holidays?*, Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum: Best Practices in Early Childhood Education, M. Kostelnik, A. Soderman, and A.P. Whiren (2010).

*Young Investigators: The Project Approach in the Early Years (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.)*, Judy Harris Helm and Lilian Katz (2011).

These resources, and many others, may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center by visiting <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/mediactr.html> or by calling 1-402-557-6885 or 1-800-89CHILD.

## Online Resources

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Executive Function: Skills for Life & Learning (Video and pdf)

[http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/inbrief\\_series/inbrief\\_executive\\_function/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/inbrief_series/inbrief_executive_function/).

Executive Functioning Skill Development & Support- videos of children at play and suggestions for skill development [http://www.deltraining.com/courses/Executive\\_Function/content-frame.htm](http://www.deltraining.com/courses/Executive_Function/content-frame.htm).

*Tools of the Mind*: a research-based early childhood program that builds strong foundations for school success by promoting intentional and self-regulated learning in preschool- and kindergarten-aged children <http://www.toolsofthemind.org/>.

Understanding Learning and Thinking in Preschoolers <http://www.getreadytoread.org/early-learning-childhood-basics/early-childhood/understanding-learning-and-thinking-in-preschoolers>.

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Standards	NE Rule 11 Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Standards
Approaches to Learning	Approaches to Learning: Initiative & Curiosity (AL.01)	Language 10a.6.	Language Development: Expressive Language	LA 0.3.1a LA 0.2.1a	004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Child Development Program  Toys, Equipment and Materials
		Cognitive 11b.6.	Approaches to Learning: Persistence & Attentiveness			
		Cognitive 11d.6.	Approaches to Learning: Initiative & Curiosity			
		Cognitive 11e.4.				
	Approaches to Learning: Reasoning & Problem Solving (AL.02)	Cognitive 11e.6.	Approaches to Learning: Persistence & Attentiveness	SC 2.1.1f SC 2.1.1b	004.05D 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	
		Cognitive 11b.6.				
		Cognitive 11c.6.	Logic & Reasoning: Reasoning & Problem Solving			
		Cognitive 12a.6.				
		Cognitive 12b.6.				
		Cognitive 13.6.				
Cognitive 14a.6.						

Sources: Teaching Strategies, Inc.: [www.TeachingStrategies.com](http://www.TeachingStrategies.com). Revised Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS\\_Revised\\_Child\\_Outcomes\\_Framework\(rev-Sept2011\).pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework(rev-Sept2011).pdf). Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 391- Children's Services Licensing: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\\_childcare\\_childcareindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx). Nebraska K-12 Academic Standards: <http://www.education.ne.gov/academicstandards/>. Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations: <http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf>.

# Health & Physical Development

Fine (Small) Motor Skills HP.01  
Gross (Large) Motor Skills HP.02  
Health Status and Practices HP.03  
Nutrition HP.04

**Activities which promote physical development along with health and safety should be integrated into all areas of learning.** Activities should be structured to encourage preschool children to explore their world, promote coordination and strength, enhance thinking skills, and develop an “I can do it” attitude in a secure environment. Adults should ensure that children’s health, physical activity, safety and nutrition needs are met, and that those activities contribute to the overall health and well-being of children. Young children need indoor and outdoor space and facilities that allow them to experience a variety of developmentally appropriate physical activities.

**The development of fine (small) motor and gross (large) motor skills, as well as self-help skills, is a critical part of the development of the preschool child.** Practicing and promoting these skills through play fosters children’s sense of achievement, reinforces positive interactions with peers, and provides the foundation for academic performance in such areas as writing, reading, behavior, and school attendance.

**Young children who are healthy and safe are more prepared for school.** Health and school readiness begin long before a child enters a kindergarten classroom. “Striking disparities in what children know and can do are evident well before they enter kindergarten. These differences are strongly associated with social and economic circumstances and they are predictive of subsequent academic performance (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000).”

**Rising childhood obesity in America is a national crisis.** Childhood obesity is linked with numerous negative effects that can follow them throughout their lifetime, including greater risk for other health problems such as asthma, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure. Lack of physical activity and poor nutrition are significant contributors to childhood obesity. Caring adults can build awareness and teach the decision-making skills needed to identify healthy diet and activity options. Young children adopt healthy habits more easily and are able to apply these habits over a longer period of time than older children. Early intervention is key.



# Fine (Small) Motor Skills

## (HP.01)



### Widely Held Expectations

- Child uses finger and hand control to operate and use small objects to demonstrate fine motor coordination
  - Uses eye-hand coordination to perform a variety of tasks
  - Develops fine motor skills through participation in activities
  - Uses strength and control to perform simple tasks
- Child explores writing, drawing and painting materials

### Learning in Action: Examples

#### The Child:

- Participates in activities which require the use of small muscles (buttoning, squeezing, writing, drawing, cutting, etc.)
- Handles small objects with growing skill (stringing small beads, pegboard, etc.)
- Pulls caps off markers and puts them back on firmly, easily uses scissors, pencils, etc.
- Puts small building blocks together and pulls them apart with relative ease
- Opens/closes lids on containers, pours from a pitcher

#### The Adult:

- Provides adequate time, materials, and adaptations for fine (small) motor skills (drawing, handwriting development, use of computer keyboard/mouse, musical instruments, and any appropriate adaptable devices, etc.)
- Provides relevant and challenging activities to help children build more advanced fine motor skills according to each child's developmental skills (materials of varying sizes and types to support the stages of writing from scribbles to symbols to letters)
- Provides child size tools whenever possible (scissors, silverware, pitchers)
- Scaffolds activities, such as, children use play dough or modeling clay to build up fine motor skills for holding a paint brush or adapted pencil grip for writing

#### The Environment Includes:

- Tools, workbench, clay, toys, puzzles, blocks, beads, keyboards, touch screens, switches
- Variety of materials for writing, drawing, and creating 3-D objects
- Seating options with tables at tummy level and feet on the floor
- Trays and containers for spatial awareness while doing activities

## Strategies to Support Small (Fine) Motor Skills

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Play “Toss a Bean Bag” to a friend. When finished with the activity have each child throw their bean bag into a basket. This will help so not everyone is transitioning at one time and will keep them busy while waiting for their turn to go.
- Tape a piece of construction paper so it hangs off the edge of a child-size table. Have the child sit on the floor and cut “up” the paper. The child has to hold his scissors with the thumb up while being able to practice cutting without having to hold the paper.
- Have children use their finger muscles to squeeze tweezers/chopsticks to pick up pom-poms and place them in an ice cube tray.
- Weave twigs or yarn through a fence outdoors.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Use verbal, visual, and physical cues to help children know what to do and encourage active involvement in routines.
- Support participation by adapting materials and activities to meet the individual needs of each child, (paper/outlines with raised color lines, adaptive rubber stamps, scissors with hand over hand or squeeze function, tracing templates, sand paper under drawing paper, slant boards with clips to hold paper, easels, dressing aids such as zipper pulls, Velcro closures and elastic shoelaces).
- Start with what children can and want to do to avoid feeling discouraged, and to work toward independence.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Encourage children to model the language, actions, and help each other with materials and equipment, and respond positively to their attempts to communicate.
- Work with interpreters, cultural mediators and/or other community members if staff does not speak the children’s home language.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Be aware of gestures, touch and other social rules of the cultures of the children. For example, a pat on the head is not acceptable in some Asian cultures, snapping fingers is used for animals in some Hispanic cultures and is insulting to use with people.
- Provide materials from a variety of cultures such as cooking and eating utensils, play food, dress up clothing, jewelry, scarves, multiethnic dolls, puppets, and musical instruments.
- Involve family members to encourage the development of physical skills. View video clip, “[Jenni’s Story](#)” from Results Matter website for an example.
- Invite family or community members to share and teach children about the stories from their cultures, traditions, and music, and tell why they are valued. For example, children may learn to make tortillas or paper maché, weave, pottery, painting, embroidery or gardening.

# Gross (Large) Motor Skills

## (HP.02)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Child develops gross motor skills:
  - Coordinates both hands to manipulate large objects
  - Continues to develop body flexibility and coordination
- Child uses indoor and outdoor gross motor equipment safely and appropriately
- Child develops coordination, balance, spatial awareness and strength through gross motor activities

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Engages in daily structured and unstructured physical activities, such as marching, hopping, running, dancing, pulling wagons, pushing boxes, rolling, propelling or mobility devices
- Engages in complex movements, such as, balancing, climbing, going up and down steps with alternating feet, riding a tricycle, skipping, throwing, catching, bouncing and kicking a ball
- Begins to use vocabulary associated with movement and body parts, such as, eyes, arms, catch, climb, pull

#### The Adult:

- Acknowledges and supports children's natural tendencies to move and be active throughout the day (avoid using physical activity as a reward or punishment)
- Provides adequate time (1-2 hours throughout the day) for children to practice, explore, and expand their motor skills
- Supports variations in gross (large) motor development, indoors and outdoors
- Plans for outdoor activities on a daily basis

#### The Environment Includes:

- Equipment and materials to encourage hopping, running, jumping, dancing, climbing and other gross (large) motor skills
- A variety of safe and accessible outdoor equipment (climbing apparatus, swings, tunnels, slides, tricycles, wagons, etc.)
- Open space for movement and exploration, both indoors and outdoors, that meets safety standards, with areas designated for riding toys and obstacle courses

## Strategies to Support Gross (Large) Motor Skills

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- When playing games like Duck-Duck-Goose, instead of children selecting who they will touch, have them draw a craft stick with a friend's name on it. This encourages gross motor activity, reading, and ensuring everyone has a turn!
- Ask children to move like their favorite animals when transitioning children to another area.
- When children cannot go outside to play, set up an obstacle course where children walk around, skip, climb over, and under, etc.
- Challenge children to extend and vary their skills. "Try to throw the ball farther," or "I wonder if you can kick it a different way."
- Ensure the learning environment is spacious enough to accommodate children in wheelchairs and/or several children. All children require a lot of space to move and explore.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Adapt the environment and materials/equipment, both indoors and out, to support participation, (enclosed swings, flat surfaces and wide aisles for wheelchairs, ramps between play areas, switch-operated riding toys, mat, lap weights, cylindrical pillows, wedges, and non-slip materials used to facilitate positioning; textured balls of different sizes with bells or beeper or glitter for hearing- or visual-impaired children).
- Provide physical guidance/support for children having difficulty with motor tasks. For an example of how to use playground equipment to increase muscle strength, view "[Jacob's Story](#)" from Results Matter website.
- Include picture schedules and communication boards for individual activities, and assistance from other children as needed.
- Place equipment at various levels to provide access to children with limited motor skills.
- Orient a child with special needs to play areas and objects like steps, curbs, and uneven surfaces before use.
- Use tape on floor to define areas and highlight path to play areas.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Break process down into simple steps, demonstrate actions by modeling, and use labels and pictures.
- Teach movement words in both the home language and English with the help of interpretive resources.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Include a variety of cultures and physical characteristics in visual representations.
- Invite family and community members to share and teach children about their traditions, songs, music, musical instruments, dances, or games.

# Health and Safety Practices (HP.03)



## Widely Held Expectations

- Child develops an awareness of health, nutrition, physical activity, and safety
  - Shows growing independence in hygiene, nutrition, and personal care when eating, dressing, washing hands, brushing teeth, and toileting
  - Develops knowledge and skills about what to do in case of injury or emergency
  - Identifies potentially harmful objects, substances, or behaviors, knows to leave them alone and tell an adult
- Child develops an understanding of the need for daily physical activity and rest

## Learning in Action

### The Child:

- Participates actively in games, indoor/outdoor play, and other forms of physical activity that enhance overall health and wellness
- Follows program safety rules with few reminders and recognizes signs of danger
- Uses good hand washing skills (after toileting, eating, wiping nose, handling animals)
- Recognizes the importance of doctor and dentist visits as a positive experience

### The Adult:

- Provides time and safe space for daily physical activity and sufficient rest
- Provides instruction and explanation (using simple directions) for basic health and safety rules
- Models health and safety practices during regular activities including meals/snacks/dental care
- Provides opportunities to practice necessary emergency drills (fire, tornado, emergency)
- Provides health education for children and families to be aware of the implications of childhood obesity, environmental toxins, such as lead, and preventative health care (regular doctor and dentist visits)
- Supports child in obtaining regularly scheduled preventative doctor and dental visits

### The Environment Includes:

- Access to indoor and outdoor play spaces that are safe and supportive for quality daily physical activity
- Procedures and signs for emergency evacuation and written health and safety policies
- Child size sinks, soap that is readily available, paper towels, footstools if needed, etc.
- Picture schedules with instructions for hand washing, tooth brushing and steps in toileting posted for children to follow in daily self-care routines

## Strategies to Support Health and Safety Practices

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Encourage children to actively engage in physical activity daily.
- Have regular fire drills during different times of the day. Have children practice leaving from different exits, but still meet in the same consistent place. This helps children prepare for real emergencies.
- Experiment with foods that are processed differently (raw apples, applesauce, dried apples) and have children vote for which they like best. Chart their responses and display the charts. Discuss the process of processing the food.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Modify materials/activities to promote skills that enable a child to care for his own needs.
- Use sensory cues to indicate placement of items: auditory or visual cues can be used to prompt during routine times.
- Provide adaptive materials to support participation in daily living skills (hair and tooth brush with curved, enlarged handle, switch-adapted electric tooth brush/ toothpaste dispenser, adaptive potty chair/stool, laminated picture communication board for choices).
- Review and adapt routine times to increase participation.
- Encourage peers to model the actions and help with materials and equipment.
- Keep activities simple and open-ended so that every child can be successful.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Use videos, pictures and simple words to describe the action and show process/illustrate steps to perform health and safety practices and express their needs.
- Intentionally makes connections in home language with concepts taught when possible.
- Provide health education, written health and safety policies/procedures for children and families in their home language.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Use books, materials and posters that include authentic photographs/illustrations that accurately reflect the cultures of all children and families.
- Use authentic photos from families whenever possible.

# Nutrition (HP.04)

## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child shows knowledge of healthy eating and lifestyle habits
  - Demonstrates knowledge that some foods are healthier than others
  - Uses manners during meals/snacks, including asking for seconds
- Child begins to develop interest in foods and eating styles of other cultures
- Child begins to distinguish more or less healthy foods, and understand that healthy foods help them to grow and give them energy to play and think
- Child begins to understand where foods come from and how they are produced



## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Tries new foods, eats a variety of foods, and passes food, taking child-sized portions
- Uses dramatic play and learning experiences to gain awareness of where different kinds of foods come from and how they are prepared

### The Adult:

- Provides a pleasant, supportive environment with sufficient time for all children to eat
- Encourages children to serve and feed themselves, and assist with setup and cleanup, using child-sized utensils if possible.
- Joins children at the table, eating and drinking the same food and drink, modeling and encouraging them to try new or less favorite foods
- Helps children determine if they are still hungry before additional food is served or if they are full before taking additional food or removing the plate
- Provides opportunities for children to prepare and try a variety of healthy snacks and nutritious foods, providing water throughout the day
- Recognizes (and is supportive) that families have different food preferences and eating habits and solicits input from families about eating patterns and cultural food preferences
- Stays current with an individual child's food allergies and provides substitutes as needed
- Provides dramatic play props, pictures, stories and books to represent many cultures
- Provides first hand experiences such as gardening, field trips to local farms, cooking, etc.
- Ensures that food is not used as a reward or punishment to encourage or discourage behaviors

### The Environment Includes:

- Books, audio recordings, visual media, and pictures about familiar foods and nutrition habits from around the world
- Dramatic play center props (foods, dishes, utensils, pans, cookbooks, gardening props, etc.)
- Visuals of healthy food choices including the new "food plate" model to learn food groups

## Strategies to Support Nutrition

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Sort pictures of junk food and healthy food. Bring in flyers from your local grocery store. Let the children sort, cut out and glue the junk food in one group and the healthy food in the other group. This is a great fine motor activity as well as a pre-math activity.
- Chart which foods come from the ground and which ones come from the tree. Have the children classify the foods according to their origins. This activity teaches math skills, too.
- Plant an ingredient garden or have each child bring in a vegetable and prepare a class/group soup or a salad.
- At snack and meal times, comment on color, shape, and textural appearance of food.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Frequently discuss and implement special dietary needs and strategies suggested by families and professionals into daily routines and menu.
- Adapt and modify routine times and tools to support children's participation in meals/food activities with others.
- Promote independence in daily mealtime routines by ensuring adaptive materials are used.
- Provide physical guidance/support in using equipment when needed.
- Use verbal, visual (visual schedule and/or simple picture communication boards), and physical cues (sign language) in interactions and activities to promote participation in nutrition activities.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Encourage hands-on and sensory experiences such as touching, holding, exploring, tasting, smelling and manipulating.
- Provide materials from a variety of cultures, such as cooking and eating utensils, play food, menus from local ethnic restaurants, and empty packages from ethnic foods.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Explore various ways food is grown, prepared, served and used in different cultures.
- Create an environment in which children encounter food, objects, pictures, and people that they can identify with their culture.

## Print Resources

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*Active for Life: Developmentally Appropriate Movement Programs for Young Children*, Stephen W. Sanders (2002).

*Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Age 5* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), National Association for Sports and Physical Education (2009).

*Big Body Play: Why Boisterous, Vigorous, and Very Physical Play is Essential to Children's Development and Learning*, Frances M. Carlson (2011).

*Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children and Adolescents*, American Academy of Pediatrics (2008).

*Caring for our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.), Topics include staffing, program activities for healthy development; health promotion and protection; nutrition and food service facilities, supplies, equipment, and environmental health; transportation, play areas, and playgrounds; infectious diseases, children with special needs; licensing, and community action. American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics. American Public Health Association (2011).

*Developmental Physical Education for All Children*, David L. Gallahue and Frances Cleland Donnelly (2003).

*Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.), Susan Aronson (2012).

*Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children to Nature* (2008)  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature\\_education.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature_education.pdf).

*Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children to Nature* (2008),  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature\\_education.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature_education.pdf).

*Parachute Games*, Todd Strong and Dale Lefevre. (2006).

*Preschool Health and Safety Matters*, Jody Martin (ed.; 2011).

*Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance*, Institute of Medicine Report (2004).

*Preventing Childhood Obesity In Early Care and Education Programs*, American Academy of Pediatrics (2012).

*Preventing Obesity and Promoting Wellness In Early Childhood Settings DVD*, Turn Key Training (2012).

*Recess- It's Indispensable!*, NAEYC Play, Policy and Practice Interest Forum, Young Children (September 2009).

These resources, and many others, may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center by visiting <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/mediactr.html> or by calling 1-402-557-6885 or 1-800-89CHILD.

## Online Resources

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Annotated Bibliographies (click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center):

[Health and Physical Development](#), created on 5/24/12

[Nutrition](#), updated on 3/19/12

Clover Kid Projects & Activities: <http://liferaydemo.unl.edu/web/child/cloverkid>.

Common Questions on Lead Poisoning:  
<http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/LeadQuestions.aspx>.

*Nature Explore*: a complete program of fun, effective resources to help educators, families and anyone working with children connect with nature. Nature Explore is a collaborative project of Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation  
<http://www.dimensionsfoundation.org/>.

Understanding physical development in preschoolers <http://www.getreadytoread.org/early-learning-childhood-basics/early-childhood/understanding-physical-development-in-preschoolers>.

National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play Head Start Body Start: resources and ideas for active play and meaningful movement; tools and guidance to enhance play spaces or create an outdoor classroom <http://www.aahperd.org/headstartbodystart/>.

Health and Nutrition Information for Preschoolers  
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers.html>.

Healthy Child Care America <http://www.healthychildcare.org/index.html>.

Healthy Child Care: fact sheets and checklists <http://www.epa.gov/childcare>.

Healthy Kids Healthy Future: Recommendations on physical activity, screen time, food and beverages <http://www.HealthyKidsHealthyFuture.org>.

Let's Move! Strategies to put children on the path to a healthy future during their earliest months and years, and information for parents to foster environments that support healthy choices <http://www.letsmove.gov/>.

National Center for Physical Development and Outdoor Play: resources and ideas for active play and meaningful movement to early childhood programs and family homes, online professional development opportunities <http://www.aahperd.org/headstartbodystart/>.

National Health and Safety Standards and the Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) <http://www.whrv.org/NR/rdonlyres/4C89B06B-4ED9-4315-99B3-4B0D7A3F0E0C/10128/NAPSACCBestPracticeRecommendationsforChildCareFaci.pdf>.

Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children Provider Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program: <http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nutritionandwellness.html>

National Center on Health: I Am Moving, I Am Learning; Tips for Families...Active Play, Healthy Eating, Safety & Injury Prevention; Healthy Children are Ready to Learn, etc.  
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/center>

TXT4Tots: a library of short, evidence-based messages focused on nutrition and physical activities targeted to parents and caregivers of children: <http://www.hrsa.gov/healthit/txt4tots/>

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Standards	NE Rule 11 Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Standards
Physical Development & Health	Health & Physical Development: Fine (Small) Motor Skills (HP.01)	Physical 7a.8.	Physical Development & Health: Fine Motor Skills	LA 0.2.1c	004.05A7 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Child Development Program  Toys, Equipment and Materials
		Physical 7b.6.		SC 2.2.1c		
	Health & Physical Development: Gross (Large) Motor Skills (HP.02)	Physical 4.8.	Physical Development & Health: Gross Motor Skills	LA 0.1.5b	004.05A7 004.05A8 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Outdoor Play Area  Fenced Outdoor Play Area
		Physical 5.8.		SS 0.3.1a		
		Physical 6.8.				
	Health & Physical Development: Health Status & Practices (HP.03)	Social Emotional 1c.8.	Physical Development & Health: Health Knowledge & Practice	LA 0.3.1a	004.05A7 004.05A8 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Sanitation Inspection Safety Training CPR/First Aid Communicable Diseases Children Excluded Due to Illness Immunizations Napping and Rest Period Medications Environmental Safety Hand Washing
				LA 0.1.5b		
	Health & Physical Development: Nutrition (HP.04)	Social Studies 29.	Physical Development & Health: Physical Health Status	LA 0.1.5b	004.05A7 004.05A8 004.06C 004.06E	Food Service  Food Safety
		Social Studies 30.		LA 0.3.1a		
		Language 10.b.6.				

Sources: Teaching Strategies, Inc.: [www.TeachingStrategies.com](http://www.TeachingStrategies.com). Revised Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS\\_Revised\\_Child\\_Outcomes\\_Framework\(rev-Sept2011\).pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework(rev-Sept2011).pdf). Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 391- Children's Services Licensing: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\\_childcare\\_childcareindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx). Nebraska K-12 Academic Standards: <http://www.education.ne.gov/academicstandards/>. Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations: <http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf>.

# Language & Literacy Development

Listening and Understanding LL.01

Speaking and Communicating LL.02

Phonological Awareness LL.03

Book Knowledge and Appreciation LL.04

Print Awareness and Concepts LL.05

Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge LL.06

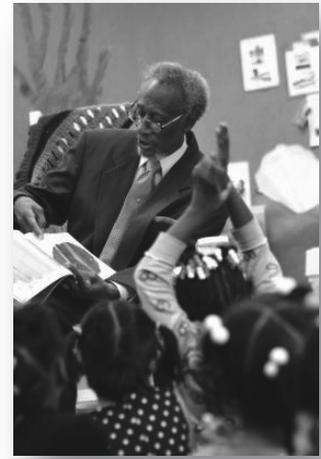
**Language and literacy skills develop through talking, listening, playing, reading, writing, and learning the skills that adults use to communicate.** Children develop the foundation for all communication in the early childhood years. They begin with nonverbal interactions (smiling, facial expressions, gestures), and then gradually move toward spoken language, sign language or other alternative communication methods to practice the rules of communication in their culture and family. Between three and five years of age, children begin to understand how oral language is reflected in written symbols (letters), and learn to create written symbols to communicate their ideas. Language and literacy development is promoted and supported through play, especially pretend play, and through music, rhyme, and rhythm.

**A solid foundation in oral language development in the early years before a child enters school will promote success in reading and writing in the future.** Young children who have rich language and literacy experiences are more likely to experience success in learning to read independently. In fact, a study by Hart and Risley at the University of Kansas found that the more words children heard from their parents or caregivers before they were three, the higher their IQ was, and the better they did in school.



# Listening and Understanding

## (LL.01)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Child listens to directions and conversations with understanding
  - Demonstrates understanding of the meaning of stories, songs and poems
- Child follows directions in sequences
  - Follows single, multi-step, and complex directions in order
- Child listens to others and responds to feelings and expressed ideas
  - Responds verbally or by alternative means to simple, direct, conversational sentences
- Child demonstrates understanding of home and/or English languages during social interactions, program directions, and activities

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Follows directions from the adult such as “Please wash your hands, then sit at the table.”
- Retells main events of stories, and repeats familiar songs and poems
- Carries on a conversation with another person, either verbally or by alternative means, that extends a thought or idea
- Listens to stories that are read aloud, and shows understanding through body language, pointing to pictures, or retelling the story

#### The Adult:

- Builds upon children’s comprehension skills by listening, responding, and asking questions
- Greets children daily by name and with a short conversation
- Engages children in stories, songs and poems throughout the day
- Intentionally incorporates new vocabulary words into the learning environment

#### The Environment Includes:

- Stories, songs, words, games and daily schedules in English and the languages of the non-English speaking children
- Ways to assist children in the understanding of new vocabulary, such as a word wall, pictures, or labels
- Defined space for children to look at books with carpet squares, beanbags or soft chairs so children can listen at story time without being too close

- Accessible books (on low shelves, in baskets, or bins on the floor)
- Opportunities to listen to stories/songs independently or in small group situations (listening area protected from more active areas to reduce distractions)
- Technology activities available to support and extend children’s language learning (smart boards, audio books, computer programs assistive technology)
- Color-coded tape for play and stop buttons for independence when listening to books on audio players
- Visual cues (photos, a visual schedule board or a video) to support listening and understanding of step by step directions, such as washing hands or setting the table

## Strategies to Support Listening and Understanding

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Present information in a variety of ways with a variety of materials. For example, the adult may read a book to the children, while giving each child a felt picture that corresponds to the information in the story. When the adult reads about their picture, the child puts their picture up on the felt board.
- Make learning meaningful by helping children apply their everyday experiences to concepts. For example, the adult introduces magnets by showing the children various magnets and asking children what they know about them. Children reply that they have them on their refrigerators at home. The adult asks what makes them stick to the refrigerator and the lesson about how magnets work follows.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Provide adaptations to support children with communication boards and auditory communication tools during their daily routines. Sign language and Braille are used, as needed, to enable children to participate in literacy activities. Photographs can be used to help children break down parts of stories or literacy activities.
- Use assistive technology such as computer/smart devices to listen to books.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Pair non-English speaking children with bilingual peers and adults.
- Meet with the child’s family on an ongoing basis and support his/her home language development and the development of English.
- Continue to interact even though the children do not offer verbal responses.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Use information from families and observations of children to individualize services to help children learn meaning from directions and conversations.
- Teach children what is and what is not acceptable in the classroom/group culture.

# Speaking and Communicating

## (LL.02)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Child communicates needs, wants, thoughts, ideas and feelings through words, gestures, actions, or expressions
  - Uses sentences that include two or more separate ideas using new vocabulary that has been introduced
  - Tells about another place or time
  - Child understands different rules for using language and variation in voice level
  - Child begins to understand body language as a nonverbal means of communication
- Child communicates for a variety of purposes
  - Attempts to solve problems with other children independently through communicating
  - Greets and initiates interactions with adults and peers

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Speaks clearly enough, or uses alternative communication methods, to be understood
- Asks questions to acquire more information
- Uses “please,” “thank you,” and “excuse me,” with reminders
- Uses language for a variety of purposes (role playing, rhyming, using props, describing feelings, telling jokes, conversing)
- Uses eye contact (as culturally and individually appropriate)

#### The Adult:

- Builds on children’s interests to introduce new vocabulary and ideas
- Asks open-ended questions (requiring more than a one-word response) throughout the day
- Provides opportunities for children to engage in turn taking and dialogue in conversation
- Repeats and extends children’s responses (Child says, “Leaves.” Adult says, “Yes, red leaves and branches on trees and ....”)
- Encourages communication during daily routines

#### The Environment Includes:

- A variety of activity centers that encourage children to interact and communicate with adults and peers
- Props, books, materials and manipulatives for telling and retelling events and stories

# Strategies to Support Speaking and Communicating

## Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Use advanced language with children by extending their language and using new or unfamiliar vocabulary:  
Teacher: “Tell me about your new coat.”  
Child: “Pink. Blue. Purple.”  
Teacher: “You have many different colors on your coat. It’s a multicolored coat!”
- Use open-ended questions that require children to put together language to communicate complex ideas such as, “Tell me about...” or “Share your story with the group,” or “What do you think?” and “How do you know...”

## Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Use alternate modes of communication when needed (sign language, Braille, gestures, visual cues, picture communication boards, voice output devices).
- Point to pictures when using a communication board with a child with communication needs; encourage the child to make choices and communicate with others.
- Teach peers how to interact and communicate with child with communication needs.
- Include adapted books with manipulative and voice output tools throughout the learning environment.

## Supporting English Language Learners:

- Incorporate children’s home language(s) whenever and wherever possible.
- Avoid speaking to the children in English and then immediately repeat the same information in the home language. Many experts caution that simultaneous interpretation may be distracting or confusing to children.
- Utilize small group situations to support children learning English, and facilitate conversation among children and between children and adults.
- Learn key words and phrases in each child’s home language.
- Assess children’s progress in acquiring their home language and English.
- Utilize technology to offer activities in other languages such as apps that translate words in many languages.

## Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Create an open and respectful dialogue with the child’s family about first and second language development and ways to support child’s home language and culture development.
- Encourage people to share items representing their culture and communicate about it.

# Phonological Awareness (LL.03)



## Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows knowledge of phonological awareness (the ability to hear and understand the different sounds of language)
  - Recognizes matching sounds and rhymes in familiar nursery rhymes, songs, stories and poems
  - Spontaneously repeats songs, rhymes and chants, and creates nonsense words
- Child progresses in listening and telling differences in phonemes (smallest parts of sound in a spoken word)
  - Identifies words that begin with the same sound (alliteration)
- Child recognizes the connection between spoken and written words
  - Shows growing ability to hear and discriminate separate syllables in words
  - Isolates beginning and ending sounds of printed or spoken words

## Learning in Action: Examples

### The Child:

- Listens to two words and determines whether or not they rhyme
- Notices that several words or names begin with the same sound
- Claps hands for each syllable in words
- Plays with sounds to create new words

### The Adult:

- Provides opportunities for children to hear sounds in their home language
- Gives children the opportunity to create rhymes with familiar words (bat, hat, cat)
- Gives children the opportunity to repeat sounds in their names and other words
- Draws children's attention to the separate sounds of spoken language through playful songs, games and rhymes
- Models appropriate language, communication, reading and writing
- Incorporates phonemic and alliteration awareness within children's activities that are based on their interests and developmental levels rather than using rote memorization such as flashcards or worksheets
- Uses story time to teach literacy concepts (rhyming, alliteration)
- Writes what children say so they see the connection between their spoken word and how it looks in writing

### The Environment Includes:

- A quiet place where children may listen to a variety of nursery rhymes and stories
- Materials like magazines or catalogs for children to find pictures of items that begin with the same letter or same number of syllables or rhymes with child's name
- Opportunities for children to make visual connections with rhyming words and word/letter families (word wall, pocket chart, collections of materials that start with same letter)
- Picture books that have easy-to-follow stories, rhymes, repetition and simple language

## Strategies to Support Phonological Awareness

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Create a rhyming collection: Help children find objects that rhyme and place them in a container (sock, rock, block.)
- Recite nursery rhymes with your child. Create different rhyming words that can substitute for the ones in the nursery rhyme (Hickory Dickory Dock, The Mouse Ran Up the Sock.)

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Support participation in awareness of rhyming sounds, encouraging children to participate on any level possible, using their multiple senses and adaptations if needed.
- Pair spoken words with items you can see or touch to learn rhyming sounds (point to picture while saying that word.)

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Use gestures, body languages, props, and other visual cues to help aid children's comprehension of rhyme and alliteration.
- Accept minimal responses such as the nod of the head or a smile when asking children if words rhyme or if words begin with the same sound.
- Model language by narrating actions using self-talk strategies ("I am putting these two together because they rhyme. They sound the same; cat, bat.")

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Include diverse cultures and languages in the environment and the curriculum.
- Ask families for words that rhyme in their home language, if applicable, or words that start with the same sound.

# Book Knowledge & Appreciation

## (LL.04)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Child demonstrates interest in and appreciation of reading-related activities
  - Shows interest when stories are read
  - Relates events in story to own knowledge and experience
- Child increases knowledge about books and how they typically are read
  - Holds book right side up
  - Turns pages front to back
  - Knows specific words related to books such as author and illustrator
  - Understands that the print describes what is happening in the picture
- Child learns to sequence, predict, and retell a story
  - Picture reads; tells about the story from the pictures on the cover or in the book

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Asks people to read stories, signs, notes
- Answers questions about a story that has been read or repeats parts of the story
- Chooses a favorite book
- Pretends to read book titles/simple stories
- Tells stories to others, real and imaginary
- Demonstrates an interest in different types of literature: nonfiction, poetry, etc.
- Knows how to care for books

#### The Adult:

- Provides print-rich environment and reads to children, both individually and in small and large groups throughout the day
- Places books and signs/posters in all interest areas on topics that are relevant
- Reads books with rich descriptive vocabulary, exploring and extending children's understanding of the meaning of new words
- Assists children in relating stories to events in their own lives and in making predictions
- Uses story time to teach literacy concepts such as author, illustrator, title page, directionality and print to picture match
- Demonstrates using different kinds of books: picture book, cook book, fantasy, factual

### The Environment Includes:

- Soft, cozy place for looking at books (with pillows, comfortable chairs, rugs)
- Many types of children’s books; reference books, audio books, electronic books, big books, board books
- Some books displayed on accessible shelves with covers facing outward
- Books and displays that celebrate the differences of all children and families, including those who are not represented in the learning environment

## Strategies to Support Book Knowledge & Appreciation

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Make books with children that include all the parts (front and back covers, title page with their name as author and illustrator, drawings with words).
- Have children share a favorite book that they have read. Create a location where they can display that book for others to read.
- Make real-life connections to activities and events to books that you read.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Modify activities and materials to enable participation. For example, page puffers added to books enable children to turn pages without help, and sign language and Braille dots can be added to books.
- Use book holders and page turners if child is unable to hold the book independently.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Provide access to many types of children’s books, reference books, audio books, electronic books, in home languages.
- Use actual names of people and objects rather than pronouns when looking at and reading books.
- Be observant: notice what children are interested in, what they might want to talk about, and what they know, and provide books which reflect those interests.
- Continue to read and interact when reading to children even though the children do not offer verbal responses.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Provide a variety of books and magazines that portray men and women of all ages and different ethnic groups engaged in jobs that are familiar to most children in the community.
- Use materials related to your children’s cultures. Children respond when they see books, topics, characters, and images that are familiar.

# Print Awareness & Concepts (LL.05)



## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child shows an awareness of print as a form of meaningful communication
- Follows the print on the page, moving eyes from left to right and top to bottom
  - Identifies some letters and numbers
  - Recognizes and begins to write own name
  - “Reads” familiar environmental print such as logos, posters, signs
- Child understands that each spoken word can be written down and read
- Child recognizes words as a unit of print and understands letters form words

## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Asks people to read stories, signs, or notes
- Begins to recognize several words including own name, or a few simple phrases or sentences
- Points to words using a left to right progression when “reading” picture books
- Recognizes and identifies specific letters from their name when looking at book titles or environmental print
- Wants to read (pretend or recall) stories to others
- Begins using print for communication in play activities, or to label artwork

### The Adult:

- Writes children’s explanations or labels on projects, artwork, block constructions
- Encourages children to help read the job chart, program rules, and daily schedule
- Encourages children’s interest and their attempts to copy or write their own name
- Plans literacy activities that are relevant and meaningful for children. For example, when learning about pumpkins, the letter “P” would be explored and learned about

### The Environment Includes:

- Many books, pictures and visual examples of written words, such as printed messages, ideas, pictures and print created by children
- Pictures, posters, labels on cubbies, materials, toy shelves
- Easily accessible writing area filled with a variety of materials (books, journals, children’s names, signs, children’s stories, labels, alphabet charts, word wall, pencils, markers)

## Strategies to Support Print Awareness and Concepts

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- When reading to children, run a finger along the lines of print, and point out and enunciate words.
- Take children's dictation on art work, labels, messages, stories, songs, rules, shared experiences, and plans. Ask where to write on the paper when taking dictation and to reinforce print concept. Read the dictation back to them verbatim.
- Create an environmental print wall. Have the children collect a variety of cereal boxes, juice cartons, coupons, etc., with print that they can read. An adaptation of this could be to create an A to Z environmental print book.
- Use simple, easy to read font; cutesy fonts can confuse learners.
- Use upper and lower letters correctly, and be sure spelling is accurate.
- Use print from left to right, as this is how children are learning to read; avoid stacking letters even if the item is tall and slender.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Support print awareness through modification of print using multisensory means. Raised print and addition of sign and Braille symbols helps create a memory of letters and words for children.
- Pair print with pictures and use a gesture with print to help a child associate new information with known information.
- Ensure that auditory and motor skills are used with print/visual information, which helps children to create an association that leads to a stronger memory.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Label the environment in the home language of the children as well as in English (in different, but consistent colors).
- Label the environment with pictures and words from each language in a different color, for example, English in black and home language in blue.
- Read books that are developmentally appropriate and visually stimulating, which match their interests, out loud and often.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Learn how to pronounce and write each child's name correctly.
- Ensure children and families can experience their written home language in the environment whenever possible.

# Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge (LL.05)



## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child shows an interest in early writing
  - Uses scribbles, shapes, or pictures to represent specific thoughts, ideas, stories
- Child progresses in the identification of letters
  - Identifies some letters and numbers
  - Uses pretend writing in play as a purposeful activity
- Child recognizes and/or writes own name on artwork or possessions
- Child recognizes that letters represent sounds

## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Uses magnetic letters, stamps, or other alphabet materials to form own name
- Labels a drawing with several randomly placed, letter-like shapes
- Copies letters from signs and labels posted around the room
- Experiments with various writing tools and materials
- Recognizes that writing is a way of communicating for a variety of purposes such as giving information, sharing stories, or giving an opinion

### The Adult:

- Displays children's names on artwork, cubbies, and all personal supplies
- Models the use of writing and drawing in everyday activities
- Promotes literacy-related play activities and respects children's attempts at writing
- Provides opportunities for children to express their thoughts and ideas through the developmental stages of scribbles to conventional print

### The Environment Includes:

- A variety of writing materials to encourage children's attempts at writing
- Books and writing tools, from crayons to computers, in each area of play
- Displays of children's work that reflect meaningful experiences (art, beginning attempts at writing, response to books or experiences) around the room at child's eye level
- Displays of the alphabet and environmental print at child's eye level

## Strategies to Support Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Provide writing materials of all kinds throughout the room (colored pencils, markers, pens, crayons, chalk, and chalkboards, unlined paper, notepads, sticky notes, labels, wallpaper samples, grocery bags)
- Model how to hold writing tools and scissors while referring children to one another for help. Children may learn dexterity and coordination skills better by watching and imitating their peers.
- Go on a letter hunt. Choose a letter of the alphabet (possibly the same letter that the child's name begins with), and find objects that begin with that letter. Have children say the name of the object out loud to make sure that it begins with the right sound. This letter hunt is fun to do indoors and outdoors.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Support early writing and letter knowledge through a multisensory approach. For example, form letters with play dough, build letters out of blocks, write with many types of tools, cut letters out of sandpaper, write letters with finger in flour or shaving cream.
- Provide opportunities for children to write with their fingers as well as many modified writing tools to help them understand the relationship between scribbles and the written word.
- Incorporate sign language and Braille dots as needed in the media a child encounters.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Display alphabet and environmental print in home and English languages, at child's eye level.
- Be observant; notice what children are interested in/what they might want to write about.
- Use actual names of people and objects rather than pronouns and encourage children to write those names.
- Offer one-on-one assistance as children experiment with writing tools.
- Help children write about their world by labeling objects in the environment in both their home language and English.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Create an environment in which children encounter objects, pictures, and people that they can identify with.
- Connect activities to what children experience in their homes and communities (oral stories, environmental print, family recipes.)

## Print Resources

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- Are You Listening? Fostering Conversations That Help Young Children Learn*, Lisa Burman (2009).
- Basics of Supporting Dual Language Learners: An Introduction for Educators of Children Birth Through Age Eight*, Karen N. Nemeth (2012).
- Beginning Literacy with Language: Young Children Learning at Home and School*, David K. Dickinson and Patton O. Tabors (2001).
- Building a Foundation for Preschool Literacy: Effective Instruction for Children's Reading and Writing Development*, Carol Vukelich and James Christie (2004).
- Children, Language, and Literacy: Diverse Learners in Diverse Times*, Celia Genishi, NAEYC (2009).
- Early Dual Language Learning*, Fred Genesee (2008).
- Early Childhood Calendar: Suggestions, ideas, and tips to help prepare children for kindergarten through literacy-based play and interaction. Nebraska Department of Education [www.education.ne.gov/read](http://www.education.ne.gov/read).
- English Language Learners in the Preschool Setting DVD, Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices*, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2011).
- Handbook of Early Literacy Research*, Susan B. Neuman and David K. Dickinson (2003).
- Ladders to Literacy: A Preschool Activity Book*, Angela Notari-Syverson, Rollanda E. O'Connor, and Patricia F. Vadasy (2007).
- Learning About Print in Preschool: Working With Letters, Words, and Beginning Links With Phonemic Awareness*, Dorothy S. Strickland and Judith A. Schickedanz, International Reading Association (2004).
- Learning To Read And Write : Developmentally Appropriate Practices For Young Children*, Susan B. Neuman, Carol Copple, and Sue Bredekamp, NAEYC (2006).
- Literacy Leadership in Early Childhood: The Essential Guide*, Shannon Riley-Ayers (2007).
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children to Nature* (2008), [http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature\\_education.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature_education.pdf).
- One Child, Two Languages: A Guide for Preschool Educators of Children Learning English As a Second Language* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), Patton O. Tabors (2008).
- Oral Language and Early Literacy in Preschool: Talking, Reading, and Writing*, Kathleen A. Roskos, Patton O. Tabors and Lisa A. Lenhart, International Reading Association (2004).
- Phonemic Awareness in Young Children: A Classroom Curriculum*, Marilyn Jager Adams, Barbara R. Foorman, Ingvar Lundberg and Terri Beeler (2001).
- The Read-Aloud Handbook* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.), Jim Trelease (2006).
- So Much More Than ABC's: The Early Phases of Reading and Writing*, Judith Schickedanz (2012).

*Spaces and Places: Designing Classrooms for Literacy*, Debbie Diller (2008).

*Use Your Words: How Teacher Talk Helps Children Learn*, Carol Garhart Mooney (2005).

*What Teachers Need to Know About Language*, Carolyn Temple Adger, Catherine E. Snow and Donna Christian (2002).

These resources, and many others, may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center by visiting <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/mediactr.html> or by calling 1-402-557-6885 or 1-800-89CHILD.

## Online Resources

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10 Things You Can Do To Raise a Reader, Signs Your Child Is Ready For Kindergarten & mobile app <http://www.readingrockets.org>.

Annotated Bibliographies (click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center):

[Early Language and Literacy](#), updated on 1/23/12

Basics of Supporting Dual Language Learners <http://www.naeyc.org/event/basics-of-supporting-dual-language-learners>.

Center for Early Literacy Learning <http://www.earlyliteracylearning.org/pgparents.php>.

Early Childhood Research Institute on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services <http://clas.uiuc.edu/>.

Encouraging language development at home and at preschool  
<http://www.getreadytoread.org/early-learning-childhood-basics/early-childhood/understanding-language-development-in-preschoolers>

Encouraging reading at home and at preschool <http://www.getreadytoread.org/early-learning-childhood-basics/early-literacy/understanding-beginning-reading-development-in-preschoolers>

The National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness  
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/center>.

Supporting Dual Language Learners and Their Families <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners>.

PBS Parents Play & Learn: theme-based interactive games and simple hands-on activities that connect math and literacy skills to everyday experiences; designed to build on a child's natural curiosity about his or her everyday world and to encourage dialogue between kids and parents  
<http://pbskids.org/mobile/pbs-parents-play--learn.html>.

Reading strategies, lessons, and activities designed to help young children learn how to read and read better <http://www.readingrockets.org/>, <http://www.literacyconnections.com/Parents.php>.

Starting Young English Language Learners on the Road to Success- Stepping Stones: 100 free lessons, available in both English and Spanish, around early learning themes or units  
[http://www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/early\\_childhood103.html](http://www.sedl.org/pubs/catalog/items/early_childhood103.html).

Supporting Literacy in Natural Environments and On-the-Go Resources: 14 home and community activities show how to promote language, and early literacy during everyday activities, in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Somali and Russian  
<http://www.wlearning.com/resources/>

Understanding Beginning Reading Development in Preschoolers  
<http://www.getreadytoread.org/early-learning-childhood-basics/early-literacy/understanding-beginning-writing-skills-in-preschoolers>.

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators		Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Standards	NE Rule 11 Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Standards
Language & Literacy	Language & Literacy: Listening & Understanding (LL.01)	Language 8a.8.		Language Development: Receptive Language	LA 0.3.2a LA 0.3.2b LA 0.3.2c	004.05A4 004.05B 004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Prohibited Language, Materials and Actions  Child Development Program
		Language 8b.8.					
		English Language Acquisition 37.		English Language Development: Receptive English Language Skills			
	Language & Literacy: Speaking & Communicating (LL.02)	Language 9a.6.		Language Development: Expressive Language	LA 0.3.1a LA 0.1.5c	004.05A4 004.05B 004.05C 004.06D 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Prohibited Language, Materials and Actions  Child Development Program
		Language 9b.6.					
		Language 9c.6.					
		Language 9d.8.					
		English Language Acquisition 38.		English Language Development: Expressive English Language Skills			
	Language & Literacy: Phonological Awareness (LL.03)	Literacy 15a.6.		Literacy Knowledge & Skills: Phonological Awareness	LA 0.1.2b LA 0.1.2d	004.05A4 004.05B 004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Child Development Program
		Literacy 15b.6.					
		Literacy 15c.4.					
		Literacy 17b.6.					
	Language & Literacy: Book Knowledge & Appreciation (LL.04)	Cognitive 12b.6.		Logic & Reasoning: Reasoning & Problem Solving	LA 0.1.1e LA 0.1.6a LA 0.1.6c LA 0.3.2c	004.05A4 004.05A5 004.05B 004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Child Development Program
		Literacy 17a.6.		Literacy Knowledge & Skills: Book Appreciation & Knowledge			
Literacy 18a.4.							
Literacy 18b.4.		Literacy 18b.6.					
Literacy 18c.2.							
Language & Literacy: Print Awareness & Concepts (LL.05)	Literacy 17b.4.		Literacy Knowledge & Skills: Print Concepts & Conventions	LA 0.1.1b LA 0.1.1f LA 0.1.1d LA 0.1.1a	004.05A4 004.05B 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E		
Language & Literacy: Early Writing & Alphabetic Knowledge (LL.06)	Cognitive 14a.6.		Logic & Reasoning: Symbolic Representation	LA 0.2.1a LA 0.2.1c LA 0.2.2a	004.05A4 004.05B 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Not Applicable	
	Literacy 16a.4.		Literacy Knowledge & Skills: Alphabet Knowledge				
	Literacy 16b.2.						

		Literacy 19a.5.	Literacy 19a.6.	Literacy Knowledge & Skills: Early Writing			
		Literacy 19b.4.					

Sources: Teaching Strategies, Inc.: [www.TeachingStrategies.com](http://www.TeachingStrategies.com). Revised Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS\\_Revised\\_Child\\_Outcomes\\_Framework\(rev-Sept2011\).pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework(rev-Sept2011).pdf). Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 391- Children's Services Licensing: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\\_childcare\\_childcareindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx). Nebraska K-12 Academic Standards: <http://www.education.ne.gov/academicstandards/>. Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations: <http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf>.

# Mathematics

Number and Operations M.01

Geometry and Spatial Sense M.02

Patterns and Measurements M.03

**Young children develop number and mathematical concepts through meaningful and active learning experiences that are broader in scope than numerals and counting.** In an inclusive, developmentally appropriate play-based environment, preschool children have opportunities to acquire and understand mathematical skills and concepts using hands-on materials and use of numbers in real-life situations.

**Early childhood teachers and caregivers must be flexible during daily routines and try to capture teachable moments using open-ended questions to expand mathematical concepts.** Adults must also plan activities that build upon young children's existing skills based on their curiosity and enthusiasm for the objects in their environment.



# Number and Operations (M.01)



## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child develops awareness of number and numerals
  - Uses one-to-one matching (correspondence)
  - Distinguishes between numbers and letters
  - Identifies written numerals
- Child uses language to demonstrate understanding of space and time (next to, on top of, before, after)
  - Begins to learn sequences of events in time (first, next, last)
- Child develops an understanding of the counting process
  - Counts, in order, up to ten or higher
  - Counts all types of objects; plays with counting forward or backward
  - Can judge whether groups of up to five objects contain the same number of objects

## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Compares quantities of small groups of objects, using words like more/less, some/all
- Recognizes numerals, points to each object when counting, assigning the correct number
- Uses words such as yesterday, today, and tomorrow in conversation
- Counts in nursery rhymes and finger plays
- Identifies new quantities when changes are made (combining or separating)
- Uses numbers daily by describing their learning experiences and through problem solving

### The Adult:

- Offers counting materials and activities throughout the day, such as number puzzles, books, finger plays, songs, computer software with counting games, and sand timers
- Provides opportunities for children to pair objects, to count both common things (blocks) and silly things (freckles on their arms), and to develop and practice using number words
- Uses descriptive words throughout the day such as yesterday, tomorrow, before, and after
- Gives children opportunities to practice grouping objects and comparing quantities

### The Environment Includes:

- Materials available within the daily routine for sorting, comparing and counting (small blocks, colored bears, magnetic shapes, large beads and counters, Velcro and magnetic blocks, pegboards)
- Shallow containers for children to use materials while keeping the pieces together
- Variety of places for children to use materials (table, vertical or slanted surfaces)
- Objects that include numbers and number words (clocks, timers, calendars, thermometers, calculators, measuring cups, number lines, etc.)
- Games that encourage children to identify numbers and use numbers in problem solving

## Strategies to Support Number and Operations

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Write, “How many of the smaller containers of water will fit in the larger container?” on the top of a chart. List the children’s names down the side and document the guesses after each name. Reflect on the results after the experiment is conducted.
- Use self-talk (saying what you are thinking or doing). “I am going to give each of you five crackers. I am opening the box... now I am handing the crackers out, one to each person, now two to each person... Now let’s see, did everyone get five? Yes! I handed out five crackers to everyone.”
- Offer materials and games that convey the concept of number such as dominoes and dice. Ask children, “Can you find another domino with the same (more, less) number of dots?”
- Pose simple problems, such as “We have 8 children in our group but 2 are gone. How many plates do we need for lunch?”

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Provide adaptations to help children grasp items. For example, build up handles with sponges or foam tape, stabilize toys on surfaces with C-clamps, attach Velcro to small manipulatives, and attach knobs or handles to puzzle pieces.
- Use picture communication board to allow children to make choices, answer questions and express observations when communicating about amounts and numbers.
- Modify games using large dice, spinners with a handle to spin, or a switch that encourage children to identify and use numbers in problem solving.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Encourage hands-on and sensory experiences such as touching, holding, exploring, tasting, smelling and manipulating as children learn about numbers and counting.
- Use number names from multiple languages when talking about quantity and counting.
- Teach number and operations words (today, tomorrow, yesterday, more, less) in both the home language and English with the help of an interpreter.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Lead discussions of similarities and differences among different cultures to help children understand and appreciate diversity and to develop of sense of community. For example, everyone uses numbers to count but it may sound different and look different.
- Include a variety of cultures and physical characteristics in visual representations of things to count and quantify.

# Geometry and Spatial Sense

## (M.02)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Child develops knowledge of geometric principles
  - Classifies and sorts different shapes
  - Recognizes and names simple shapes in various sizes and positions
  - Combines different shapes to make representations or patterns
- Child develops spatial sense
  - Uses comparison words correctly
  - Uses words that describe the relative position of things
- Child groups similar objects together and gives reasons for groupings

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Uses a pegboard to create geometric shapes with rubber bands
- Uses spatially descriptive words (on top, under, behind, below, above, between, around)
- Compares the various sizes of unit blocks (longer, shorter, same length)
- Creates structures and designs with blocks of various shapes and sizes

#### The Adult:

- Encourages children to make comparisons of various object shapes and sizes
- Provides children with opportunities to create designs with pattern blocks; draw, paint and cut shapes in their artwork; weave over and under, describe 2 and 3 dimensional shapes; and locate shapes in the environment
- Provides games and activities that encourage children to move through space (action songs, obstacle courses)
- Uses language throughout the day that describes attributes of shapes and space relationships
- Takes pictures of the children's creations and records their explanation or discussion about the structure

#### The Environment Includes:

- A variety of materials representing various shapes and sizes for counting, comparing and drawing conclusions about relationships (boxes, tubes, containers, blocks, balls)
- Items to encourage movement (tunnel, empty box, plank)
- Labels on shelves representing the shapes of the objects that belong there

- Materials for filling and emptying, fitting things together and taking them apart
- A light table with transparent shapes for children to explore with
- Computer software that allows children to explore geometric principles

## Strategies to Support Geometry and Spatial Sense

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- To increase geometric skills, show a picture of the shape and have the children describe the unique characteristics of the shape by asking, “How do we know this is a \_\_\_\_\_?”
- Play “I Spy,” asking children to find materials or objects in the room that are that same shape. Discuss what they find and make a book about the shapes in our room.
- Help children create an obstacle course. Ask the following types of questions: What is something our bodies will fit under? What is something we can go around, or climb over? After going through the obstacle course a few times, ask the children if they would like to make some changes or additions.
- Introduce both two and three-dimensional shapes, regular and irregular shapes. Engage children in drawing and tracing shapes. Encourage children to describe how shapes are the same and how they are not the same. Discuss how two sides, or top and bottom of objects (such as doll clothes, a teeter totter, toy airplane) are symmetrical and others (such as a glove, slide, and toy crane) are asymmetrical. Have children wrap boxes with paper.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Adapt activities that provide a multisensory approach to comparing sizes and shapes that enable children to understand similarities and differences in the world around them. For example, fill and empty various containers with sand or water, discuss the shapes of container and amounts each container holds, describe and compare weights.
- Provide communication boards and pictures to enable children to make choices and tell about the world around them.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Use vocabulary and phrases in the child’s native language when introducing new ideas/ concepts about shapes and spatial sense.
- Model language by narrating actions and labeling shapes while using self-talk strategies, “I am using this blue crayon to color in this big square.”
- Allow children to show you that they can match shapes, make geometric shapes without requiring them to use language.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Emphasize shapes in the environment by showing shapes in photos of buildings from different cultures and depicting multiple cultural influences.
- Use descriptive and comparison books that include authentic photographs, illustrations that accurately reflect the cultures of the children.

# Patterns and Measurement

## (M.03)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Child develops knowledge of patterns
  - Describes patterns in the environment and daily routine
  - Begins to recognize duplicates and extends simple patterns using a variety of materials
- Child demonstrates use of measurement
  - Uses standard and/or non-standard measures
  - Recognizes that different types of measurement can be made (height, length, weight)

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Sorts buttons, beads or pegs into egg cartons, with each compartment holding a different color, size, or shape
- Makes a pattern (by color, size, or shape) with interlocking cubes
- Collects objects from a group walk and arranges them by color, size, or shape
- Uses measuring tools at workbench or water table

#### The Adult:

- Engages in conversations with children about quantity and comparisons as they interact with materials throughout the day
- Uses a predictable daily routine consistently and encourages children to begin to predict what comes next in a pattern or sequence of events
- Demonstrates methods of measurement and patterning throughout the day. For example, uses a graph to document and compare the number of children choosing each vegetable as a favorite, or guessing how many footsteps it will take to walk to the fence, then charting their discoveries.

#### The Environment Includes:

- Materials of various sizes, colors, textures, and shapes that can be arranged in order as well as sorted and compared: blocks, beads, peg boards, matching games, measuring cups, scales, rulers, unit blocks
- Computer software that allows children to recognize and create their own series and patterns
- Posted daily schedule with pictures so children understand what happens now and next

## Strategies to Support Patterns and Measurement

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Use the rhythm sticks to create different patterns. Hit the sticks together once and the floor twice. Encourage the children to match that rhythm with their sticks. Allow individual children to take the lead.
- Have the children measure different items in the room with the length of a straw (or any other non-standard unit of measurement). The adult can choose some items and ask the children to guess how many lengths of the straw each object is. They can then measure using their own straw, and record their actual and predicted measurements on a graph.
- Arrange children in a line and tell them, “We are going to play a pattern game. See if you can figure out the pattern.” Ask the first child to stand, the second child to sit, and the third child to stand. Then ask children what the fourth child should do.
- Use visual models to help children understand and quantify differences. Make a daily routine chart where the length of each part in inches is proportional to durations in minutes. Small group time (which lasts 20 min.) is twice as big as large group time (10 min.)

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Adapt materials (attaching curlers or sponges to pencils) to support gathering of information on qualities and quantities that surrounds us every day.
- Use a multisensory approach (materials with different textures, sizes, smells, sounds) to identify patterns and relationships between objects.
- Communication boards enable children to tell about similarities and differences they encounter in their daily routines.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Use pictures and actions to teach the language needed for making a pattern or measuring through an interpreter if possible.
- Display photographs of patterns to help children understand the concept of patterning.
- Accept minimal responses, such as the nod of the head or a smile when asking children about patterns and measurement.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Use measurement and show an interest in children’s cultures by having children experience cooking foods native to their culture on a regular basis.
- Have children count and graph the number of languages spoken in their group.
- Bring in items from the community that display cultural symbols, patterns, and shape, such as clothing, quilts, and artwork.

## Print Resources

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- Blocks and Beyond: Strengthening Early Math and Science Skills Through Spatial Learning*, Mary Jo Pollman (2010).
- Cowboys Count, Monkeys Measure, and Princesses Problem Solve: Building Early Math Skills Through Storybooks*, Jane Wilburne (2011).
- Engaging Young Children in Mathematics: Standards for Early Childhood Mathematics Education*, Douglas H. Clements, Julie Sarama and Ann-Marie Dibiase (2003.)
- “I’m Older Than You. I’m Five” Math in the Preschool Classroom*, Ann Epstein and Suzanne Gainsley (2005).
- Math at Their Own Pace: Child-Directed Activities for Developing Early Number Sense*, Greg Nelson (2007).
- Mathematical and Scientific Development in Early Childhood*, National Research Council of the National Academies (2005).
- Mathematics in Early Childhood Education Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices DVD*, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2008).
- Mathematical Thinking: Geometry, Patterning & Measurement in Early Childhood Education Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices DVD*, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2010).
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children to Nature* (2008), [http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature\\_education.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature_education.pdf).
- Showcasing Mathematics for the Young Child: Activities for Three-, Four-, and Five-Year-Olds*, Juanita V. Copley (2004).
- Spotlight on Young Children and Math*, Derry G. Koralek, NAEYC (2004).
- Teaching Mathematics in Early Childhood*, Sally Moomaw (2011).
- Teaching STEM in the Early Years: Activities for Integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics*, Sally Moomaw (2013).
- The Young Child and Mathematics* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.), Juanita Copley. NAEYC (2010).

These resources, and many others, may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center’s Media Center by visiting <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/mediactr.html> or by calling 1-402-557-6885 or 1-800-89CHILD.

## Online Resources

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Annotated Bibliographies (click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center):

Math, created on 5/2/12

Encouraging math development at home and at preschool <http://www.getreadytoread.org/early-learning-childhood-basics/early-math/understanding-numbers-and-counting-skills-in-preschoolers>

PBS Parents Play & Learn: theme-based interactive games and simple hands-on activities that connect math and literacy skills to everyday experiences; designed to build on a child's natural curiosity about his or her everyday world and to encourage dialogue between kids and parents. <http://pbskids.org/mobile/pbs-parents-play--learn.html>

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Cognition & General Knowledge	Mathematics: Number & Operations (M.01)	Mathematics 20a.4.	Mathematics Knowledge & Skills: Number Concepts & Quantities	MA 0.1.1b MA 0.1.1a MA 0.1.1d	004.05A4 004.05B 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Not Applicable
		Mathematics 20c.4.				
		Mathematics 20b.4.	Mathematics Knowledge & Skills: Number Relationships & Operations			
		Mathematics 21a.4.	Mathematics Knowledge & Skills: Geometry & Spatial Sense			
		Mathematics 22.4.	Mathematics Knowledge & Skills: Measurement & Comparison			
	Mathematics: Geometry & Spatial Sense (M.02)	Cognitive 13. 6.	Logic & Reasoning: Reasoning & Problem Solving	MA 0.2.1a MA 0.2.4a MA 0.3.1b	004.05A6 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	
		Mathematics 21a.6.	Mathematics Knowledge & Skills: Geometry & Spatial Sense			
		Mathematics 21b.6.				
	Mathematics: Patterns & Measurement (M.03)	Mathematics 23.6.	Mathematics Knowledge & Skills: Patterns	MA 0.2.5c	004.05A3 004.05A6 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	
		Mathematics 22.6.	Mathematics Knowledge & Skills: Measurement & Comparison	LA 0.3.1a		

Sources: Teaching Strategies, Inc.: [www.TeachingStrategies.com](http://www.TeachingStrategies.com). Revised Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS\\_Revised\\_Child\\_Outcomes\\_Framework\(rev-Sept2011\).pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework(rev-Sept2011).pdf). Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 391 - Children's Services Licensing: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\\_childcare\\_childcareindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx). Nebraska K-12 Academic Standards: <http://www.education.ne.gov/academicstandards/>. Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations: <http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf>.

# Science

Scientific Skills and Methods S.01

Scientific Knowledge S.02

**Science fosters curiosity and motivation to learn. Young children are natural scientists.** They easily become fascinated by everyday happenings. Through varied and repeated opportunities to observe, manipulate, listen to, reflect, and respond to open-ended questions, preschoolers make decisions and become higher-level thinkers.

**Science activities require a balance of content and process, using multi-sensory experiences.** In addition to science inquiry skills, preschoolers can begin to acquire a foundation of scientific concepts and knowledge on which they can build a clear understanding of their world.

**Early childhood teachers and caregivers should look for opportunities to explore scientific concepts in all content areas throughout the day.** Adults need to feel comfortable with allowing children the opportunity to explore what they think, know, and want to know. Even if adults know the answer, a better response is to ask, “What do you think? Let’s find out together.”



# Scientific Skills & Methods (s.01)

## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child develops scientific skills and methods
  - Makes observations, collects information, and describes objects and processes
  - Begins to make comparisons between objects that have been observed
  - Begins to look for answers to questions through active investigation
- Child uses sentences that include two or more ideas with descriptive details
- Child uses senses, materials, tools, technology, events in nature, and the environment to investigate and expand knowledge

## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Explores various materials to learn about characteristics of objects, plants, animals, and various phenomena, such as weight, shape, size, color, temperature
- Uses a variety of tools and objects to explore the world and how things work in the world (uses magnets to pick up metal, observes through a microscope and magnifying glasses)
- Makes observations, asks questions, predicts, draws conclusions, explains, and tries things out to see what will happen
- Collects, describes and records information through discussions, drawings, maps, and charts

### The Adult:

- Models the scientific process by asking questions that allow children to explain, predict, and draw conclusions:
  - What is the question we want answered? (State question or problem)
  - What might the answer be? What may happen? (Predict the answer)
  - How can we find out? (Conduct experiments)
  - What happened? (Observe results)
  - Was our guess right? Why? Why not? (Make conclusions)
- Documents the process to share with others
- Encourages children to ask questions and find answers through active exploration and reflection on what they learn
- Observes nature and discusses the life cycles of animals (butterflies, frogs)
- Provides pictures of steps to perform “experiments” or complete projects
- Explicitly models and explains how to use the tools and materials (magnets, magnifying glasses, microscope, tongs, and mirrors)

## The Environment Includes:

- Natural objects that are placed at different levels (floor, tables, shelves) to be accessible throughout the day for observation, exploration and manipulation
- Magnets, magnifying glasses, balance scales, gears, pulleys, mirrors, measuring devices, etc.
- Lamps or flashlights to enable children to inspect materials under direct light
- Items placed on high contrast materials, such as light colored material on a dark surface or dark colored items on white
- Resources to support and pictures to show naturally occurring events, such as seed growth

## Strategies to Support Scientific Skills and Methods

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- To develop critical thinking skills, ask child if a random item will fit in their collection or sequence that they're creating. Ask "why" or "why not" and "how did you decide?"
- Challenge children to question their own thinking and conclusions to promote further learning. For example, while discussing how to build and dress a snowman in the cold, the adult incorporates children's ideas and comments. The adult asks questions about why boots are needed outside or whether you can put on socks on after you put on shoes.
- Document changes that occur in experiments by photographing the steps/changes. Later, children can sequence the picture as they discuss the process and the effect of their experiment.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Use special or adaptive tools to increase a child's level of participation: a picture communication board to allow children to make choices, ask questions and comment.
- Encourage hands-on and sensory experiences, such as touching, holding, exploring, tasting, smelling and manipulating.
- Provide physical guidance/support in using science tools when needed.
- Break the scientific process down into simple steps and demonstrate actions.
- Use pictures and simple words to describe the action and show process.
- Adapt items such as scoops, tongs and magnifier handles with ping-pong or tennis balls to make them easier to grasp.
- Ensure that outdoor explorations and field trips are accessible for ALL children.

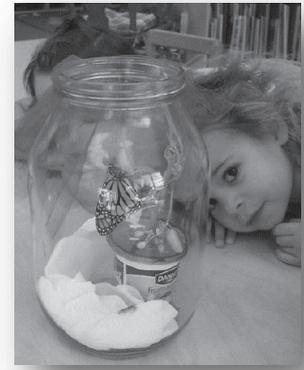
### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Pre-teach new science vocabulary words before a lesson using those words and provide developmentally appropriate definitions.
- Work with children in small group settings to help promote language development and understanding of the scientific process and skills.
- Use pictures and simple words to describe the action and show process.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Include science materials and visuals that accurately reflect the cultures and language of children and families, such as books that include authentic photographs, illustrations that accurately reflect the cultures of the children involved in science activities.

# Scientific Knowledge (s.02)



## Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows interest in active investigations by observing, describing, and discussing
- Child describes or represents a series of events in the correct sequence
- Child demonstrates understanding of natural processes and simple cause and effect
- Child shows interest in measurement of time, length, distance, and weight
- Child develops increased ability to observe and discuss things that are similar and different
- Child can differentiate between living and nonliving organisms

## Learning in Action: Examples

### The Child:

- Compares the properties of objects that float in water with objects that sink
- Compares the properties of objects that go fast or slow on ramps (force and motion)
- Examines senses we use when we do things: playing with a ball, seeing clouds in the sky
- Compares own handprint to those of others
- Compares characteristics between living and nonliving organisms
- Participates in caring for living things, such as plants and animals
- Uses an eye dropper to drop color in glasses of water

### The Adult:

- Encourages children to discuss objects and events that they observed
- Provides opportunities to observe nature and make predictions about natural events
- Provides opportunities for observation and comparison, such as comparing vegetables that grow above or below ground
- Provides information about specific scientific concepts, such as properties of objects, living things vs. nonliving things, characteristics of animals, plants, and insects, and natural events
- Explicitly guides children's investigation while providing them with time for exploration

### The Environment Includes:

- A variety of living and non-living materials from the natural world: plants, animals, rocks
- Photos taken during walks to retell story or the events experienced during the walk
- Materials to encourage curiosity and exploration (sand, water, ant farms, tadpoles, blocks, and balls)
- Field trips to observe different environments (farm, aquarium, zoo, nursery)
- Informational, non-fiction books with photos and simple explanation

# Strategies to Support Scientific Knowledge

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## Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Ask children to predict how much two or three items weigh. Then weigh them and chart how close their guess was with the actual weight, using words like more, less, and same.
- Ensure children participate, meaningfully, during experiments and are given opportunities to reflect on their investigation. For example, during a demonstration of a volcano, each student gets to pour vinegar, a liquid that causes the volcano to erupt, and is asked why.
- When there are not real life opportunities, spend time connecting abstract ideas. For example, when an adult in Nebraska reads a book about oceans and the adult recognizes that most children have not seen an ocean, take time to talk with them about where they might see an ocean, what it feels like, what lives in the ocean, and so forth. Have children who have seen an ocean share their experiences.

## Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Adapt tools to increase a child's level of participation, For example, make adaptations to watering cans and other items used in exploration and the caring of living things.
- Ensure all children have inside and outside, hands-on and sensory experiences (touching, holding, exploring, tasting, smelling, and manipulating).
- Provide physical guidance/support in using science tools when needed.
- Break the scientific process down into simple steps and demonstrate actions.
- Picture communication board to allow children to make choices, answer questions, and express observations.

## Supporting English Language Learners:

- Pair up English language learners with English-speaking children to help children learn science concepts.
- Teach scientific concepts to children in small groups to ensure students understand and participate.
- Break processes down into simple steps and demonstrate actions using simple words.
- Use pictures that help demonstrate the descriptive words you are teaching children. Have them point to the picture that describes the comparison they are investigating, such as photos of celery absorbing colored water in different stages of the experiment when teaching how every plant uses water to carry nutrients through the plant bodies.

## Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Invite community members who reflect the cultures of the children into the class/group to participate in activities that use the scientific process.
- Ensure cultural beliefs are integrated into science learning. For example, incorporate the Native American culture of using only what is needed so as not to be wasteful, or thanking Mother Earth for providing plants.

## Print Resources

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- Bugs, Bugs, Bugs! 21 Songs and Over 250 Activities for Young Children*, Pam Schiller (2006).
- Building Structures with Young Children* (DVD also available), Ingrid Chalufour and Karen Worth (2004).
- Discovering Nature with Young Children*, Ingrid Chalufour & Karen Worth (2003).
- Exploring Water with Young Children* (DVD also available), Ingrid Chalufour and Karen Worth (2005).
- The Everything Kids' Science Experiments Book*, Tom Robinson (2001).
- Greening School Grounds: Creating Habitats for Learning*, Tim Grand and Gail Littlejohn (2001).
- Incredible Edible Science: Recipes for Developing Science and Literacy Skills*, Liz Plaster and Rick Krustchinsky (2010).
- Kitchen Science*, Shar Levine and Leslie Johnstone (2003).
- Learning with Nature Idea Book*, National Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation (2007).
- My Big World of Wonder*, Sherri Griffin (2004).
- Natural Playscapes: Creating Outdoor Play Environments for the Soul*, Rusty Keeler (2008).
- Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines: Connecting Children to Nature* (2008),  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature\\_education.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/nature_education.pdf).
- Picture Science: Using Digital Photography to Teach Young Children*, Carla Newmann-Hinds (2007).
- The Potential of a Puddle*, Clair Warden (2005).
- The Preschool Scientist: Using Learning Centers to Discover and Explore Science*, Robert Williams (2010).
- Preschool Pathways to Science: Facilitating Scientific Ways of Thinking, Talking, Doing, and Understanding*, Rochel Gelman (2010).
- Science Experiences for the Early Childhood Years: An Integrated Approach (10<sup>th</sup> ed.)*, Jean D. Harlan and Mary S. Rivkin (2011).
- Science in Early Childhood Education DVD Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices DVD*, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2008).
- Spotlight on Young Children Exploring Nature*, Amy Shillady (2013).
- Teaching STEM in the Early Years: Activities for Integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics*, Sally Moomaw (2013).
- Worms, Shadows and Whirlpools: Science in the Early Childhood Classroom*, Sharon Grollman and Karen Worth (2003).

These resources, and many others, may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center by visiting <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/mediactr.html> or by calling 1-402-557-6885 or 1-800-9CHILD.

## Online Resources

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Annotated Bibliographies (click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center):

Science, created on 5/2/12

Clover Kid Corner Play and Activities <http://liferaydemo.unl.edu/web/child/cloverkid>.

Ladybug: a magazine for young children featuring seasonal articles and poems that include science concepts [www.ladybugmagkids.com](http://www.ladybugmagkids.com).

Science Kids Fun Science and Technology for Kids [www.sciencekids.co.nz/experiments.html](http://www.sciencekids.co.nz/experiments.html).

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Standards	NE Rule 11 Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Standards
Cognition & General Knowledge	Science: Scientific Skills & Methods (S.01)	Science & Technology 24.	Science Knowledge & Skills: Conceptual Knowledge of the Natural & Physical World	SC 2.1.1.a SC 2.1.1.b SC 2.1.1.c SC 2.1.1.e	004.05A3 004.05A6 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Not Applicable
		Science & Technology 25.				
		Science & Technology 26.				
		Science & Technology 27.				
		Science & Technology 28.				
	Science: Scientific Knowledge (S.02)	Science & Technology 24.	Science Knowledge & Skills: Scientific Skills & Method	SC 2.1.1.f SC 2.2.1.a SC 2.2.1.b SC 2.3.1.a	004.05A3 004.05A6 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	
		Science & Technology 28.				
		Cognitive 13.6.				
		Mathematics 22.6.				

Sources: Teaching Strategies, Inc.: [www.TeachingStrategies.com](http://www.TeachingStrategies.com). Revised Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eeed/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS\\_Revised\\_Child\\_Outcomes\\_Framework\(rev-Sept2011\).pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eeed/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework(rev-Sept2011).pdf). Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 391 - Children's Services Licensing: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\\_childcare\\_childcareindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx). Nebraska K-12 Academic Standards: <http://www.education.ne.gov/academicstandards/>. Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations: <http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf>.

# Creative Arts

Music CA.01

Art CA.02

Movement CA.03

Dramatic Play CA.04

**Creative arts activities allow children to use individual ideas, feelings, and expressions engaging children’s minds, bodies, and senses.** In the preschool environment, creative arts can be integrated into all curriculum areas to develop an appreciation for the arts, such as drawing tools with building materials, painting supplies outdoors, books about art, drawing software for computers, etc.

**Creative arts foster creative and individual expression, self-esteem, imagination, and appreciation of cultural diversities.** With the introduction of the various components—music, movement, dramatic expression, and visual arts—the preschool child is encouraged to listen, observe, discuss, move, solve problems, explore and express him/herself creatively. Creative arts help children learn to read by using materials and tools to create “pictures,” sculptures and other two and three-dimensional projects. Children develop skills in visualization and representation that are very important in the process of learning to read.

**On a daily basis, young children are given opportunities for creative activities, emphasizing the experience rather than the outcome; it’s the process, not the product that’s important.** These experiences should allow for choice, individual expression, and active exploration, offered in a risk-free environment where all children are encouraged to move freely through the creative process.



# Music (CA.01)

## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child is able to sing, play, move and create music, expressing individual imagination
  - Takes the lead in music activities
  - Develops an appreciation for music
- Child responds to music through movement
  - Responds to the beat of songs or instrumental music with more complex movements (walking or jumping to the beat)
  - Uses music as an avenue to express thoughts, feelings, and energy
  - Describes and carries out movement sequences
- Child is able to distinguish between different types of music (loud/soft, fast/slow, happy/sad)
- Child uses music as a way of learning other concepts, (literacy, rhyme, math, weather)



## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Participates in music activities, both indoors and outdoors (listening, singing, finger plays, games, performances)
- Uses props to respond with expression to music (scarves, streamers, instruments)
- Knows the words of often-repeated songs, humming or singing them during other parts of the day
- Makes up songs to accompany their play activities
- Imitates movement to a steady beat

### The Adult:

- Encourages children's interest in music, creative movement and dance
- Provides opportunities for children to experience movement through music
- Introduces children to different kinds of music (jazz, rock, classical, music from other cultures)
- Uses music for different purposes (moving, calming, learning, transitioning to a new activity or area, signaling a quiet work time)
- Provides props for children to use with music activities (rhythm and musical instruments, scarves)

## The Environment Includes:

- Materials for children to create their own instruments (strings, rubber bands, boxes, cans)
- A variety of types of music for children to experience (lullabies, folk music, classical, jazz, children's songs, and songs from other cultures and in other languages)
- Musical instruments for children to use during choice time to allow for creativity

## Strategies to Support Music

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Allow children to record their own songs and play them back.
- Play musical instruments of varying pitch and ask children to position their bodies according to the sound: stand on tip toe for high pitch and crouch down low for a low pitch.
- Incorporate different strategies to increase children's familiarity with rhythms. Use poems, chants and songs with steady beats.
- Roll up paper sacks and tape them to create rhythm sticks. Emphasize beats with tapping the sticks to the music.
- Intentionally choose materials that add to the sounds of the room.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Use multisensory adaptations, such as switch-adapted music and computer software, to support participation in music experiences including singing and listening to music.
- Modify musical instruments to allow children to grasp them and participate independently in making music.
- Communication boards can be used to make choices and express feelings about songs.
- Encourage participation at any level; allow children to stand, rather than sit, or vice versa.
- Consider the needs of individual children. For example, children with autism may be sensitive to some sounds.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Play music as a way to help children feel welcome and introduce language through songs and games.
- Create ways for children to participate in activities in a non-verbal way (clapping, playing instruments).
- Play music to engage children and teach them language.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Invite family and community members to share and teach children about their culture's songs, music, musical instruments, and dances, and provide or create similar props for individual exploration.
- Provide music and instruments from different cultures, and songs in different languages, including sign.
- Have music available in the home language of the children.

# Art (CA.02)



## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child progresses in exploration and experimentation with new materials and techniques
  - Uses materials to make a simple representation and describes or demonstrates how it was made
- Child gains experience in making shapes and linear patterns
  - Draws or paints images with a few details
- Child broadens artistic exploration
- Child develops confidence in own creative expression through experiences that celebrate what child learns through the process, rather than creating a product
- Child uses materials to build and create a three-dimensional structure to represent another item (blocks become a castle, clay becomes a snake)

## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Participates in individual and group art activities that reflect thoughts, feelings, experiences or knowledge
- Uses new materials to paint (cotton swabs, straws, twigs, marbles, trucks, feathers)
- Tries a variety of materials and ways of using the materials (overlapping tissue paper, using a big brush to paint broad strokes, combining colors, developing patterns)
- Attaches materials using a variety of methods (tape, stapler, string, pipe cleaners, glue)
- Discusses own creations and those of others

### The Adult:

- Provides opportunities to discuss art that the child has created and others
- Provides opportunities for exploration of the relationship of space and objects as well as color, balance, texture and design
- Points out various forms of media found in books, photographs/prints in a variety of settings
- Provides opportunity to observe various artists who use different techniques and art media
- Encourages child to appreciate the process of creating rather than the end product

### The Environment Includes:

- A variety of art materials (paint, crayons, markers, watercolors, collage materials, paper, scissors, glue, stamp pads, templates, stencils, clay, playdough, computer paint programs) that are easily accessible to children
- Space to display children's artwork, and works by various artists in the program/community
- Children's art displayed at child's eye level

## Strategies to Support Art

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Take a nature walk or bring in natural pieces from outdoors and encourage children to use different materials to recreate what they see, in both 2-dimension and 3-dimension.
- Ask children to share their discoveries about art materials and tools. Their insights will inspire innovation in their peers.
- Challenge children to combine art materials and use tools in unconventional ways; using scissors to cut play dough, stitching paper with large tapestry needles.
- Provide illustrations and reproductions that highlight a feature of line or bold colors.
- Use craft sticks and twigs to make line drawings in mud or patches of snow outdoors, or trace shapes on fogged windows.
- Encourage children to view artwork from various perspectives or positions (up close, far away, from the side, squinting) to see whether things look different in relation to one another.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Respect needs of individual children who might not tolerate some textures or materials.
- Encourage participation at any level; allow children to stand, rather than sit, or vice versa.
- Adapt materials to children's needs and abilities: crayons or markers (with ping pong ball on the end to hold on to and draw) for children unable to grip, paintbrushes made easier to grasp (lengthen or shorten handle), attach to a mitten with Velcro, or build up with pipe insulation, tape paper onto table or use table-top easel.
- Provide children with materials for painting that are easier to grasp such as sponges or containers you can squeeze paint out of, and textured or thick-handled tools.
- Use materials with visual contrast: dark paint on white paper for children with visual impairments.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Create interesting centers with creative materials (art supplies, musical instruments, etc.) which give children opportunities to practice their oral language skills and express themselves creatively.
- Use pictures and real world objects to teach basic words like "paintbrush," "marker" and "book." Ask families to share the same words in their home language.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Invite family and community members to share and teach children about the art from their culture: quilts, weaving, clay pottery, and provide similar materials for individual exploration.
- Display and discuss artwork from around the world.

# Movement (CA.03)

## Widely Held Expectations

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- Child expresses strong emphasis, steady beats and changing dynamics in various musical tempos and styles through movement
  - Responds to the beat of songs or instrumental music with more complex movements (walking or jumping to the beat, clapping)
- Child demonstrates a sense of balance and body coordination
  - Demonstrates a wide variety of positions (stretching, bending, rocking, twisting, etc.)
- Child represents experiences through movement
  - Demonstrates movement concepts (feelings, directions, words, ideas, etc.)
- Child understands the value of movement to stay healthy



## Learning in Action: Examples

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### The Child:

- Uses movement to interpret or imitate feelings, animals, and such things as plants growing, or a rainstorm
- Shows creativity using his/her body (dance, march, hop, jump, sway, clap, snap, stomp, twist, turn)
- Uses props to create special movements and dances (scarves, streamers, instruments)

### The Adult:

- Provides opportunities for children to move their bodies to various rhythms and musical tempos
- Introduces games and activities that involve balance and body coordination
- Plans indoor and outdoor activities involving balancing, running, jumping and other vigorous movements, to increase children's understanding of movement

### The Environment Includes:

- Materials, equipment and experiences that allow children to practice developing skills in movement and rhythm
- Materials that encourage movement (scarves, hoops, flags, wands)
- Adequate, safe space to move without infringing upon others' space

## Strategies to Support Movement

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Give children hula hoops, scarves, etc., to help them discover relationships between themselves and objects: walk around the hula hoop, hop inside it, or have one child hold an edge of the hoop while the other child crawls through it.
- Use inexpensive party streamers and help children tape them to craft sticks and encourage them to move to the rhythm of the music and create their own dance movements.

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Adapt the environment to promote participation, engagement, and learning using easy-to-grip materials and room arrangement to provide enough space (wide aisles, smooth surfaces).
- Provide adaptations to floor, include rugs, large balls and beanbags chairs to support movement, wedges to support rolling and indoor swings for low energy movement.
- Have children work with a friend to guide each other through movement activities.
- Provide earmuffs or headphones for children who are sensitive to sound if the area gets too noisy.
- Provide picture communication board to allow children to make choices and tell how they want to move (fast/slow).

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Encourage children to model movement language and actions with each other.
- Work with interpreters, cultural mediators and/or other community members if staff does not speak the children's home language.
- Incorporate movement games having English-speaking peers demonstrate all movements to help increase understanding of movement.

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Invite family and community members to share and teach children about their culture's songs, music, musical instruments, and dances, and provide or create similar props for individual exploration.

# Dramatic Play

## (CA.04)



### Widely Held Expectations

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- Child participates in a variety of dramatic play activities
  - Uses creativity, words, actions and materials to portray a role, situation or setting
  - Engages in role play with two or more children
- Child imagines and clearly describes characters, their relationships and their environment in dramatic play situations
  - Assumes the role of someone or something else, or talks in language relevant to the assumed role
- Child recognizes difference between pretend/fantasy and reality

### Learning in Action: Examples

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#### The Child:

- Expresses creativity using puppetry, storytelling, dance, plays, pantomime and theater
- Participates in discussions after attending a dramatic performance
- Acts out or retells a familiar story
- Talks to and plays with pretend friends, stuffed animals and other toys
- Engages in role play in various activities such as dramatic play, block play, outdoor play

#### The Adult:

- Provides opportunities for children to act out books, nursery rhymes, and assume roles in other ways
- Encourages children to tell and act out stories, stressing beginnings and endings to introduce sequencing
- Participates with children in various forms of dramatic expression including those from other cultures
- Arranges field trips (to art events, concerts, dance and theatrical performances, cultural fairs, nursing home or other facility that has people with disabilities, etc.)

#### The Environment Includes:

- Items used by people with disabilities, such as a cane, wheelchair or braces
- Dress up clothing with a variety of fasteners, some Velcro, some large and small buttons as well as snaps and buckles
- Dolls and images representing diverse cultures and abilities in the dramatic play area
- A well-equipped dramatic play center for active imaginative play with a variety of props (home-living, fire station, fast food restaurant, hospital, school)
- Materials representing various cultures (flags, pictures, foods, dolls, books, clothes, toys)

## Strategies to Support Dramatic Play

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### Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Provide non-stereotypical visual examples and props to encourage children to role play different occupations.
- Props in the outside area (dishes, wallets and purses, pretend food, maps, clothing) help children engage in dramatic play throughout the day.
- Use parallel talk (providing language for children's actions). Adult: "You are putting a dress on that baby doll and making her very warm and all dressed up. I wonder if you are going to pretend to take her somewhere." Child: "We are going to the store." Adult: "Getting dressed before going to the store is a good idea. I wonder what else you will need to do to get ready to go to the store. Do you have a list of what you need to buy at the store?"

### Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

- Use adaptations, such as pictures of sequence in activities, videos, and social stories to support play in daily routines.
- Adapt the environment to promote participation, engagement, and learning using easy-to-grip materials and room arrangement to provide enough space.
- Provide picture communication board to allow all children to make choices and express ideas and needs.

### Supporting English Language Learners:

- Make connections with community leaders and members who speak the child's language and ask them to come to your environment to talk about what they do. Encourage children to pretend to have their jobs.
- Provide and teach language for dramatic play in both the home language and English if possible.
- Provide materials from a variety of cultures for cooperative play such as cooking and eating utensils, and play food.
- Learn how to read the meaning of gestures and facial expressions. Is a child asking for a word? Does she want to play with a particular child?

### Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

- Invite family and community members to share and teach children about their jobs, talents, hobbies, art, or traditions, such as songs, music, musical instruments, dances, games, or traditional stories/poems traditional clothing, jewelry, hats, scarves, shoes, or family heirlooms, and tell why they are valued and provide similar props for dramatic play exploration.
- Ensure the environment and materials include such things as dolls, pictures, books and kitchen items that represent the people and objects which accurately reflect children's cultures in a respectful and authentic way.

## Print Resources

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- Active for Life: Developmentally Appropriate Movement Programs for Young Children*, Stephen W. Sanders (2002).
- Art in Universally Designed Preschool Environments DVD, Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices*, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2011).
- The Big Messy Art Book: But Easy to Clean Up*, Mary Ann F. Kohl (2000).
- The Bilingual Book of Rhymes, Songs, Stories and Fingerplays*, Pam Schiller, Rafael Lara-Alecio and Beverly J. Irby (2004).
- Cha, Cha, Cha: Spanish Learning Songs (CD)*, Jorge Anaya (2010).
- The Colors of Learning: Integrating the Visual Arts into the Early Childhood Curriculum*, Rosemary Althouse, Margaret H. Johnson and Sharon T. Mitchell (2003).
- Creativity and the Arts with Young Children*, Rebeca T. Isbell and Shirley C. Raines (2012).
- The Dancing Dialogue: Using Communicative Power of Movement with Young Children*, Suzi Tortora (2006).
- De Colores and Other Latin American Folk Songs (CD)*, Jose-Luis Orozco (2009).
- Learning to Read Through the Arts*, Bernadette O'Brien (2003).
- Movement Plus Music: Activities for Children Ages 3-7*, Phyllis S. Weikart (2004).
- Mudworks: Creative Clay, Dough and Modeling Experiences/ Experiencias Creativas Con Arcilla, Masa y Modelado (Spanish/English Bilingual Edition)*, Mary Ann F. Kohl and Kathleen Kerr (2001).
- The Power of Play: Learning What Comes Naturally*, David Elkind (2007).
- Sand and Water Play: Simple, Creative Activities for Young Children*, Sherrie West and Amy Cox (2001).
- Supporting Young Artists: The Development of the Visual Arts in Young Children*, Ann S. Epstein and Eli Trimis (2002).

These resources, and many others, may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center by visiting <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/mediactr.html> or by calling 1-402-557-6885 or 1-800-89CHILD.

## Online Resources

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The Artful Parent <http://www.artfulparent.com/2013/02/art-ideas-for-kids-to-challenge-their-creativity-hole-drawings-paintings.html>

Connecting Children to Nature: Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/naure\\_education.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/naure_education.pdf)

Dramatic Play and Prop Boxes: Child Care Lounge  
<http://www.teachpreschool.org/2012/01/everyday-dramatic-play-in-preschool-and-a-linky/>

Exploring Music and Movement with Young Children: Child Care Lounge  
<http://www.childcarelounge.com/activity/music-movement.php>

Music and Movement: The Perpetual Preschool  
<http://www.perpetualpreschool.com/preschoolsongs.html>

Teach Preschool: Promoting Excellence in Early Childhood Education  
<http://www.teachpreschool.org/category/creative-art/>  
<http://www.teachpreschool.org/2012/01/everyday-dramatic-play-in-preschool-and-a-linky/>

Preschool Arts and Crafts Activities <http://www.education.com/activity/preschool/arts-and-crafts/>

Up Down and All Around: A Fun and Exciting Program and DVD for Kids and Adults to Creatively Move Together (2008) <http://leapinglegs.com/about.html>

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Standards	NE Rule 11 Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Standards
Approaches to Learning	Creative Arts: Music (CA.01)	The Arts 34.	Creative Arts Expression: Music	LA 0.1.4a LA 0.1.4b LA 0.3.2a LA 0.1.2b	004.05A9 004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Not Applicable
		The Arts 35.	Creative Arts Expression: Creative Movement & Dance			
	Creative Arts: Art (CA.02)	The Arts 33.	Creative Arts Expression: Art	LA 0.3.1a	004.05A9 004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	
	Creative Arts: Movement (CA.03)	The Arts 34.	Creative Arts Expression: Music	LA 0.3.2a LA 0.3.2b	004.05A9 004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	
		The Arts 35.	Creative Arts Expression: Creative Movement & Dance			
		The Arts 36.	Creative Arts Expression: Drama			
	Creative Arts: Dramatic Play (CA.04)	Cognitive 14b.6.	Logic & Reasoning: Symbolic Representation	LA 0.3.1a LA 0.3.2a	004.05A9 004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	

Sources: Teaching Strategies, Inc.: [www.TeachingStrategies.com](http://www.TeachingStrategies.com). Revised Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework: [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS\\_Revised\\_Child\\_Outcomes\\_Framework\(rev-Sept2011\).pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework(rev-Sept2011).pdf). Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Title 391- Children's Services Licensing: [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\\_childcare\\_childcareindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx). Nebraska K-12 Academic Standards: <http://www.education.ne.gov/academicstandards/>. Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations: <http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf>.

## Glossary: Early Learning Guidelines Definitions

**Accommodations:** Changes in the curricular material and experiences to accommodate a child's particular needs.

**Adaptive equipment:** Tools designed to help people with disabilities be more independent.

**Alliteration:** Ability to identify words that begin with the same sound.

**Approaches to learning:** General approach to learning includes child's attitudes, habits, and learning styles.

**Assessment and evaluation:** A process through which evidence is gathered in a range of content areas to determine both a student's understanding and the ability to apply that understanding.

**Assistive technology:** Technology used by individuals with disabilities in order to perform functions that might otherwise be difficult or impossible.

**Auditory:** Relating to sense of hearing and listening.

**Authentic:** Made or done in the traditional or original way so it is genuine and real to that specific child, family, or culture; not based on stereotypes.

**Competence:** Possession of required skill, knowledge, or capacity.

**Cooperative play:** Making or doing something together that requires the skills, ideas, and contributions of each person.

**Critical thinking:** When children have time to analyze, organize ideas, and assess information in order to solve problems.

**Cultural mediators:** A person who understands and values the child's culture, ideally someone from, or very familiar with that culture.

**Curriculum:** A set of learning experiences created around a program's educational goals.

**Diversity:** Recognizing and valuing differences; includes the belief that each family has its own structure, roles, values, beliefs, and coping styles. Respect for and acceptance of this diversity is a cornerstone of high quality, family-centered programs.

**Developmental delay:** A child, birth through age eight, who has been identified by a multidisciplinary team as having either a significant delay in the function of one or more of the following areas: cognitive development, physical development, communicative development, social or emotional development; or adaptive behavior or skills development or a diagnosed physical or medical condition that has a high probability of resulting in a substantial delay in function in one or more of such areas.

**Developmentally appropriate:** Learning environment and teaching strategies which are based on theories and research about the growth and development of children.

**Domains:** Key areas of children's development and learning.

**Dramatic play center:** Area for children to play, pretend, and use their imagination.

**English Language Learners (ELL)** – A person who is in the process of learning the English language, and has a first language other than English.

**Environmental print:** Printed materials that are a part of everyday life. They include signs, billboards, labels, business logos, road signs, restaurants, cereal boxes, and other places in the environment.

**Executive functions:** Thoughts that are carried out or “executed” as actions in order to reach a goal. Executive functions include skills such as maintaining attention, controlling impulses, keeping free of distractions, engaging in mental planning and problem solving, maintaining flexibility, time management, setting priorities, organizing, and executing a task. Difficulty with any of these abilities can cause academic problems as well as problems with everyday life tasks.

**Facilitate:** To guide through the process.

**Fine (small) motor skills:** Skills that use small muscle groups such as hands and fingers and frequently involve hand-eye coordination.

**Food plate model:** The new dietary guide from the USDA which replaces the Food Pyramid.

**Functional behavior assessment:** A comprehensive and individualized strategy to identify why the child uses a specific behavior; a tool to help identify the best intervention to address challenging behaviors.

**Gross (large) motor skills:** The movement and action of large and/or major muscle groups.

**Inclusion:** The practice in which all children, with a range of abilities and disabilities, participate together and are regarded as equal members of the learning community.

**Individualized Education Plan (IEP):** A written plan/program developed by the schools special education team with input from the parent, and is aimed at the success of the student in meeting their goals.

**Initiative:** The ability to assess, to act or take charge, to begin or to follow through, often without another’s influence.

**Integrated curriculum:** Connects separate subject areas by presenting information/activities in a thematic, holistic manner to meet the common needs of all learners.

**Learning environment:** Includes any setting that a child is in and receives formal and informal education. Examples include home, family childcare provider’s home, center-based or school-based preschool, and small groups, such as reading time at a library,

**Linguistically:** Relating or belonging to language: reading, writing, and speaking.

**Literacy-rich environment:** Program includes literacy activities in every component of the schedule, every day and throughout the environment.

**Manipulatives:** Materials that allow children to explore, experiment, or interact by using their hands or by mechanical methods.

**Multicultural curriculum:** Understanding of responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity in activities, materials, and actions.

**Multi-sensory:** Using one or more of the five senses (see, feel, taste, sound, and smell) to stimulate learning and engage children.

**Numeral awareness:** Understanding that a word, letter or symbol represents a number.

**Number and operations:** Ways of representing number, relationships among numbers and number systems, how numerals relate to each other and how to compute and make estimates.

**Open-ended questioning techniques:** Questions that must be answered with a response other than ‘Yes’ or ‘No’.

**Parallel talk:** When an adult describes what a child is doing to that child.

**Peer:** Person of the same age.

**Phonological awareness:** The ability to hear and manipulate the sounds of spoken words.

**Process-oriented experiences:** Children participate in activities which require them to think, communicate, organize, interact, make decisions and solve problems, both individually and in group situations.

**Pyramid Model:** An intervention model developed by Vanderbilt University which helps to support and strengthen young children's social emotional development.

**Scaffolding:** Just the right amount of support given during the learning process which helps the child have a better understanding of the process or content.

**Scientific skills and methods:** Process used to investigate observations, solve problems and test hypotheses.

**Self-regulation:** The process that children go through to be able to respond appropriately to their environment. Children translate what they experience into information that they can use to regulate thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

**Social strategies:** Activities which encompass friendship skills, emotional literacy, and problem solving strategies.

**Spatial sense:** The understanding of shapes, their properties, and how objects are related to one another.

**Transition:** Movement or change from one condition, place or activity to another.

## Additional Resources to Support Early Learning (Listed by Topic)

Many of these local and national resources were used in the development and revision of the Guidelines. Additional references, specific to each of the learning domains, are presented within the specific sections of the document, where they best fit.

These resources, and many others, may be available for Nebraska residents to borrow from the Early Childhood Training Center's Media Center by visiting <http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/medictr.html> or by calling 1-402-557-6885 or 1-800-89CHILD.

### Early Childhood Programming: Children's Growth, Development and Learning

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Responsive, effective teaching and caregiving depends on an understanding of how young children learn and grow, described in the following resources.

**Annotated Bibliographies** (Click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center.)

[Brain Development](#), updated on 11/1/11

[Child Development](#), updated on 11/8/11

[Preschoolers](#), updated on 3/15/12

[Professional Development](#), updated on 1/3/12

[Abuse, Neglect, Bullying, and Violence](#), updated on 11/3/11

[Adult/Child Interaction for Responsive Caregiving](#), updated on 10/13/11

[Nature Education for Young Children](#), updated on 11/3/11

### Nebraska Publications

*Early Childhood Programs: A Guide to Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Entrance Age In Center-based Early Childhood Programs Operated by Public School Districts, Educational Service Units and their Community Partners.* This guide is written as a resource for any public school district or educational service unit (ESU) developing and implementing high-quality center-based early childhood education programs serving children from birth to kindergarten entrance age. It is designed to provide strategies and resources to assist districts, ESUs, and community-based organizations in working together to ensure that all young children and their families have equity of access to high quality early learning experiences in their communities (2012) [http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/ec\\_grant/A\\_Guide\\_to\\_Serving\\_Young\\_Children\\_Final.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/ec_grant/A_Guide_to_Serving_Young_Children_Final.pdf).

*Guidelines Recommended for Use with Rule 24*, Nebraska Department of Education. Rule 24 and accompanying guidelines govern the provision of teaching endorsements by approved teacher education programs in Nebraska colleges and universities. These include teaching endorsements for early childhood education, early childhood education unified, and preschool disabilities (2012) [http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/Rule24\\_Guidelines\\_2012.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/Rule24_Guidelines_2012.pdf).

*Indicators of Quality. Guiding the Development and Improvement of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs*, Nebraska Department of Education. The indicators are designed to promote quality and excellence in early care and education programs (1998).

*A Kindergarten for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood. This position statement provides a summary of information about kindergarten that is deeply grounded in years of research, early childhood science, and best practices for young children (2010) <http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/KStatement.pdf>.

*Nebraska's Core Competencies for Early Childhood Professionals: Knowledge and Skills Needed to Effectively Work with Children Ages Birth to Five Years*. Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood (2009) [http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/core\\_comp\\_0510.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/core_comp_0510.pdf).

*Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines-- Kindergarten: Language & Literacy and Mathematics*. These guidelines are a practical resource to support the teacher; they also provide examples of authentic activities and assessments which can be incorporated into the existing curriculum to aid the child's academic and social growth. These guidelines provide examples of how the Nebraska Standards in language arts and mathematics can be intentionally taught and informally integrated throughout a range of daily experiences to support optimal learning outcomes for young children (2010) [http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/pubs/ELG/kgn\\_langlit.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/pubs/ELG/kgn_langlit.pdf)  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/pubs/ELG/kgn\\_math.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/pubs/ELG/kgn_math.pdf).

*Nebraska Mathematics Standards (2009), Nebraska Language Arts Standards (2009), Nebraska Science Standards (2010), Nebraska Social Studies/History Standards (2012)*. The State Board of Education adopted these revised content standards to identify what students should know and be able to do and what teachers should teach for students in grades K-12 in the year indicated. <http://www.education.ne.gov/academicstandards/>.

*Nebraska PreK-16 Initiative*. A Nebraska Department of Education and University of Nebraska statewide initiative to promote a seamless educational path for Nebraska students in the areas of mathematics, language arts/English, and world languages across preschool through post-secondary programs (2003)  
<http://www.education.ne.gov/read/PreK16ArticulationDocument.pdf>  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/math/PDFs/Nebraska\\_Mathematics\\_Articulation.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/math/PDFs/Nebraska_Mathematics_Articulation.pdf)  
<http://www.education.ne.gov/forlg/PI6/PreK16WLDdocument.pdf>.

*Rule 11, Regulations for Early Childhood Education Programs, Title 92 NAC, Chapter 11*. Nebraska Department of Education. Rule 11 is a set of basic standards to guide program planning and development for all center-based programs serving children age birth to 5, operated by public schools and/or Educational Service Units (2007)  
<http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEANrule112007.pdf>.

*Rule 24, Regulations for Certificate Endorsements, Title 92 NAC, Chapter 24*. Nebraska Department of Education (2012) [http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/RULE\\_24\\_2012.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/RULE_24_2012.pdf).

## **Publications by Others**

*Basics of Developmentally Appropriate Practice: An Introduction for Teachers of Children 3 to 6*. Carol Copple & Sue Bredekamp.. This book describes the core concepts and makes them meaningful to everyday practice. National Association for the Education of Young Children (2009).

*Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Focus on Preschoolers*. Carol Copple, Sue Bradenkamp, Derry Koralek & Kathy Charner. Early childhood teachers will gain a better understanding of DAP and how to pally it in their work with preschool children. National Association for the Education of Young Children (2013).

*Eager to Learn: Educating our Preschoolers*, Barbara T. Bowman, Suzanne Donovan and M. Susan Burns (2001).

*Early Childhood Education: Young Adult Outcomes From the Abecedarian Project*. Campbell, F., Ramey, C., Pungello, E., Sparling, J. & Miller-Johnson, S. *Applied Developmental Science*, 6:1 (2002) pp. 42-57.

*Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success*. A Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. This position statement defines the desired content and outcomes of young children's education (2002).

*From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*, Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah Phillips. This book examines neurobiological perspectives, as well as those of behavioral and social sciences, and makes specific recommendations for applying this knowledge in policy and practice for the well-being of children (2000).

*Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework*. Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. The Framework represents the foundation of the Head Start Approach to School Readiness. It aligns with and builds from the five essential domains of school readiness identified by the National Education Goals Panel and lays out essential areas of learning and development. The Framework can be used to guide curriculum, implementation, and assessment to plan teaching and learning experiences that align to school readiness goals and track children's progress across developmental domains. The domains and domain elements apply to all 3 to 5 year olds in Head Start and other early childhood programs, including dual language learners and children with disabilities (2011).

*Head Start Child Outcomes Framework*. Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. The Head Start Child Outcomes Framework is intended to guide Head Start programs in their ongoing assessment of the progress and accomplishments of children, and in their efforts to analyze and use data on child outcomes in program self-assessment and continuous improvement.

*Head Start Performance Standards*. Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. These are mandatory regulations that grantees and delegate agencies must implement in order to operate a Head Start program. The Standards define the objectives and features of a quality Head Start program in concrete terms; they articulate a vision of service delivery to young children and families; and they provide a regulatory structure for the monitoring and enforcement of quality standards (2009).

*The Intentional Teacher: Choosing the Best Strategies for Young Children's Learning*. Ann Epstein (2007).

*NAEYC Spotlight on Young Children and Play*, Derry Koralek, (ed.; 2004)  
[http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/Play/Spotlight%20on%20Play\\_2.pdf](http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/Play/Spotlight%20on%20Play_2.pdf).

*Technology and Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs Serving children from Birth-Age 8: A joint position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College* (2012).

## Websites

*The Learning Child*: Research-based programs and education to help you support the development of children and youth. Resources include: Text for Teachers and U R Parent app <http://www.extension.unl.edu/child-youth>.

*PBS LearningMedia*: Free digital media content library designed to support curriculum-based teaching and learning; classroom-ready, digital resources including video and interactives for Whiteboard, plus audio, photos, and in-depth lesson plans <http://nt.pbslearningmedia.org/>.

## Inclusion: Supporting Diversity and Children with Special Needs

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Effective practices with young children value the unique and individual characteristics of children, including their special learning or developmental needs. Children's growth and learning is fostered when the environment reflects the child's culture and also supports both the child's native language and English. Accommodations are also made to ensure that all children can actively and meaningfully participate in the early childhood setting.

**Annotated Bibliographies** (click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center.)

*Children with Special Needs*, updated on 10/26/11

*Cultural Diversity*, updated on 11/22/11

*Spanish Language Materials (English version)*, updated on 12/7/11

*Spanish Language Materials (Spanish version)*, updated on 12/7/11

## Nebraska Publications

*Rule 51, Regulations and Standards for Special Education Programs*. Title 92 NAC, Chapter 51, Nebraska Department of Education. Rule 51 contains requirements for school districts in the provision of special education and related services for children and youth with disabilities age birth-21, specifically in Section 007: Individual Education Program (IEP) and the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), and in Section 008: Placement of Children with Disabilities (2010) [http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEAN51\\_2010.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/legal/webrulespdf/CLEAN51_2010.pdf).

## Publications by Others

*Building Blocks for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs*, Susan R. Sandall and Ilene S. Schwartz (2002).

*CARA's Kits: Creating Adaptations for Routines and Activities*: A full-color quick guide and multimedia CD-ROM; provides a clear, six step process for planning and implementing adaptations and increasing participation in activities and routines. S.A. Milbourne and P.H. Campbell. Division of Early Childhood (2007).

*Challenging Common Myths About Young English Language Learners: a discussion of research findings that dispel common myths about dual language development and educational approaches to dual language learning for children ages three to eight*. Linda M. Espinosa. Foundation for Child

Development FCD Policy Brief Advancing PK-3 No. Eight January (2008) <http://fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/MythsOfTeachingELLsEspinosa.pdf>.

*DEC Recommended Practices in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education*. Identifies effective practices based on research and shared beliefs to help early childhood educators, other practitioners, families and administrators provide quality learning experiences that result in better outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families (2005).

*DEC Recommended Practices: Indicators of Quality in Programs for Infants and Young Children with Special Needs and Their Families*. Susan R. Sandall, Mary E. McLean and Barbara J. Smith (2000).

*Developing the Research Agenda for Young English Language Learners*. Eugene García and Ellen Frede (Eds.; 2010).

*Diversity in Children's Lives: Children's Books and Classroom Helps*, Molly Weston and Patricia W. Wesley (2002).

*Diversity in Early Care and Education: Honoring Differences (5th ed.)*, Janet Gonzalez-Mena (2007).

*Dual Language Learners with Challenging Behavior*. Karen Nermeth and Pamela Brillante. A collection of articles from National Association for the Education of Young Children- *Young Children* (2011) <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/Full%20DLL%20collection%20%20-%20interactive.pdf>.

*Early Childhood Inclusion. A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)*. The position statement outlines the importance for all children, regardless of abilities, to actively participate in natural and inclusive early childhood settings within their communities (2009) [http://www.dec-spced.org/uploads/docs/about\\_dec/position\\_concept\\_papers/PositionStatement\\_Inclusion\\_Joint\\_updated\\_May2009.pdf](http://www.dec-spced.org/uploads/docs/about_dec/position_concept_papers/PositionStatement_Inclusion_Joint_updated_May2009.pdf).

*Evaluating Young Children From Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds for Special Education Services*, Rashida Banerjee and Mark Guiberson (2012) <http://yec.sagepub.com/content/15/1/33.full.pdf+html?ikey=grHZlwOtPKLDc&keytype=ref&siteid=spyec>.

*Getting it Right for Young Children from Diverse Backgrounds: Applying Research to Improve Practice*, Linda Espinosa (2010).

*Handbook of Early Childhood Intervention (2nd ed.)*, Jack Shonkoff and Samuel Meisels (2000).

*Head Start Program Preparedness Checklist: Serving Dual Language Learners and Their Families, Version 5: A Tool to Assist Head Start and Early Head Start Programs to Assess Their Systems and Services for Dual Language Learners and Their Families*. The National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (2012) <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners/pdm/management/ProgramPreparedn.htm>.

*One Child, Two Languages: A Guide for Preschool Educators of Children Learning English as a Second Language*, Patton O. Tabors (1999).

*Racial and Ethnic Awareness. In Starting Small: Teaching Tolerance in Pre-school and the Early Grades*. Teaching Tolerance Project (1997).

*Recognition of Giftedness in the Early Years of School: Perspectives of Teachers, Parents, and Children*, Kerry Hodg and Coral Kemp. *Journal for the Education of the Gifted*; (2006) 30:2, pp. 164-204  
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ofs&AN=507940077&site=ehost-live>.

*Resource Guide: Selected Early Childhood/Early Intervention Training Materials* (11th ed.), Camille Catlett, Pamela J. Winton and Anna Mitchell (2002).

*Resources on Embracing Diversity in Early Childhood Settings- Young Children articles and NAEYC books. Beyond the Journal, Young Children on the Web* (2005)  
<http://journal.naeyc.org/btj/200511/DiversityResourcesBTJ1105.pdf>.

*Serving the Preschool Gifted Child: Programming and Resources*, J.R. Cukierkorn, F.A. Karnes, S.J. Manning, H. Houston, & K. Besnoy. *Roeper Review* (2007) 29: 4, pp.271-276  
<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Serving+the+preschool+gifted+child%3a+programming+and+resources.-a0166696358>.

*Teaching Young Gifted Children in the Regular Classroom: Identifying, Nurturing, and Challenging Ages 4-9*, Joan Franklin Smutny, Sally Yahnke Walker, and Elizabeth A. Meckstroth (1997).

## Websites

A free online resource for printing labels in Spanish <http://www.eichild.com/printables>.

*American Society of Deaf Children* [www.deafchildren.org](http://www.deafchildren.org).

*Answers for Families*: Gives information and support to families with special needs including discussion groups, resources and referrals <http://www.answers4families.org/>.

*Beginnings*: For parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing [www.ncbegin.com](http://www.ncbegin.com).

*International Children's Digital Library* <http://en.childrenslibrary.org/>.

*Jacob's Story in Just Being Kids: Supports and Services for Infants and Toddlers and Their Families in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places* (video). Edelman, L. (Producer) (2001). Denver: Western Media Products: [www.media-products.com](http://www.media-products.com). Used with permission from JFK Partners, University of Colorado School of Medicine and the Colorado Department of Education.

*Jenni's Story in Just Being Kids: Supports and Services for Infants and Toddlers and Their Families in Everyday Routines, Activities, and Places* (video). Edelman, L. (Producer) (2001). Denver: Western Media Products: [www.media-products.com](http://www.media-products.com). Used with permission from JFK Partners, University of Colorado School of Medicine and the Colorado Department of Education.

*Learn the Signs. Act Early*: Information for families and providers on developmental milestones and fact sheets [www.cdc.gov/actearly](http://www.cdc.gov/actearly).

*Let's Play!* Projects provides information on selecting toys for play, toys for children with disabilities, adapting toys to make them easier to use, locating specially designed toys as well as other resources to promote play <http://letplay.buffalo.edu/>.

*National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (NAPVI) and the American*

*Foundation for the Blind (AFB):* an online, multimedia community for parents and guardians of children with visual impairments <http://www.familyconnect.org>.

*National Association of Gifted Children* <http://www.nagc.org/EarlyChildhoodNetwork.aspx>.

*The National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness Strategies for Supporting All Dual Language Learners:* practical examples of how to use research-based strategies that support children at different levels of English language acquisition <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners>.

*Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind or Visually Impaired* <http://www.ncecbvi.org/>.

*Partnering 4 Students:* Nebraska's Tool Kit for Systems Involved in the Education of Students in Out-of-Home-Care <http://www.partnering4students.org/part-six/tool-e-l.html>.

*PTI Nebraska:* a statewide resource for families of children with disabilities or special health care needs, enabling parents to have the capacity to improve the education and healthcare outcomes for their children <http://pti-nebraska.org/>.

*Ready for Success Supporting Dual Language Learners in Head Start and Early Head Start.* (archived webinars). Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners/prof\\_dev/conferences/ReadyforSuccess.htm](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners/prof_dev/conferences/ReadyforSuccess.htm).

*Staying on Track:* Nebraska's Early Development Network mobile app <http://edn.ne.gov/stayontrackapp.html>.

*Young Dual Language Learners A Key Topic Resource List* [http://www.researchconnections.org/files/childcare/keytopics/Dual\\_Language\\_Learners.pdf](http://www.researchconnections.org/files/childcare/keytopics/Dual_Language_Learners.pdf).

## The Learning Environment

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The physical environment of children can be a powerful invitation to children's learning. These selected resources provide guidance to the underlying values and practical strategies that can engage children in a trusting and creative manner.

**Annotated Bibliographies** (click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center).

Playground Safety, updated on 11/17/11

### Nebraska Publications

*Child Care Licensing Standards, 391 NAC*, Department of Health and Human Services, Regulation and Licensure. These standards identify health and safety regulations for child care centers, family child care homes and preschools [http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl\\_childcare\\_childcareindex.aspx](http://dhhs.ne.gov/publichealth/Pages/crl_childcare_childcareindex.aspx).

## Publications by Others

*All About the ECERS-R: A Detailed Guide in Words and Pictures to be Used with the ECERS-R.*, Debby Cryer, Thelma Harms, and Cathy Riley (2003).

*Creating Rooms of Wonder: Valuing and Displaying Children’s Work to Enhance the Learning Process*, Carol Seefeldt (2002).

*Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early Childhood Environments*, Deb Curtis, and Margie Carter (2003).

*Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale Revised (ECERS-R)*, Thelma Harris, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer (2005).

*Playgrounds that Work: Creating Outdoor Play Environments for Children*, Pauline Berry (2001).

## Curriculum Approaches to Young Children’s Learning

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Children’s development and learning is fostered in an active, nurturing, and safe environment that adults carefully and intentionally design, illustrated through the following resources.

### Nebraska Publications

*The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland*. A joint project of the Nebraska Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Area Education Agencies and the Iowa and Nebraska Head Start-State Collaboration Offices. This project is a research-based framework for curriculum, instruction, and assessment for early childhood education. The program facilitates continuous learning by accommodating the broad range of children’s abilities, their learning rates and styles, and their knowledge, experiences, and interests (2001) [http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/pri\\_pro/PrimaryProgram.html](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/pri_pro/PrimaryProgram.html).

### Publications by Others

*The Creative Curriculum for Preschool (4th ed.)*, Diane Trister Dodge, Laura J. Colker and Cate Heroman, Teaching Strategies, Inc. (2002).

*Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation*. A Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE). This position statement outlines ways to build an effective, accountable system in programs for children birth through age eight (2003) <http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/CAPEexpand.pdf>.

*Measuring Growth: Curriculum and assessment considerations for young children from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds*, Linda Espinosa. *Psychology in the Schools*, 42(8), 837–853 (2005).

*Steps to Success: An Instructional Design for Early Literacy Mentor-Coaches in Head Start and Early Head Start*. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children & Families, Administration on Children, Youth & Families, Head Start Bureau <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/resources/video/STS>.

# Assessment Practices for Young Children and Programs

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Assessment should utilize contexts and settings that are familiar to children and are reflective of their everyday work. Multiple tools should be utilized, with heavy reliance on observational gathering and recording of children's growing and demonstrated knowledge and skills.

**Annotated Bibliographies** (click on link below for a description of topical resources available through the Early Childhood Training Center.)

Assessment, updated on 1/24/12

## Nebraska Publications

*The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland.* A joint project of the Nebraska Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Area Education Agencies and the Iowa and Nebraska Head Start-State Collaboration Offices. This project is a research-based framework for curriculum, instruction, and assessment for early childhood education. The program facilitates continuous learning by accommodating the broad range of children's abilities, their learning rates and styles, and their knowledge, experiences, and interests (2001) [http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/pri\\_pro/PrimaryProgram.html](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/pri_pro/PrimaryProgram.html).

*Results Matter Nebraska: Child, Program and Family Outcomes Technical Assistance Document for Early Childhood Programs operated by Public School Districts and Education Service Units,* Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood (2013).

## Publications by Others

*Assessing the State of State Assessments: Perspectives on Assessing Young Children,* Catherine Scott-Little, Sharon Lynn Kagan and Richard M. Clifford (2003).

*Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System for Infants and Children,* Diane D. Bricker, Kristie Pretti-Fontczak, Joann Johnson and Elizabeth Straka (2002).

*Basics of Assessment: A Primer for Early Childhood Professionals,* Oralie McAfee, Deborah Leong, and Elena Bodrova. National Association for the Education of Young Children (2004).

*Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS™):* An observation tool that focuses on the effectiveness of classroom interactions among teachers and children, promoting children's social and cognitive development, Robert Pianta, Karen LaParo, and Bridget Hamre (2008).

*Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation.* A Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE). This position statement outlines ways to build an effective, accountable system in programs for children birth through age eight (2003).

*Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale, Revised Edition,* Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford, and Debby Cryer (2005).

*Evaluating Young Children From Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds for Special Education Services,* Rashida Banerjee and Mark Guiberson (2012)

<http://yec.sagepub.com/content/15/1/33.full.pdf+html?ijkey=grHZlwOtPKLDc&keytype=ref&siteid=spyec>.

*Measuring Growth: Curriculum and assessment considerations for young children from culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse backgrounds*, Linda Espinosa. *Psychology in the Schools*, 42(8), 837–853 (2005).

*Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation (3rd ed.)*, National Association for Family Child Care (2002).

*Teaching Strategies GOLD<sup>®</sup>: Objectives for Development & Learning: Birth Through Kindergarten*: a seamless, research-based system proven to be reliable and valid for assessing children from birth through kindergarten, inclusive of all children, including English-language learners and children with disabilities. Cate Heroman, Dian Burts, Kai-lee Berke, and Toni Bickart, Teaching Strategies,<sup>®</sup> LLC. Reprinted with permission (2010).

*Users Guide to the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Toolkit*, Miriam W. Smith and David K. Dickinson (2002).

## Partnering with Families

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Families play a critical role in children’s growth and learning as a child’s first, primary, and lifelong teacher. Families, teachers and caregivers who partner effectively will enjoy a meaningful relationship and share valuable communication that supports a child’s sense of trust, belonging and success as a learner.

### Nebraska Publications

*First Connections with Families, Learning Begins at Birth*. This booklet from Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood, offers information on child development, reading to children and child health and safety issues (2004) <http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/FWF.html>.

*Getting Ready for Kindergarten: What Early Care & Education Providers Need to Know to Support Nebraska’s Children & Their Families* (2012)  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pdfs/Ready\\_for\\_Success/Getting\\_Ready\\_for\\_Kindergarten.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pdfs/Ready_for_Success/Getting_Ready_for_Kindergarten.pdf).

*Ready for Success: What Families Want to Know about Starting School in Nebraska*. This booklet, from Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood, addresses common questions from parents about preparing for, and entering kindergarten (2012)  
[http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/ready\\_for\\_success.html](http://www.education.ne.gov/OEC/ready_for_success.html).

### Publications by Others

*Coaching Families and Colleagues in Early Childhood*, Barbara E. Hanft, Dathan D. Rush and M’Lisa L. Shelden (2004).

*From Parents to Partners: Building a Family Centered Early Childhood program*, Janis Keyser (2006).

*The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework: Promoting Family Engagement and School Readiness, From Prenatal to Age 8: a road map for progress in achieving the kinds of outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families.* The PFCE Framework was developed in partnership with programs, families, experts, and the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. It is a research-based approach to program change that shows how an agency can work together as a whole—across systems and service areas— to promote parent and family engagement and children’s learning and development (2011) <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/IMs/2011/pfce-framework.pdf>.

*Head Start and Early Head Start Relationship-Based Competencies for Staff and Supervisors Who Work with Families* (2012) <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family/Family%20and%20Community%20Partnerships/Family%20Services/Professional%20Development/ohs-rbc.pdf>.

*Partnering with Parents: 29 Easy Programs to Involve Parents in the Early Learning Process*, Bob Rockwell and Janet Rockwell Kniepkamp (2003).

*Successful Kindergarten Transition: Your Guide to Connecting Children, Families, and Schools*, Robert C. Pianta and Marcia Kraft-Sayre (2003).

## Websites

UNL Extension (communicating with families):  
<http://www.extension.unl.edu/web/child/communicating>.

Video clip of a parent-teacher conference visit:  
<http://www.cde.state.co.us/resultsmatter/RMVideoSeries.htm#top>.

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