

## Ages 3 through 5



# North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines



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John Hoeven, Governor  
Carol K. Olson, Executive Director

## North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines

To North Dakota parents and early care and education professionals:

We are pleased to join many state and local partners in presenting the **North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines** for children ages three through five years!

These voluntary guidelines were developed in response to President Bush's early childhood initiative **Good Start, Grow Smart**, which was launched in April 2002. This initiative stresses the importance of supporting learning for every child to reach his or her full potential.

The **North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines** serves as a guide for state and local early care and education practitioners' efforts to improve early childhood practice and programs for young children ages three through five. The **Guidelines** are intended to effect greater collaboration and consistency across systems by aligning practices across all early childhood settings including school pre-K programs.

We hope you will find this document useful in understanding what you may expect to see in a child's learning and development, taking into consideration the individual differences and unique needs of every child. These guidelines recognize that learning in early childhood lays a critical foundation for the young child's later success in school, work, citizenship, and personal fulfillment.

By showing an interest in children's experiences, you join a dedicated group of caring individuals who acknowledge the importance of quality early care and education for our youngest citizens. With your commitment, we can ensure a good start for all of North Dakota's children.

We hope you find this publication useful, and encourage you to share this information with other parents and early care and education practitioners.

Respectfully,

Linda Jagielo

Early Childhood Services Administrator

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## HISTORY

The impetus for developing early learning guidelines in North Dakota came in 2002 from the federal Good Start, Grow Smart initiative, which is the early childhood counterpart of President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act. Implementation and accountability requirements were integrated into the Child Care Development Fund Block grant. The federal Child Care Bureau's regional offices held satellite teleconferences to inform state child care administrators of the mandates and expectations. In June of 2004, a core group consisting of the Departments of Human Services and Public Instruction, which included Early Childhood Services, Head Start-State Collaboration Office, Part C Developmental Disabilities, Part B Special Education, and Standards and Assessments called together a stakeholder advisory committee, comprised of representatives from potential consumer groups in North Dakota. In addition to the core group members above, the Advisory Committee included representation from Early Childhood Service, Child Care Resource and Referral, child care, preschool, kindergarten, early grades, Early Head Start, Head Start, early intervention, early childhood special education, and college and university programs' and representation from North Dakota Tribes.

In spring of 2005, bids were sought for a writing team. The core group selected a team of three writers, all with early childhood/special education expertise. The stakeholder committee worked closely with the three writers to identify the guidelines and indicators, to field test the process, and to write the final document.

Various members of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee held focus groups on drafts of the guidelines with their constituencies. The stakeholders received feedback regarding how the guidelines might be used, how the guidelines could be improved, and ways the guidelines were already helpful and strong.

The North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines, Indicators, and Supportive Practices were developed through comprehensive, collaborative, and consensus decision-making processes involving many sources of information, expertise, and guidance. The content of the guidelines was derived from two primary sources. First, an extensive review of the latest research on early childhood development; international, national, and state level early learning guideline documents; reports by federal agencies; guidelines issued by professional organizations; and quality

child development articles, texts, and publications in peer-reviewed journals. Second, the broad group of stakeholders reviewed and field-tested the document in the natural environments in which they will be used. Groups participating in the field-testing consisted of Early Head Start, Head Start, preschools, Early Intervention, early childhood special education, child care, Right Track, and parents. Field-testing included both validation of the indicators and formative data on the usefulness of the supportive practices. The final version of the Indicators reflects the thoughtful suggestions and comments made throughout the review process.

The first draft of the document was posted on the Department of Human Services website in April of 2006. By November of 2006, an editing group of five persons from the core group mentioned above began revising the document. In May of 2007 several decisions were made:

- The guidelines were split into two documents, Birth to Age Three and Ages Three Through Five
- Work on the Ages Three through Five guidelines will be completed before the Birth to Three guidelines
- Contract with an infant toddler expert to lead completion of the work on Birth to Three
- Develop a framework for the Ages Three through Five guidelines
- The Early Childhood Services and Head Start-State Collaboration Office Administrators would take the lead in completing the framework and revising the front and end matter for the final Ages Three through Five guidelines document.

Wording for the Ages Three through Five guidelines and indicators was borrowed and/or adapted from several other states and the national database of Early Learning Standards. In November of 2007, the framework of the guidelines and indicators was shared with many stakeholders throughout North Dakota for feedback.

## Guiding Principles

The Early Learning Guidelines Advisory Committee has established the following principles to guide a) the content of the Guidelines, b) the development of the indicators and supportive practices, and c) the application of the Early Learning Guidelines in North Dakota. These guiding principles reflect the knowledge base from scientific research, our values, and our commitment to young children and families.

### Children

1. Children of all ages are capable and competent learners. Development and learning continues after birth and occurs in all settings and environments.
2. Children's early learning and development is multidimensional. Children's learning is interconnected across domains.
3. Children are unique individuals who develop at different rates and learn in various ways. Children develop their individual potential through programs/adults who respect, value, and build upon the differences in children.
4. Children are curious and enthusiastic learners who want to know about the world around them. Intellectual development is the process of acquiring, structuring and restructuring knowledge.
5. Children are artistic beings who learn through sensory experiences. Children express and represent their thoughts and feelings through a variety of media and forms.
6. Children are emotional and social beings with unique personalities. Children develop and refine their thinking as they interact and communicate with other children and adults.
7. Children are physical beings who learn through physical activity. Children learn through whole-body activities, active participation, and play.

### Environments

8. The nurturing environment provided by parents and other members of the extended family are necessary for children to learn through daily opportunities. The family home and community are children's primary learning environments.
9. An environment where children's physical and safety needs are met is where children learn best. Young children are entitled to the basic rights afforded to all citizens of society, including special rights and provisions necessitated by their vulnerabilities.
10. An environment where children's psychological and sociological needs are met is where children learn best. The learning environment provides a safe and secure climate for all children. It provides time and opportunities for children to take appropriate risks, make choices and explore their world as they learn self-efficacy.
11. The learning environment facilitates the development of thinking processes by engaging children in investigative activities. The environment is also rich in content, allowing children to learn knowledge in purposeful, meaningful ways.

### Practices

12. "Developmentally appropriate practices result from the process of professionals making decisions about the well-being and education of children based on at least three important kinds of information or knowledge:
  - a. what is known about child development and learning...
  - b. what is known about the strengths, interests, and needs of each individual child in the group...



- c. [what is known about] the social and cultural contexts in which [the child] lives....” (NAEYC, DAP in ECP, 1997, p. 8-9.)
13. Families are key partners and will be involved in all aspects of their children’s early care and education. Effective communication and involvement consistently leads to positive effects for the early development of young children. (NAEYC & NAECS-SDE, 2002)
  14. Children learn best, regardless of their diverse abilities, when participating actively in natural settings within their communities. A natural setting is one in which the child would have spent time had he or she not had a disability. Providers of early care and education work with families, in partnership with the parents, and make referrals when children’s development appears delayed.
  15. Collaboration with service agencies will ensure that appropriate interventions are identified and utilize the natural early childhood environments and routines of the children. All children have the right to the necessary supports, resources, and services they need to participate actively and meaningfully in early childhood settings.
  16. The brain grows at an amazing rate and is very malleable. Children come into the world ready to learn, actively engaging in making sense of their world from birth. The speed of brain development naturally varies; every child grows and adjusts to the world at his or her own pace.
  17. Children’s homes, communities, and family lives will be respected in the early care and education setting. The home language is used as the basis for learning a second language. A child’s learning is complex and is influenced by multiple cultural and contextual factors. (NAEYC, 1995)
  18. Learning is ongoing: children continually act upon and organize their experiences as they make sense of the world and construct knowledge. Enriched learning environments allow children to explore and interact with a variety of materials and people. (NAEYC, 1987)
  19. Children’s play is respected: Through play, children learn about and assess the complexities of the world. Children learn best through a combination of adult-directed and child-initiated methods, through both guided play and open-ended activities. (NAEYC, 1987).
- ### Caregivers
20. Quality early care and education contribute to the developmental progress of children. Early care and education practitioners are experts in child development and undertake continuing education on the latest development on current research-based practices. Staff education and compensation are positively correlated to quality in early care and education programs.
  21. Early care and education practitioners understand and follow the profession’s ethical guidelines at all times and in all situations. (NAEYC, 2005) <http://www.naeyc.org/about/positions/pdf/PSETH05.PDF>
  22. Practitioners and parents use developmentally appropriate indicators of progress to guide them in helping children grow and develop. Practitioners and parents may also use the indicators as a basic framework for communicating information on children’s developmental progress.
  23. Children enter school with a wide range of readiness skills. Schools are committed to the success of all children. Adults take responsibility for the goals and expectations they have for children’s learning and marshal the resources necessary to achieve those goals. (High/Scope ReSource, 2005) <http://www.highscope.org/file/NewsandInformation/ReSourceReprints/Fall%2005/Two%20Sides%20of%20a%20Coin.pdf>

## Overview of Early Learning Guidelines

Early learning guidelines for ages three to five have been developed in all fifty states and most US territories in response to President Bush's early childhood initiative Good Start, Grow Smart, which was launched in April 2002. This initiative stresses the importance of supporting learning for every child to reach his or her full potential.

The North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines are voluntary and may be used as a resource to guide children's development and learning in the formative years from birth through kindergarten. The guidelines for North Dakota have been split into two documents, one for ages birth to three, and this document, for ages three through five. The Guidelines are designed for parents, child care providers, and pre-kindergarten teachers in North Dakota. The North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines are aligned with the Content and Achievement Standards established by the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction for children in grades Kindergarten through Grade 12. The Early Learning Guidelines are designed to outline the skills, knowledge, and dispositions that young children need prior to starting first grade and for ensuring a successful transition into Kindergarten.

The following sections will help people understand why the early learning guidelines and indicators were created and how they can be used.

### Early Learning Guidelines Are Needed

The first five years of a child's life are marked by a significantly accelerated period of growth and development. By age three, most children walk, talk, use their hands, demonstrate symbolic thinking, and communicate with the world around them. Brain research has uncovered several "windows of opportunity" for learning that occur in the early years. Knowing this, early learning guidelines are designed to assist adults with their responsibilities for the growth and development of children.

Research has demonstrated the significant contributions that adults make in enhancing a child's early development and learning. Parents are clearly their child's first and most important nurturer and teacher. They are supported by family, community, friends, child care, health care, and educators.

Throughout North Dakota, communities have a variety of services and programs for young children and their families. Many young children spend at least

part of the day in the care of someone other than their parents. For this reason, the North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines were written for all who support the growth and development of young children.

### Underlying Theory

There are many valid, research-based theories of child development. Examples of differences in theories include those that emphasize:

- Cultural influences
- Cognitive development
- Environmental experiences
- Interactions with others
- Emotional development
- Directive parenting and teaching
- Indirect guidance and support
- Behavior modification

North Dakota's Early Learning Guidelines embed elements from several different theoretical approaches and bring together different research-based perspectives. The guidelines also represent goals for young children's development that reflect the perspectives, values, and recommended practices of a diverse range of people, institutions, and communities throughout our state. Children grow physically, socially, emotionally, linguistically, and cognitively at the same time: All dimensions of learning are critical to healthy development. The guidelines focus on the whole child and provide a comprehensive foundation for addressing the learning and development of all young children and can serve as a tool for meaningful dialogue between/ among parents, early childhood professionals, and community members.

### Purpose

There is currently a diverse group of agencies in North Dakota with many programs in each community that provide various services to young children. Because of the importance of the early years, it is beneficial for children to experience consistency from the adults in their lives. This document provides a common language for understanding what young children should know and be able to do from ages

three through five. It is hoped that these early learning guidelines will be used across the state to strengthen and coordinate early childhood practices, programs, and policies.

The ages three through five guidelines reflect our expectations for young children’s knowledge and behavior when they enter kindergarten. The guidelines are designed to support the growth and development of young children, whether the children are in their own homes, others’ homes, in licensed child care, Head Start, special education, public pre-kindergarten or private preschools. The guidelines serve as a resource, informing parents, caregivers and teachers in these settings about expectations for children’s development and learning—enhancing the child’s readiness for school.

Every child has unique characteristics, developing and learning in the context of their family, culture, and community. The guidelines and indicators acknowledge and embrace the broad diversity and variations that exist between young children.

In building a resource to develop a common understanding, the guidelines and indicators embrace a definition of diversity that includes, but is not limited, to socioeconomic, cultural, racial linguistic, ethnic, gender, abilities and regional variations. The guidelines and indicators attempt to build upon and represent the rich cultural heritage and knowledge of children and families in North Dakota. In addition, efforts have been made to include the unique learning needs of children with disabilities and children whose home language is not English.

To this end, The Guidelines are intended for all children. Given the nature of children’s diversity, we expect and treasure differences in when and how children will achieve the indicators: Some children will achieve some of the indicators earlier than other children; some children will achieve them later. Children will achieve them at different rates and in different orders. In all cases, The Guidelines are offered to inform, not to constrain children’s natural course of development.

#### **The Guidelines are Designed to:**

- Help parents and caregivers understand what they can expect as children develop;
- Assist adults in supporting and enhancing children’s development and learning;
- Provide a framework for teachers to use in creating individualized curriculum and in developing supplements to current curricula;
- Provide a common tool for meaningful dialogue between parents, early childhood professionals, and community members about reasonable expectations and practical strategies for adults who care for and teach young children;
- Effect greater collaboration and consistency across systems in North Dakota by aligning practices across all early childhood settings and services;
- Help reduce inequities in programming and achievement as children mature;
- Create a continuum of learning that links early care and development to later success in school and life;
- Support schools in being ready for children;
- Inform the content of technically developed reliable and valid child assessment and program evaluation tools; and
- Plan early childhood professional development for those who work with young children.

### The Guidelines are NOT Designed to:

- Serve as an exhaustive guide to child development and are not a developmental checklist;
- Provide the full scope, the definitive breakdown, or an exact sequence of early learning indicators;
- Fully account for the multiple ways in which children in North Dakota communicate, learn, play, and interact with adults and peers.
- Serve as the replacement for a curriculum;
- Serve as an assessment instrument to determine children's eligibility for various programs or services;
- Serve as an assessment instrument to gauge children's functioning or skills for an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP); or
- Serve as an assessment tool to collect statewide information on the overall status of children in North Dakota.

It is important to use the guidelines so children experience success and it is also important to accommodate children's different styles of learning. The intention is for adults/caregivers to focus on the function rather than a specific indicator. For example, while communication is most often the spoken word, some children may accomplish the same function by using sign language or pointing to pictures.

Our hope is that every adult sees a bit of his or her own unique life experience in the guidelines and uses the document as a basis for extending meaningful dialogue about the many contexts in which children grow and learn. On-going discussions among adults, especially those who provide direct care to children, will ensure that the guidelines represent the values, aspirations, and effective practices of the cultures and communities in North Dakota.

### Structure

North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Three through Five spell out what young children should know and be able to do by the time they reach six years old or enter kindergarten.

- Domains are broad categories, or dimensions, of children's learning and development. Each domain is of equal importance across all ages. Each domain section includes an introduction that presents the rationale for the domain.

- Sub-domains spread the major domains into manageable sections.
- Indicators describe the expected observable behavior or skill of children. There are several indicators for each sub-domain. Each child may have unique ways of demonstrating his or her development progress. The indicators represent some, not all, of the ways that children will demonstrate progress in a sub-domain.

### The Eight Domain Areas

The North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Three through Five include eight domain areas of development. These domains represent knowledge, skills and dispositions derived from contemporary research. Although presented separately, the eight domains of children's development are highly interrelated and children's growth and development in one area often influences and/or depends upon development in others areas. No single domain is more important than another.

The domains are:

- **Health and Physical Development.** This domain encompasses children's physical health and well-being and the physical ability and stamina to sustain interactions

with people, objects, and activities in the environment. It addresses the various large muscle motor skills necessary to move about and access the environment. Fine motor skills involve using the arms and hands to interact meaningfully with objects and activities in the environment. It also includes skills that enable the child to perform essential self-preservation and maintenance skills independently of others.

- **Social and Emotional Development.** This domain addresses the emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to children's experiences in the home, school, and community. This domain also addresses the importance of an individual's need for independence and self-autonomy in developing a positive self-concept.
- **Approaches to Learning.** This domain refers to a child's disposition, rather than ability, for becoming involved in learning and acquiring knowledge. This domain addresses a variety of alternative approaches to learning that accomplish the same critical tasks of knowledge and skill acquisition.
- **Expressive Arts and Creative Thinking.** This domain includes the understanding and appreciation of a variety of art forms for enhancing the quality of life including music & dancing, drama, and visual arts.
- **Language and Literacy.** This domain encompasses children's understanding of language (receptive) and use of language (expressive). This domain also addresses the functional ability to communicate effectively in different environments and for a variety of purposes. Knowledge of language concepts and the understanding and appreciation of the literacy skills necessary for achievement in school assists in the continuing quest to access knowledge about the world around them.
- **Mathematics and Logical Thinking.** Specifically, this domain focuses on children's logical and mathematical knowledge and their knowledge of numeracy, geometry, patterns, and measurement.

- **Science and Problem Solving.** This domain includes children's ability to understand and think about the physical and natural phenomenon encountered in various environments. Specifically, this domain focuses on children's knowledge of objects in the world and of the forces that act upon the objects. Sensory skills involve the ability to use the senses to take in information
- **Social Studies.** This domain includes children's ability to understand and think about the social phenomenon encountered in their multiple environments. Specifically, this domain focuses on children's knowledge of agreed-upon social conventions and skills necessary for achievement in school.

### Understanding the Indicators Across Ages

The number of indicators and strategies provided varies in each sub-domain. Each indicator needs to be understood as a developmental continuum statement. It is expected that adults will create natural/play situations in which three year olds that are ready can demonstrate the emergence of the skill, knowledge, or disposition of each indicator. It is expected that the adults in the children's lives will design natural/play learning experiences in which six year olds that are ready can demonstrate competence in the skill, knowledge, or disposition of each indicator.

Children entering kindergarten will demonstrate the majority of the indicators in this document, however, development varies for each child. Children will demonstrate varying levels competencies in each domain, in each sub-domain, and among the indicators.

### Implementing the Early Learning Guidelines

Recent research indicates that curricula for young children must be comprehensive and include support for social/ emotional development and function to encourage positive approaches to learning. Furthermore, research has shown that curricula implemented in a way that maintains a family's linguistic and cultural uniqueness demonstrate more success for children. In addition, research has indicated that children learn best when learning is experiential, e.g., learning by doing. Longitudinal research has described the benefits identified when

curricula emphasizes child initiation, are well planned, consistent and well implemented (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE 2002). (NAEYC, 2003).

The North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines will serve as a helpful resource for adults and caregivers with children ages three through five. The Guidelines provide direction regarding (1) individualized curriculum, (2) assessment, (3) children's progress, and, (4) program improvement. The Guidelines align with National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National College for Teacher Education (NCATE) professional standards.

**Individualizing Curriculum.** Through assessment of a child, adults/caregivers can adapt curricular content (e.g., real object versus picture of an object) and/or curricular approach (e.g., direct teaching; discovery) to meet needs and interests of the child.

Teachers and caregivers often look for patterns of development in a child or in a group of children (such as a class). Guidance on how the adult/caregiver can enhance each child's learning is available in The Guidelines. The identified patterns of development will assist adults/caregivers in choosing areas of learning to focus upon. For example, areas may be enhanced with additional materials in a particular domain; changes in the environment; accommodations for children's learning styles and needs; and/or training/education for the teacher in understanding and/or implementing.

**Assessment.** Through choosing assessments that are aligned with The Guidelines, families will have a common foundation from which to compare assessments. In addition, The Guidelines will provide information by which to make informed decisions regarding their child's learning.

### **Guidelines for Assessing Children**

1. Collect information on classroom/setting including teacher-child interactions, curriculum, and teacher training.
2. Collect information on children, including prior early childhood experiences, primary language, and other relevant information.
3. Assess children in all domains of Early Learning Guidelines.

4. Assess children's progress over time.
5. Use assessment approaches that include observation tools, adapted direct standardized instrument, and matrix sampling strategies.
6. Assess English language learners in both English and their primary language.
7. Use assessment information to guide program improvements. (Taking Stock, 2007)

**Children's Progress.** Children will develop at their own rate and pace across developmental domains. When the adult/caregiver reviews assessment results based upon the Guidelines, a pattern of growth and development will emerge. The pattern will reflect areas of strength and areas that may be delayed. By using The Guidelines, strengths of individual children can be paired with possible delays to enhance learning across all developmental domains.

**Program Improvement.** Adults/caregivers may use the Guidelines as the structure for a qualitative and quantitative evaluation tool with which to study children's learning and development and the effectiveness of practices and environments. The Guidelines may also be used to assist in choosing commercial evaluation tools. Information gathered with evaluation tools will give adult/caregivers opportunities to celebrate and build upon their strengths and opportunities to address areas needing improvement. The information may also be used to guide resource allocation and professional development decisions.

### **Inclusion**

A disability may impact access to normalized learning activities and learning environments for a child. Methods and activities to enhance the participation of children with disabilities, as well as accommodations and modifications to enhance the benefit derived by children with disabilities, begin with observation.

While observing a child with special needs or a disability and applying accommodations in the classroom or home, it is important to be familiar with:

- Behaviors that may interfere with obtaining reliable responses (such as perseveration or distractibility);

- Limitations imposed by specific disabilities as well as abilities not generally affected; and
- Relevant background information, especially data concerning medications, prosthetic devices, or other assistive technology needed to maximize functioning.

Discussions with the parent, caregiver, and/or teacher, and observation of the child over a period of time will provide clues as to how the child responds. Sufficient time should be allowed for children to initiate, work with, and complete a task.

## **Culture and Background**

Adults can increase rapport through awareness of the cultural mores of the child and his/her family as well as the community in which the child lives. An interpreter may be needed and may assist awareness of dialects and pronunciation unique to the community or subgroups within the community. In addition, the adult/caregiver may wish to visit and participate in other settings in which the child spends time as well as attend cultural activities in the child's community to become familiar with his/her social interactions and communication style.

## Uses for the Guidelines

In North Dakota, the Department of Human Services is the lead agency for Early Childhood Services (Child Care) and the Head Start-State Collaboration Office. The Department of Human Services has adopted the North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines Ages Three through Five as a base for the Growing Futures Early Childhood Professional Development Initiative and as a base for the Quality Rating and Improvement System that is currently under development.

Parents and families are the child's first and most important role models and teachers. Families are extremely important in providing the social and emotional support needed in order to learn and grow. Parents are the child's first teachers, and perhaps the most influential teachers the child will encounter on his or her life journey.

Higher Education programs will use the content to enhance the quality of programs preparing personnel who serve young children and their families. This includes opportunities for students to acquire knowledge and skills essential to providing high quality early care and education programs. The Guidelines are a resource document

for course content and pedagogy regarding learning experiences, curriculum models, program accountability, outcomes assessment, theoretical application, cultural competence, and personnel reflective self-assessment

The Early Childhood Services Office will use the guidelines to inform the development of rules, policies and procedures that impact young children in North Dakota.

Medical personnel and other developmental therapists will use the Early Learning Guidelines in the provision of development screening and assessment services.

It is hoped that other consumer groups will use the North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines as resource material in the development of state and local policies that increase the efficacy of programs and services to young children and their families.

These Early Learning Guidelines may be downloaded in their entirety for printing, copying, and distribution at: <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/info/pubs/docs/cfs/nd-early-learning-guidelines-for-ages-3-thru-5.pdf>



## Guidelines for Programs, Adults, and Caregivers

Program Guidelines refer to attributes of quality found in the settings and opportunities afforded to young children, whereas Early Learning Guidelines refer to “skills, attitudes, and dispositions” that young children should develop. Program Guidelines refer to factors and practices in the environment that must be created and sustained by the adults in order for young children to develop their skills, attitudes, and dispositions to reach their potential.

- I. Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- II. Knowledgeable and Responsible Caregivers
- III. Relationships and Interactions
- IV. Connections with Families and Communities
- V. Learning Environment and Curriculum

This section addresses these five Program Guidelines from two perspectives:

- What the **program** must do to create and sustain the desired quality of care. This includes creating policies and procedures based on the standards of quality adopted by the program, creating methods for monitoring the implementation of the practices determined necessary to assure that the policies are realized, and supporting caregivers.
- What each **adult/caregiver** must do to implement the practices that are aligned with policies and procedures.

In addition to the selected guidelines, the reference list will contain resources for those desiring more information on quality. The resource list will include program assessment tools, national accreditation information, books, media, and professional organizations in early childhood.

## Program Guideline 1: Health, Safety and Nutrition

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Child care providers need to address health and safety requirements as an integrated component of child care. Facilities must meet minimum fire, building, and health inspection requirements.

Health involves more than the absence of illness and injury. Children depend on adults to make healthy choices for them and to teach them to make such choices for themselves over the course of a lifetime.

Programs use good, thorough hand washing techniques and routinely sanitize toys and equipment to reduce the number of illnesses in their programs/homes. Healthy children are better learners.

Adults/caregivers are vigilant, anticipatory, and know the appropriate safety expectations for each age group of young children. The adults keep things

safe while allowing for curiosity, exploration and learning.

Television/media can negatively impact a child's development by decreasing physical activity, increasing intake of non-nutritious foods, and decreasing interactive activities, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

Child development addresses physical growth and development in many areas: gross and fine motor skills, language, emotional balance, cognitive capacity, and personal-social skills. Thus, health and safety issues overlap with those considered part of early childhood education and mental health. Such overlap is inevitable and indeed desirable.

### The Program Will:

- Provide a hazard free, yet stimulating environment indoors and outdoors.
- Provide space with good ventilation and natural lighting.
- Develop policies and procedures that ensure the safety and health of the children.
- Provide equipment and supplies to support health and safety policies and procedures.
- Serve age appropriate nutritious meals and snacks and avoid sugary foods and drinks.
- Follow all sanitary procedures related to food preparation.
- Follow all disinfecting procedures related to toileting and other bodily fluids.
- Have premises that look, smell, and are clean and fresh.
- Have consistent age appropriate daily routines and schedules.
- Develop policies and procedures to address special nutritional needs of children.
- Post proper hand washing technique posters prominently at all sinks.
- Have policies that align with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education: Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs, 2nd Ed. Free access at: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu/CFOC>.
- Include a policy for the provision of extra children's clothing in case of accidents.
- Ensure children's health and safety by providing adult supervision and guidance.
- Ensure that children receive nutritious foods that promote optimal health and development.

- Provide children with daily opportunities to play actively, promoting health-related fitness and movement.
- Provide safe environments for children, both indoors and outdoors, that facilitate physical activity and do not restrict movement for prolonged periods of time.
- Arrange for appropriate diapering supplies to be readily available at the diapering station.
- Work with the North Dakota chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics and with Healthy Child Care North Dakota to improve health and safety standards in child care regulations.
- Have written policies that encourage that children have a medical and dental home in which they receive comprehensive health care, including preventative medical and dental check-ups, immunizations, and care for acute and chronic health programs.
- Develop and post monthly, balanced menu's that incorporate a variety of foods, including introduction of new foods.

#### **The Adult/Caregiver Will:**

- Limit childrens' total media screen time to one hour per day of quality children's programming.
- Be knowledgeable about health, safety, and nutrition.
- Encourage interactive activities that will promote brain development such as play, talking, singing, and reading together.
- Closely monitor the environment at all times through the use of sight, hearing, and proximity.
- Anticipate potentially dangerous situations and intervene appropriately before they occur.
- Prevent the spread of germs by ensuring that children and adults wash hands; that mouthed toys are sanitized daily; and that runny noses are wiped individually, the tissue is immediately disposed of, and hand hygiene is followed.
- Be a good model of health practices through consistent hand washing, turning head and covering mouth with clothing when coughing, wiping up spills, using appropriate tools (safety) to address problems, etc.
- Allow children to feed themselves.
- Work with families to promote good food habits, respect family positions/values, and introduce new foods, introduce each new food several times to allow for "acquired taste."
- Respect individual needs and schedules when diapering and toileting.
- Utilize routines for meals and snacks, hand washing, and toileting.
- Individualize caregiver routines: allow a tired child to nap, rub child's back as they rest, allow children to use comforting objects to self soothe, and provide quiet activities for children who do not sleep.
- Scan the environment daily for health and safety hazards.

- Encourage structured, directive motor movements (where the adult initiates the movements to be imitated).
- Encourage self-initiated motor activities (where the child selects the movements).
- Use creative expression in gross motor movement activities.
- Be trained in CPR, First Aid, and the risk factors and signs/symptoms of child abuse and neglect.

## Program Guideline 2: Knowledgeable and Responsible Adults/Caregivers.

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High quality is only possible with highly trained and knowledgeable caregivers.

Those who work directly with children need to be highly trained and knowledgeable about child development.

Competent providers, teachers, and administrators act professionally.

Knowledgeable, responsive adults continue their own education about young children.

They learn about the developmental needs of various ages.

They understand temperament traits of children and tailor expectations and responses to meet those individual needs.

They understand the importance of supporting children through several types of transitions: between developmental stages, from one activity to another, from program to program, from child care/preschool to kindergarten, while in transit, etc.)

Adults/caregivers understand and are competent

in utilizing Early Learning Guidelines and relevant national standards to promote quality care and learning with young children.

They reflect upon the activities and experiences they provide for children: Did children learn? Was it meaningful and/or purposeful for the children? Is follow-up needed? How might I change it? What should I do next?

Adults/caregivers understand the sequences of developmental stages, are able to assess where children are, and scaffold children (support/provide relevant learning experiences) to assist them in moving toward their next developmental stage.

Adults/caregivers use professional techniques such as brainstorming, concept maps, and curriculum maps for planning both with and without children.

Each child gains general knowledge about their physical and social worlds at different rates and in different ways.

### The Program Will:

- Have written policies that require relevant and related training and education in addition to licensing requirements.
- Support on-going training that is individualized to meet the needs of each adult/caregiver.
- Have/support incentives or recognition for completing additional training and education such as specializations, certificates, credentials, degrees, etc.
- Have written policies for reporting of child abuse and neglect and requiring annual staff training in the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect.
- Work with local and state associations (e.g., United Way, Success by Six, North Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children, North Dakota Child Care Providers, Inc., Association for Better Childcare) to unite in improving services.
- Work with programs and agencies (e.g., child care, Head Start, and preschool programs, pre-kindergartens, Dept of Health, Dept of Human Services) to unite in improving services.
- Work with Child Care Resource and Referral and other training organizations to improve professional development opportunities in North Dakota.
- Utilize the services provided by Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R).
- Help programs to improve their quality.
- Inform local businesses regarding the investment in quality early care and education as a good economic investment.
- Strive for quality.
- Strive to compensate staff appropriately and provide benefits.

- Work with CCR&R and entities that educate parents regarding quality early care and education.
- Use authentic research-based criteria to observe and evaluate staff members on a regular basis—no less than twice each year.
- Provide adequate, safe storage for caregivers personal and caregiving/ educational materials.
- Require all employees to have complete abuse, neglect, and criminal background checks

### **The Adult/Caregiver Will:**

- Be able to explain the rationale behind their policies and program of learning.
- Be knowledgeable in child development and child learning.
- Seek advice from medical and developmental experts when concerned about children’s physical, emotional, social or intellectual health, development, and well-being.
- Be familiar with the risk factors and signs of child abuse and neglect.
- Optimize the growth and development of each child, providing high expectations for all children regardless of medical conditions, child, family and environment characteristics, and socioeconomic status.
- Learn about theory, specific skills, and methods to use to observe the development of cognitive skills in their young children.
- Learn about the unique dances, customs, theatrics, visual arts, and songs of the children in your classroom.
- Research the history, customs, and traditions of the children in your classroom by reading authentic print materials (including legends), listening to story tellers, studying artifacts (past and present), and searching on credible websites.
- Be trained in CPR, First Aid, and risk factors and signs/symptoms of child abuse and neglect.
- Learn about and recognize the various temperaments, predispositions, and attitudes that children may have, and accept this uniqueness and variation, in children.
- Learn about the specialized needs of children in their care.

### **Guideline 3: Close, Caring Relationships, and Interactions.**

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Adults/caregivers know that close, stable, caring, secure, responsive relationships are the foundation for later learning and development.

Young children afforded close and caring relationships from adults and peers nurture, develop, increase, and sustain feelings of self-sufficiency in children.

Social, emotional, and mental health have their roots in early relationships.

Young children learn security and trust and can develop the ability to be resilient-to bounce back when bad things happen-in the context of the caring relationship because of the physiological impacts on the brain during early development. During times of

stress, certain chemicals flood the brain and cause irregular “wiring” patterns.

Close, caring relationships are recognized as a critical element of early childhood development and are supported by using a primary caregiver model, in which an adult/caregiver/teacher is with the same group of children for extended periods of time and by maintaining low teacher/child ratios and small group sizes.

Inappropriate use of media/screen time (television, videos, computers and video games) can negatively impact a child’s social and emotional development by contributing to aggressive behavior, desensitization to violence, nightmares, and fear of being harmed.

#### **The Program Will:**

- Utilize a primary caregiver model in scheduling who is responsible for the needs of a specific group of children.
- Provide continuity of care, keeping one teacher with the same group of children over an extended length of time such as from age three through age five, sometimes referred to as “looping.”
- Support low caregiver/child ratios such as those promoted by established national standards (e.g., NAEYC, NAFCC).
- Support small group size as those promoted by established national standards (e.g., NAEYC, NAFCC).
- Encourage programming about appropriate personal boundaries through curricula such as Talking about Touching or Second Step.
- Develop and encourage intergenerational relationships with staff members, children, and their families.
- Establish policies that require caregivers to recognize and respect individual temperament, culture, preferences, stage of development, and/or disability.
- Minimize the number of different adults who provide care for the children during the day.
- Utilize full time caregivers, rather than a series of part-timer caregivers and volunteers, as primary caregivers.
- Promote ongoing communication as essential at all times.
- Provide special or assistive devices, when necessary, to increase children’s level of communication and or participation.
- Develop policies the emphasize guidance and encourage children to self-discipline.

### The Adult/Caregiver Will:

- Respond immediately when children cry.
- Position self where all children can be observed, sometimes referred to as “back against the wall.”
- Get on the child’s level when speaking to a child.
- Be knowledgeable about individual temperaments, cultures, preferences, and disabilities.
- Speak gently and respectfully to children.
- Understand and implement logical and natural consequences with children, when needed.
- Use redirection, distraction, or channeling of inappropriate behavior into acceptable outlets.
- Maximize opportunities for one-on-one interactions during play, meals and snacks, comforting, and dressing assistance.
- Recognize the individuality of each child. All children need not participate in the same activity at the same time.
- Recognize and respect individual developmental stages of children.
- Change their expectations for children as the children grow through developmental stages.
- Encourage independence appropriate to each child and his developmental stage.
- Acknowledge and identify feelings and social interactions for young children.
- Observe children to develop plans for each child based upon their interests and developmental levels.
- Have unconditional positive regard for children, families, and staff members.
- Read the child’s cues for fatigue, hunger, frustration, comfort, and act in an appropriate responsive manner.
- Recognize that children perceive adult moods and facial expressions and that their experiences and development are affected by what they see and hear.
- Be sensitive, responsive, and physically and emotionally available to children.
- Make a point of spending time with each child daily, interacting, communicating, playing, and enjoying each other’s company.
- Teach healthy social interaction skills and build positive self-esteem through modeling the enjoyment inherent in interaction.
- Promote trust, security, and exploration through nurturing relationships, and safe and stimulating environments.
- Utilize strategies to assist children socially.
- Inclusion learn to accept, understand, and manage their emotions.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for children to interact successfully with peers and adults.
- Model and teach appropriate conflict resolution and problem-solving skills.
- Take time to learn about each child’s unique experiences at home and in their community.



- Consistently and regularly encourage development in communication, language, and literacy while being sensitive to the cultural integrity of language and spoken communication.
- Interact and play with children each day, supporting and encouraging their explorations.
- Support and encourage children's creative processes, putting less emphasis on finished products.
- Interact with children in a consistent manner.
- Use appropriate verbal, visual, and physical cues in interactions and activities.
- Use descriptive encouragement to respond to children's play.
- Observe children in order to learn how they regulate and express their emotions.
- Recognize and support children's unique learning styles.
- Interact with children in play to enhance or scaffold more complex social interactions.
- Help children develop self-discipline.
- Utilize guidance techniques in helping children learn to manage their own behavior.
- Smile genuinely and speak kind words.
- Encourage children with descriptions of their actions or feelings rather than use empty praise.
- Hug and touch children appropriately.

## Program Guideline 4: Connections with Families and Communities.

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Knowledgeable and responsible adults/caregivers pay close attention to the families of the children they serve. They let the children know that their families are important.

Care away from home is consistent with the care the child receives at home when appropriate.

Adults/caregivers learn about the attitudes, beliefs and values of the families of the children in their care in order to relate families' cultures to the development and education of their children.

Programs take time to learn about a family's cultural background, and adjust their care to meet the

family's needs, know that there is more than one way to provide quality child care.

Because children's social and emotional development are linked to the contexts, cultures, and relationships in which they grow and learn, parents and caregivers play the primary role in shaping children's positive social and emotional development.

Families are valued, contacts are frequent and of high quality, and all interactions are handled respectfully and professionally. Relationships with children's families are vital to their well-being.

### The Program Will:

- Establish guidelines that recognize and respect a family's culture, including values, attitudes and beliefs.
- Support caregiver efforts in connecting with families utilizing a variety of methods.
- Seek out training opportunities related to working with families and encourage the caregivers' participation.
- Develop an on-site parent resource center, a web-based parent resource center, and/or refer parents to existing parent resource centers.
- Provide opportunities for families to have input into program policies and learning experiences.
- Provide materials and resources for families on a variety of issues, such as special needs/disabilities, proper nutrition, guidance and discipline, etc.
- Establish guidelines that support the transition between home and school, such as nap and eating routines.
- Provide policies that establish referral procedures for various types of family needs.
- Ensure that the environment is free of cultural bias.
- Encourage acceptance and appreciation of family culture.
- Strive for an environment that respects all people and is free of bias.
- Actively support and value children's home language by encouraging children to use it at home and across early learning settings.
- Offer an assortment of culturally appropriate activities, experiences, and materials that represent diversity.
- Utilize Child Care Resource and Referral as an avenue for advertising available enrollment openings for children.
- Promote the use of structured routines within the (home) environment.
- Acquire or develop a local area health and human services resource directory... available through local Head Start program or Child Care Resource and Referral agency.

- Encourage parents to utilize Child Care Resource and Referral listings and information materials as one avenue for

learning about and choosing early care and education that is best suited to their child and their family's needs.

### **The Adult/Caregiver Will:**

- Speak to family members in a respectful manner.
- Acknowledge that the family is the most important influence throughout the life of a child.
- Understand each family's culture, including values, attitudes and beliefs.
- Provide for a variety of ways in which families can be included in daily activities of the program.
- Involve parents in planning for the care and learning of their child.
- Respect the wants and needs of children's families.
- Include materials in the classroom that reflect the cultures of the children served in the program, such as photographs of the child's family, displayed at the child's level, books, toys, dress-up, play foods, etc.
- Implement strategies that support the care given in the home environment.
- Communicate with the family in a positive manner on a daily basis about the activities and growth of the child.
- Use a variety of techniques to keep communication flowing freely between caregiver and family.
- Support the child's developing self concept by talking about their family, displaying family photographs, and celebrating accomplishments.
- Welcome families into the program and encourage visits at any time.
- Refer families, as needed, to area health and human service programs.
- Model appropriate interactions with children for families.
- Incorporate songs, games, chants, drumming, dances, or other culturally specific musical activities into children's daily routines.
- Integrate teaching and learning strategies from children's cultural background with individual-cognitive development.
- Recognize and build upon "teachable moments."
- Take time to learn about each child's unique experiences at home and in their own community.
- Provide culturally and linguistically diverse models of communication, which could include voice, touch, gesture, and facial expression.
- Encourage communication and participation by using culturally appropriate objects and activities from children's home environments.
- Actively support and value children's home language by encouraging children to use it at home and across early learning settings.

- Consistently and regularly encourage development in communication, language, and literacy while being sensitive to the cultural integrity of language and spoken communication.
- Value all styles of learning and embrace children's rich diversity of habits and cultural patterns.
- Incorporate traditional strategies used by children's home cultures to support learning and development.
- Use vocabulary and phrases in children's home language when introducing new ideas or concepts.
- Acknowledge children's cultural beliefs and traditions, so children may feel validated.
- Invite cultural experiences for the children's families into the classroom.
- Recognize and support children's unique learning styles.
- Learn about the unique dances, customs, theatrics, visual arts, and songs of each child in your classroom.
- Visit with the parents and grandparents to learn about their culture.
- Arrange to have the parents, grandparents, other relatives, and/or tribal elders to prepare and present creative activities that communicate the uniqueness of their culture to the children.

## Program Guideline 5: Learning Environment and Curriculum.

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Learning strategies for children should encourage whole-child development.

Adults/caregivers know the importance of rich interactive language involvement with young children. They read and sing with children throughout the day.

Adults foster independence in young children by helping them learn to take care of themselves and by allowing children to learn from their routines and their mistakes.

They understand the importance of the environment and know that the right setting, arrangement, material and routines can make a positive difference in the quality of care.

Knowledgeable, responsive adults understand that young children learn through exploration and imitation; therefore provide abundant opportunities for children to explore and make choices about their play.

Knowledgeable, responsive adults know that they

set the emotional tone and that their actions are a model for children's behavior.

They know that children learn best with materials they can manipulate to create and/or to solve problems.

Adult/caregivers can utilize most any occurrence as a teachable moment.

The physical setting offers visually stimulating spaces and materials that serve to motivate and engage the child in interacting with others and with the materials. The curriculum guides the work of caregivers.

Indicators of effectiveness have been identified through numerous early childhood studies, demonstration projects and research projects to promote overall program effectiveness and successful outcomes for children and families.

### The Program Will:

- Provide accessible space for persons with disability.
- Provide good ventilation and natural lighting.
- Provide adequate space to allow different experiences to occur at the same time.
- Provide adequate storage for children's belongings.
- Provide low dividers, such as shelving units, to separate learning centers.
- Intergrate Early Learning Guidelines Ages Three through Five.
- Provide furniture suitable for individual care and play of young children. Chairs and tables and other equipment should be the correct height and size. Shelving should be low enough for easy access by children.
- Provide age-appropriate materials to enhance the development of young children.
- Provide a schedule that includes ample time for indoor and outdoor play, and that allows children to choose activities based on their own interests, and is varied to meet individual needs.
- Encourage the acceptance of diversity and cultural awareness.
- Ensure that materials, both indoors and outdoors, are easily accessible to all children including height, size, and location.
- Promote the use of structured routines within the (home) environment.
- Promote consistent daily routines and educational programming that balance: noisy/quiet, individual/group, inside/outside, active/restful, large muscle/small muscle, etc.

- Immerse children in language- and print-rich environments.
- Develop creative expression activities, learning experiences, and curriculum.
- Intersperse creative activities throughout the day.
- Offer an assortment of culturally appropriate activities, experiences, and materials that represent diversity.
- Encourage adults/staff members to actively engage children in play and learning.
- Develop program goals that are clear and are shared by all.
- Utilize evidenced based curricula that allows adults/caregivers to build upon prior learning and experiences.
- Value content that is learned through investigation, play, and focused intentional teaching.
- Utilize Curriculum that is comprehensive.
- Adhere to professional standards that validate the curriculum's subject matter content.
- Ensure curriculum is research-based and benefits children's development.
- Implement Curricula to meet the unique needs of each child and that demonstrates a wide range of outcomes having beneficial effects (NAEYC and NAECS/SDE 2003).
- Align curriculum with kindergarten standards

#### **The Adult/Caregiver Will:**

- Provide materials such as books, and items to manipulate and explore, etc.
- Arrange materials with similar use together to make interest areas, but allow children to bring items from one area to another during play.
- Have materials and equipment stored for easy access.
- Make interest centers clearly visible from any place in the room.
- Give attention to care-giving rather than other tasks, interests, talking to coworkers, or personal business.
- Interact with young children individually and in small groups.
- Sing, read, play and talk using turn-taking conversations with young children throughout the day.
- Provide a variety of interest centers from which children may self-select activities during choice/play times.
- Encourage children to stretch their intellect through the provision of learning experiences in all eight of Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences: music, logical-mathematical, naturalistic, spatial, linguistic, kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal.
- Promote trust, security, and exploration through nurturing relationships, and safe and stimulating environments.
- Build on what children know and can do well.
- List the common everyday routines.
- Record the skills your child currently has within those routines.

- Describe routines to your child; include the current people involved and the step-by-step processes of the routine.
- Discuss variations of that routine.
- With your child, identify weekly outcomes that you would like to see.
- Support your child to enable him or her to participate in the family routines at sequentially higher levels or at greater levels of independence.
- Utilize inclusion strategies to assist children with learning.
- Include child/ren in the daily routines of your family.
- Identify the skills the child is currently performing and then plan for the next level of participation and independence.
- Simplify complicated tasks by breaking them into smaller parts or reducing the number of steps.
- Engage children in a variety of activities and routines throughout the day.
- Provide hands-on and sensory experiences such as touching, holding, exploring, seeing, tasting, smelling and manipulating for all learning activities.
- Match teaching methods to children's differing abilities and ways of learning.
- Build and expand on what children say.
- Value all styles of learning and embrace children's rich diversity of habits and cultural patterns.
- Support and encourage children's creative processes, putting less emphasis on finished products
- Provide consistent daily routines and educational programming that balance: noisy/quiet, individual/group, inside/outside, active/restful, large muscle/small muscle, etc.
- Teach and facilitate learning in multiple ways, e.g., learning styles, multiple intelligences.
- Involve all of the senses, such as looking at, listening to, touching, smelling, and tasting in many learning experiences.
- Offer the same experiences to all children, knowing that their individual responses will differ and some children may need adaptations.
- Recognize and support children's unique ways of approaching new information.
- Observe children to learn how they acquire new knowledge.
- Use the Early Learning Guidelines Ages Three through Five to guide the experiences offered to children.
- Plan most learning activities a week in advance.
- Teach children subject/content matter through play and other engaging experiences.
- Have one-on-one time with each child, everyday.
- Use creative expression in gross motor movement activities.
- Include music and movement activities every day, because research has demonstrated these can greatly enhance learning in literacy, language, and mathematics in children.

- Encourage children to engage in dramatic play.
- Take children on field trips to expose them to a variety of situations from which they may learn and model their play.
- Expose the children to language through play-expand children's vocabulary and thought processes.



# NORTH DAKOTA'S EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES AGES THREE THROUGH FIVE

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## Domains, Developmental Areas and Indicators (or Guidelines) of Progress

### *Domains:*

- I. Health and Physical Development
- II. Social and Emotional Development
- III. Approaches to Learning
- IV. Expressive Arts and Creative Thinking
- V. Language and Literacy
- VI. Mathematics and Logical Thinking
- VII. Science and Problem Solving
- VIII. Social Studies



## Understanding the Indicators Across Ages

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The number of indicators and strategies provided varies in each sub-domain. Each indicator needs to be understood as a developmental continuum statement. It is expected that adults will create natural/play situations in which three year olds that are ready can demonstrate the emergence of the skill, knowledge, or disposition of each indicator. It is expected that the adults in the children's lives will design natural/play learning experiences in

which six year olds that are ready can demonstrate competence in the skill, knowledge, or disposition of each indicator.

Children leaving kindergarten will demonstrate the majority of the indicators in this document, however, development varies for each child. Children will demonstrate varying levels of competence in each domain, in each sub-domain, and among the indicators.

## Health and Physical Development

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“Preschool children are active by their very nature. They tend to have an inherent drive for motor activity. Notice how they explore their environment, go to all corners of the room or playground, achieve physical closeness, and enjoy communicating with others. These are all essential for proper cognitive, emotional, and physical development. When we allow children to run, play, and explore in a safe environment they will naturally get the motor activity that they need.”

Poole, J.M. (2000). Fitness and the young child. *Child Care Information Exchange*, (131), 41-56.

### I. Children Show Progress in Health and Physical Development When They:

#### A. Gross Motor Development

1. Engage in a variety of large muscle physical activities (e.g., play, exercise, games)
2. Increasingly control and coordinate large body/muscle movements (e.g., jumping, skipping, running, hopping, crawling, rolling)
3. Demonstrate body awareness in relation to stationary and moving objects (e.g., avoids bumping into obstacles, can catch a bouncing ball)
4. Exhibit strength, flexibility, and stamina/endurance when participating in exercises
5. Coordinate movement in space to accommodate boundaries (e.g., walls, lines, circles, bases)
6. Demonstrate a growing sense of balance (e.g., stands on one foot, walks on a balance beam)
7. Combine large motor movements (e.g., kicking, catching, throwing, climbing, swinging, rolling, riding) with the use of equipment (e.g., balls, swings, tricycles, jungle gym)
8. Perform a sequence of large motor skills
9. Perform a variety of movement skills both alone and with a partner(s)
10. Engages in repetitive practice of gross motor skills

#### B. Fine Motor Development

1. Engage in a variety of small muscle activities (e.g., drawing, painting, printing, cutting, gluing, pouring, assembling puzzles, building with blocks, manipulating play dough, lacing, stringing, tracing, writing)
2. Exhibit control, strength, and dexterity in manipulating objects (e.g., zippers, buttons, snaps) and tools (e.g., pencils, crayons, scissors)
3. Use eye-hand coordination to complete tasks (e.g., string beads, do puzzles, copy, trace, cut)
4. Move fingers individually (e.g., finger isolation)
5. Explore and experiments with a variety of tools (e.g., spoons, forks, crayons, paint brushes, stapler, scissors, woodworking tools, keyboards)
6. Engage in repetitive practice of fine motor skills

#### C. Physical Health and Well-Being

1. Perform basic hygiene and self-help tasks (e.g., hand washing, eating, dressing, brushing teeth, toileting, coughing into clothing, blowing congested nose)
2. Demonstrate strategies to prevent the spread of germs and verbalizes why they are important
3. Begin to differentiate between signs of hunger and fullness and stops eating when full
4. Exhibit knowledge about foods and nutrition (e.g., good food, junk food)
5. Verbalize the need for exercise
6. Demonstrate body awareness (e.g., names body parts)
7. Identify and understand the functions of basic body parts and systems (e.g., mouth is used to eat and talk)

8. Participate in physical activities daily
9. Use language to describe movement concepts and spatial locations
10. Understand own stages of growth (e.g., height, weight, mobility)
11. Make healthy choices (e.g., eats veggies and fruits)

#### **D. Injury Prevention and Safety**

1. Begin to recognize and respond appropriately to potentially dangerous objects and substances (e.g., medicine, poison, broken glass, matches, fireplace/campfire)
2. Know rules for traffic and pedestrian safety (e.g., crossing street in crosswalk, buckles up in vehicle)
3. Know safe and proper use of classroom materials
4. Know safe behaviors in the classroom (e.g., walks indoors) and on the playground (e.g., participate safely in the activities)
5. Begin to set boundaries regarding personal safety around strangers
6. Follow routines in emergency situations (e.g., fire and tornado drills, “lock downs,” calling 911)

## Social and Emotional Development

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“Emotional well-being and social competence provide a strong foundation for emerging cognitive abilities. Together they are the ‘bricks and mortar’ of the foundation of human development. The brain is a highly integrated organ. Social development and regulation of behavior are as much a part of development as cognitive learning.”

Shonkoff, J. (2007). Social, emotional, and cognitive development are inextricably linked. *Preschool Matters*, 5, (5), 5.

“Play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength. Undirected play allows children to learn how to work in groups, to share, to negotiate, to resolve conflicts, to learn self-advocacy skills and leadership. Perhaps above all, play is a simple joy that is a cherished part of childhood.”

Ginsburg, K.R. (2007). The importance of play in promoting healthy child development and maintaining strong parent-child bonds. *Pediatrics*, 119 (1), 182-191.

### II. Children Show Progress in Social and Emotional Development When They:

#### A. Self Concept

1. Know own name (first and last) and age
2. Identify own gender
3. Participate in and talks about own cultural traditions
4. Show initiative and self direction
5. Recognize own feelings/emotions
6. Begin to answer, “Who am I?” (e.g., attributes various characteristics to self)
7. Demonstrate self confidence, is emotionally secure

#### B. Self Regulation

1. Regulate feelings/emotions (e.g., self calming)
2. Regulate physical actions (e.g., follows classroom rules and routines, uses classroom materials purposefully and respectfully, manages transitions and adapts to changes in routine)
3. Understand what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behavior in different situations (e.g., in the classroom, on the playground)

#### C. Self Reliance and Resiliency

1. Begin to take care of own emotional needs (e.g., accepts and asks for hugs and self soothes when needed)
2. Begin to take care of own physical needs (e.g., when hungry eats or asks for food, when cold dresses warmer, uses lavatory as needed)
3. Use coping skills appropriately (e.g., reads body language and adjusts behavior if needed)
4. Find humor in a widening variety of situations
5. Assert own rights (e.g., holds on when they have something first; speaks up if own turn is skipped)

#### **D. Social Competence**

1. Work with others in play and group activities (e.g., uses names, shares, takes turns, asks for help)
  - a. Negotiate roles and tasks when working with peers
2. Participate in a variety of group and individual activities, tasks, and play
3. Use acceptable methods to resolve conflicts and disagreements with peers

#### **E. Interactions with Peers and Adults**

1. Begin to trust appropriately (e.g., does not hug strangers)
2. Begin to attach appropriately (e.g., forms relationships with nurturing adults)
3. Begin to interact with others regardless of differences
4. Begin to respect the feelings, opinions, and perspectives of others
5. Begin to understand that other people have rights (e.g., stands up for a friend)
6. Begin to understand the concept of fairness (e.g., everyone gets a turn or a piece of fruit)
7. Begin to participate in and talk about the cultural traditions of others
8. Begin to read social cues
9. Begin to seek and/or accept help from a peer or adult when encountering challenges (e.g., asks adult for help if something is out of reach, negotiates with peer before calling for teacher)
10. Converse with peers and adults
11. Begin to care for others and demonstrate a desire to be helpful (e.g., comforts a friend who is crying)
12. Begin to develop friendships with peers
13. Begin to develop relationships with adults

## Approaches to Learning

“Children... need loose parts [which can be manipulated, moved about, and used in new combinations] to design and build for themselves. In environments which offer the possibility of discovery and inventiveness, children’s play sustains itself. In environments devoid of loose parts children get into trouble. The more complex an environment [the extent to which an environment contains possibilities for active manipulation and alteration by children], the greater its potential to keep children continuously interested.”

Jones, E. (1989). Inviting children into the fun. *Child Care Information Exchange*, 70, 15-19.

“We maintain that children are born with all the languages of life. These languages are interactive by nature, and all children are equipped with the exploratory and perceptive tools for organizing information and sensations and for seeking out exchange and reciprocity.”

Filippini, T. & Vecchi, V. (Eds.). (1996). *The hundred languages of children: Catalogue of the exhibit*. Reggio Children: Reggio Emilia, Italy, 30.

### III. Children Show Progress in Approaches to Learning When They:

#### A. Initiative and Curiosity

1. Make independent and interdependent decisions and choices
2. Show eagerness and a sense of wonder about their world
3. Show interest in discovering and learning new things
4. Choose to participate in an increasing variety of experiences

#### B. Engagement and Persistence (e.g., application)

1. Sustain attention and focus on activities
2. Are increasingly able to plan and follow through on plans
3. Persevere in completing a variety of learning experiences
4. Filter out/ignore most distractions and interruptions
5. Apply appropriate coping skills (e.g., asks for help when needed)

#### C. Flexibility and Risk Taking

1. Use a variety of strategies to solve problems
2. Seek and/or accept help from others when encountering a challenge
3. Choose to participate in a variety of familiar and new experiences
4. Are increasingly able to differentiate between appropriate and inappropriate risk taking

#### D. Imagination and Invention (e.g., creativity)

1. Use/combine materials/strategies in novel ways to explore, play, and solve problems
2. Engage in pretend play taking on various roles with real or imaginary objects
3. Explore and experiment with a wide variety of materials and activities
4. Explore and experiment through repeated exposure to the same or similar materials and activities

## **E. Compliance**

1. Follow simple directions
2. Imitate
3. Cooperate
4. Recall/remember
5. Understand/comprehend

## **F. Reflection and Interpretation (e.g. analysis, evaluation)**

1. Are increasingly able to predict possible outcomes based upon prior experience and learning (e.g., “round objects roll down hill”)
2. Apply prior experience and learning to new situations (e.g., “If I want crispy cereal, I need to eat it right after I add milk.”)
3. Are increasingly able to generate ideas, suggestions, and possible solutions for questions, tasks, and challenges
4. Create, hold, and manipulate mental images of objects and people (e.g., can picture a dog running in his/her mind)
5. Communicate ideas, suggestions, and possible solutions to others

## Expressive Arts and Creative Thinking

“Art with children works best when adults share in the discoveries. Teachers must bring their own curiosity and awe into the classroom and be prepared to acknowledge that children often lead in the discovery. One ongoing challenge is learning to recognize the moment of engagement, to embrace that physical and psychological place in which adults and children are free to make discoveries, and to look for opportunities to use materials in new ways. Creative acts incorporate previous learning and experiences as well as new expressions. The willingness of adults to consider new ideas allows children to enter magical rooms where new ideas sprout springs and wings and begin to bounce and fly.

“Some of us accept that messiness and inappropriate behavior have meaning and realize that children’s most important play and stories often include troubling and perplexing actions and ideas. Sometimes the stories that help all of us grow are disturbing. If we want children to develop the capacity to find new, creative solutions, we must constantly search for ways to manage, even embrace, the disturbing parts of life. The arts play a critical role in the human need for self-expression, for sharing thoughts and ideas, and for challenging old ways of thinking.”

Matlock, R. & Hornstein, J. (2004). Learning and the arts through the ages. *NAEYC Beyond the Journal*, July. Retrieved on April 4, 2008 from <http://www.journal.naeyc.org/btj/200407/LearningArtsThroughTheAges.pdf>

### II. Children Show Progress in Expressive Arts and Creative Thinking When They:

#### A. Music and Dance

1. Use a variety of media and materials for sensory experience, exploration, and creative expression
2. Incorporate a variety of elements (e.g., tempo, beat, rhythm, dynamics, pitch, tone, notation, patterns, flexibility fluidity, style, synchronization, repetition, imitation)
3. Apply a variety of processes (e.g., playing simple instruments, vocalizing, singing, moving, swinging, locomotion, balancing, twirling, leaping, reading musical notations, observation)
4. Coordinate movement with a tempo (e.g., marching and dancing to music)

#### B. Visual Arts

1. Use a variety of media and materials for sensory experience, exploration, and creative expression
2. Incorporate a variety of elements (e.g., shape, line, color, texture, symbolism)
3. Apply a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional processes (e.g., painting, printing, drawing, coloring, observation, cutting, shaping, rolling, pulling, patting, observing, imitation, patterning, repetition)
4. Represent experience, thoughts, concepts, and/or ideas through visual arts
5. Select different media and processes to express emotions and ideas
6. Progress through developmental stages of drawing (e.g., Rhoda Kellogg’s Stages of Scribbling, 1967)
7. Use safe procedures when handling art materials and tools
8. Use a variety of media, materials, and tools to create

#### C. Dramatic Play and Movement

1. Use a variety of media and materials for sensory experience, exploration, and creative expression
2. Incorporate a variety of elements (e.g., character, theme, setting, idea, plot, props, costume, make-up)



3. Apply a variety of dramatic play processes (e.g., role-play, imitation, observation, listening, giving objects attributes they do not have, personification, pretend, vocalize environmental sounds, dramatize)

#### **D. Appreciation of the Arts**

1. Use a variety of media and materials for sensory experience, exploration, and creative expression
2. Participate in a variety of expressive arts experiences (e.g., see A. B. & C. above)
3. Incorporate various elements and processes of each expressive/creative arts
4. Show others and/or talk about what they have made or have done
5. Show interest and respect for the expressive/creative work of self and others
6. Share opinions about likes and dislikes related to expressive/creative arts
7. Share experiences, ideas, and thoughts about the expressive/creative arts

## Language and Literacy

“Strategies that have been shown to be effective at promoting children’s early literacy development include reading aloud to children, fostering children’s understanding of print concepts; arranging the classroom environment so that children have an opportunity to interact with books and other print materials; providing opportunities for children to experiment with writing; familiarizing children with letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds; and involving children in activities that promote children’s phonological skill development.

“While all of the above strategies have been shown to be effective, many experts contend that the single most important teaching strategy for promoting children’s early literacy development across multiple domains (e.g., vocabulary growth, print awareness) is reading aloud to children in an interactive style that engages them as active learners. When children are encouraged to become active participants rather than passive listeners, they are more likely to experience improvements in their vocabularies and their comprehension abilities.”

Green, S.D., Peterson, R., & Lewis, J.R. (2006). Language and literacy promotion in early childhood settings. *Early Childhood Research and Practice*, 8 (1). Retrieved on April 8, 2008 from <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v8n1/green.html>

### III. Children Show Progress in Language and Literacy When They:

#### A. Listening and Comprehension

1. Understand verbal, English and/or home language, and non-verbal, gestures, actions, and expressions, cues
2. Listen to understand and/or participate in stories, nonfiction, poetry, drama, rhymes, songs, directions, and conversations
3. Listen to and recognize different sounds in the environment
4. Listen to and recognize different sounds in speech
5. Listen for a variety of purposes (e.g., to understand messages, to gain and share information, to perform a task, for enjoyment, to learn what happened in a story, to converse with an adult or peer)

#### B. Speaking and Communicating

1. Use words, in English and/or home language, or sounds and non-verbal cues, gestures, actions, and expressions, to communicate needs, ideas, experiences, and emotions
2. Use spoken language to express needs, opinions, and ideas
3. Participate in opportunities to speak, sing, act out, and recite (e.g., stories, songs, rhymes, fingerplays)
4. Ask relevant why, what, when, where, and how questions to accomplish a variety of purposes
5. Follow conversational rules (e.g., taking turns, making relevant comments, staying on topic) when talking with peers and adults
6. Respond differently based upon purpose of messages and questions in conversations with children and adults (e.g., stays on topic, elaborates)
7. Retell a story with attention to the main events based upon a book, personal experience, or make believe
8. Use new vocabulary and descriptive language to describe feelings, thoughts, experiences, and observations
9. Speak clearly enough to be understood in English and/or home language
10. Use appropriate levels of volume, time, inflection and expression (e.g., drops voice at end of sentence, uses a conversational tone when speaking to someone next to them, shouts/yells when playing a game outside.)

### **C. Phonological Awareness**

1. Understand that spoken language is made up of sounds
2. Recognize matching (phonemes) and rhyming sounds
3. Segment words into syllables and phonemes
4. Understand that speech sounds are represented in print with letters/words

### **D. Emergent Reading**

1. Understand that the sounds of language are represented by letters, words, and sentences
2. Recognize and can identify familiar print in the environment (e.g., traffic signs, store logos, own name)
3. Know that books have titles, authors, and often, illustrators
4. Know that print and written symbols convey meaning
5. Know that print appears in different forms (e.g., letters, labels, storybooks) and serves different purposes (e.g., to inform)
6. Know that print is read from left to right, top to bottom, and books are read front to back
7. Know that reading is valuable and enjoyable
8. Know the difference between real and make-believe
9. Know the elements that compose a story (e.g., characters, plot (sequence of events), setting)
10. Know the proper way to handle books (e.g., hold the book upright; turn pages from front to back, one at a time, returns to proper place when done)
11. Predict story events or outcomes
12. Recall and consider information from familiar stories
13. Relate own life and experiences to literature
14. Understand that illustrations and pictures convey meaning
15. Understand the difference between letters, numbers, and words
16. Use words and pictures to independently “read” a story

### **E. Emergent Writing**

1. Use scribbles, shapes, pictures, and dictation to represent thoughts and/or ideas
2. Engage in writing (e.g., drawing, scribbles, random symbols, shapes, letter-like marks, letters, and invented spelling) to represent ideas and express thoughts and feelings
3. Begin to apply rules of grammar, punctuation, and spelling (e.g., uses “have” instead of “got”, tells teacher to put a period at the end of a thought on LEA chart)
4. Dictate stories, poems, and personal narratives
5. Engage in writing for a variety of purposes (e.g., to make lists, to send messages, to write stories) and in a variety of forms (e.g., journals, sign-in sheets, name cards, cards with words and pictures)
6. Know that writing, including pictures, letters, and words, communicates meaning and information
7. Use knowledge of letters to write or copy familiar words (e.g., own name, mom, dad, no, yes)
8. Use writing tools and materials (e.g., pencils, crayons, chalk, markers, rubber stamps, computers, paper, cardboard, chalkboard)
9. Write random letters or letter-like symbols

## Mathematics and Logical Thinking

“Young children often have a spontaneous and explicit interest in mathematical ideas. Naturalistic observation has shown, for example, that in their ordinary environments, young children spontaneously count, even up to relatively large numbers, like 100, and may want to know what is the ‘largest number.’ Also, mathematical ideas permeate children’s play: in the block area, for example, young children spend a good deal of time determining which tower is higher than another, creating and extending interesting patterns with blocks, exploring shapes, creating symmetries, and the like.

“Play provides valuable opportunities to explore and to undertake activities that can be surprisingly sophisticated from a mathematical point of view. Although essential for children’s intellectual development generally and for mathematics learning in particular, play is not enough. It does not usually help children to mathematize—to interpret their experiences in explicitly mathematical form and understand the relations between the two. [A planned early math curriculum is also needed.]”

Ginsburg, H.P., Lee, J.S., & Boyd, J.S. (2008). Mathematics education for young children: What it is and how to promote it. *Social Policy Report*, 22(1), 1, 3-11, 14-23.

### IV. Children Show Progress in Mathematics and Logical Thinking When They:

#### A. Number Sense and Operations

1. Demonstrate understanding of the pre-number concept of...
  - a. Comparison (e.g., same/different)
  - b. Matching (e.g., looks the same/like this color, shape, etc.)
  - c. Classification (e.g., grouping by attribute(s))
  - d. Patterns (e.g., repetition, like red-blue-red-blue-red blue or cap-clap-slap, clap-clap-slap,... or jump-squat-jump, jump-squat-jump,...etc.)
  - e. One-to-one correspondence (e.g., object pairing, each plate has a cup, each locker has coat)
  - f. Seriation (e.g., order, short to long, heavy to light, first to last event)
  - g. Spatial relationships (e.g., directionality, position in space)
  - h. Conservation (e.g., when children come to understand that amount, volume, and mass stay the same despite a change in appearance)
  - i. Subitizing (e.g., instant recognition of number of objects in a set-without counting)
2. Demonstrate understanding of the one-to-one counting principle (e.g., one and only one number word is assigned to each counted object)
3. Demonstrate understanding of the stable order counting principle (e.g., the numerals are always in the same order: 1, 2, 3,)
4. Demonstrate understanding of the cardinality counting principle (e.g., the last number represents the quantity of counted objects)
5. Demonstrate understanding of the abstraction counting principle (e.g., any discrete objects can be counted)
6. Demonstrate understanding of the order irrelevance counting principle (e.g., the order in which you count the objects does not affect the cardinality/total)
7. Demonstrate the numeracy strategy of...
  - a. Rote counting (e.g., from memory)
  - b. Rational counting (e.g., meaningful counting)
  - c. Counting-on (e.g., after 4 comes...)
  - d. Counting-back (e.g., count backwards from 7)
  - e. Skip, or group, counting (e.g., 2, 4, 6,... or 5, 10, 15, 20...)
  - f. Number benchmark (e.g., numbers like 2, 5, 10 are anchors, for instance 4 is one less than 5)
8. Use numeric symbolic representation (e.g., recognizing, naming and writing number symbols from zero through 10)

9. Demonstrate understanding that numbers can also be used as names (Channel 5), to indicate order (1st, 3rd), to describe relationships (2nd cousin), and to indicate locations (addresses)
10. Use mathematical vocabulary to compare groups of objects and numerals (e.g., same, larger than, smaller than)
11. Know that the quantity of objects can change by adding or taking away objects
12. Use number sense to solve simple problems

## **B. Spatial Sense**

1. Identify, name, describe, draw, and build common two and some three dimensional shapes
2. Find geometric shapes in the environment
3. Use spatial vocabulary to indicate directionality, order, and position of objects (e.g., above & below, inside & outside, next to, behind, after & before)
4. Compare, classify (sort), and seriate (order) two and three dimensional shapes based upon one or more attributes (e.g., line, sides, corners, size, shape, color)
5. Show an awareness of symmetry (e.g., notices symmetry of own body, notices symmetry of “butterfly” paint blot folded, creates symmetrical block structures)
6. Experiment with mapping skills using classroom materials (e.g., sandbox, block area, transportation mat)
7. Demonstrate understanding that a shape remains the same shape regardless of its position in space (e.g., flip or rotate a triangle—it is still a triangle)
8. Begin to understand that geometric shapes can be put together or taken apart to make other shapes (e.g., two equal, right triangles can be combined to form either a square or a rectangle, a rectangle or square can be divided corner to corner to become 2 triangles)
9. Demonstrate understanding of spatial sense in solving problems (e.g., uses parquetry blocks to fill in a template, completes puzzles successfully inserts shapes into correct/matching opening)

## **C. Measurement**

1. Use familiar objects for measurement (e.g., shoes, paperclips, blocks, etc.)
2. Begin to use standard devices for measuring (ruler, scale, measuring cups, timer, thermometer, calendars, etc.)
3. Demonstrate understanding of an awareness of time concepts (e.g., that a minute is less than an hour, o'clock/time by hour, clean up will be in 5 minutes)
4. Know the sequence of various events (e.g., snack is before story time, we go outside after playtime)
5. Begin to use appropriate measurement vocabulary (e.g., inch, foot, pounds, hours, days)
6. Use appropriate comparative vocabulary (e.g., heavy/light, full/empty, shorter/taller, day/night, hot/cold)
7. Seriate a set of objects based upon an attribute (e.g., height, length, size/mass, weight, time/order)
8. Demonstrate understanding that different sized containers will hold more or less (note: keep Piaget’s developmental conservation tasks in mind)
9. Begin to recognize and name common coins and understands that coins have different values (e.g., penny, nickel, dime)

## **D. Patterns and Algebra Functions**

1. Order/sequence objects by attribute(s) (e.g., height, weight, color intensity)
2. Explain why and how objects are organized (e.g., How did you decide which one went...?)
3. Demonstrate understanding of patterns (e.g., ababab and see A.4.)
4. Recognize, describe, and replicate patterns of objects, sounds, and movements
5. Predict and extend patterns of objects, sounds and movements
6. Use concrete objects to represent and solve a problem (e.g., six cookies & three children, how many each?)

## E. Representing and Interpreting Data

1. Represent newly acquired information in a variety of ways (e.g., stories, drawing, dramatic play, movement)
2. Gather information about themselves and their environments (e.g., personal characteristics such as age, hair color, where they live, number of chairs in classroom)
3. Gather, sort, and compare objects by attribute(s) in the context of daily activities and play (e.g., fruit in fruit bowl, all unit sized blocks on same shelf, float & sink)
4. Place objects in a “concrete” floor or table graph by attribute (e.g., column of tie shoes, column of Velcro shoes, column of slip on shoes)
5. Place representative items in a “pictorial” floor, table, or wall graph by attribute (e.g., children’s name tags instead of shoes, pictures of objects, etc.)
6. Identify the category or categories that have the most or the fewest items in a floor or table graph
7. “Read” and interpret displays of data, like concrete and pictorial charts/graphs, using comparison vocabulary (e.g., verbalize which column has more/less)

## F. Reasoning

1. Begin to use mathematical vocabulary to express ideas mathematically (e.g., “If we add your two to my three we’ll have five”)
2. Make predictions based upon observations and information (e.g., complete patterns, estimate, “You need \_\_\_ more marbles to have six”, verbalize own logic for Piaget’s conservation tasks)
3. Use simple strategies to mathematically solve problems (e.g., use one-to-one correspondence to pass out snack items, divides four cookies into two piles of two to share with friend)
4. Begin to understand that problems often can be solved in more than one way
5. Begin to compare and contrast solution strategies (e.g., counting on fingers, combining and separating sets/groups)
6. Begin to develop estimation skills (e.g., the number of blocks that will fit on the shelf, number of children in the room)

## Science and Problem Solving

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“Play, helps people both reach and understand their goals. Play is a state of mind that allows us to depart from particular goals and to mess around with those actions that are unnecessary to reaching those goals. Play helps the child understand the necessary versus the unnecessary, the ‘is’ from the ‘is not’, such is the structure of understanding.

To watch a [young child] successfully roll a ball down a ramp does not imply he understands the necessity of the incline. If you look closely in the beginning, you will see that he pushes the ball down the ramp. He assumes that his hand-movements are necessary to make the ball roll. But through play he discovers that the ball rolls on its own when simply released at the top of the incline, that the ball returns when pushed up the incline, and that a cone will roll in an arc when released. If he were motivated merely to succeed, he would probably continue to push the ball down the ramp for many months. But a child is motivated more by this light-hearted distance from recreating a predictable effect. And in the process of playing with the unnecessary he defines the necessary.”

Foreman, G. (2008). The necessity of the unnecessary in play. *Videatives Views*, (55).

### V. Children Show Progress in Science and Problem Solving When They:

#### A. Knowledge

1. Know basic states of matter (e.g., solid, liquid, gaseous)
2. Know that objects have certain properties (e.g., color, size, shape, smell, texture)
3. Know that the physical properties of things can change
4. Know ways to group objects based on basic properties
5. Understand properties of liquids (e.g., they are different from solids; they take the shape of their container)
6. Identify differences between living and non-living things
7. Know that animals live in different habitats on earth that are supportive of their growth
8. Know that living things are made up of different parts
9. Know that plants and animals need food, water, air, and sun to survive
10. Know simple ways that living things can be grouped (e.g., by skin covering, by habitat/environment)
11. Know that living things go through life cycles (e.g., growth, development, reproduction)
12. Recognize and use vocabulary that describes major features of the sky (e.g., clouds, sun, moon, stars)
13. Know ways that technology may be used to access information

#### B. Observation

1. Use their five senses to explore materials and the environment
2. Use words to identify and describe the physical characteristics objects and animals
3. Identify and describe changes that occur in their world (e.g., natural processes, forces of nature)
4. Develop simple explanations for observations

#### C. Inquisitiveness

1. Express wonder about the natural world
2. Ask questions and seek answers through active exploration
3. Hypothesize about phenomena (e.g., speculate about why an event/process occurs)
4. Predict phenomena (e.g., speculate about what might happen next)
5. Wonder about cause and effect relationships

6. Explore and experiment with different materials, objects, and situations
7. Show interest in and discovers relationships and patterns

#### **D. Investigation**

1. Use tools (e.g., magnifying glass, binoculars, maps, eye droppers, computers) for investigation of the environment
2. Gather simple information and data about the environment through a variety of means including discussions, drawings, maps, and charts
3. Make comparisons between objects that have been collected or observed
4. Sort living things by characteristics (e.g., behavior, environment, appearance)
5. Record and interpret data that has been collected (e.g., float and sink—heavy items sink)
6. Begin to develop procedures and thinking skills for investigating the world (e.g., there are a variety of ways to examine phenomena/processes)
7. Begin to ask questions, identify problems, and propose ways to answer/solve them
8. Test hypotheses (e.g., observes events/processes for similarity to hypothesis)
9. Test predictions (e.g., continues with process/experiment to see if prediction is accurate)
10. Observe, describe, and investigate changes in materials and cause-effect relationships (e.g., mixing colors, baking)

#### **E. Application**

1. Begin to describe and discuss predictions, explanations, and generalizations based upon past experiences (e.g., can verbalize where their ideas originate)
2. Begin to choose procedures and thinking skills for solving problems and making decisions (e.g., thinks about which method to use)
3. Use simple machines in everyday play (e.g., lever, wheel & axle, pulley, wedge, inclined plane, screw, and gears)
4. Expand knowledge of and respect for the environment
5. Apply force (e.g., pushing or pulling) to change the position and motion of an object
6. Understand simple cause and effect relationships (e.g., if you go outside when it is raining you will get wet)
7. Combine materials and equipment in different ways to make something new (e.g., building a tent using sheet over table, making a box into a house for a storybook character)



## Social Studies

“Children need opportunities to function as part of a community of learners if they are to gain the skills and dispositions that lead to civic competence, and grow into contributing members of society.

“When given the opportunity to become an active, participating member of a community of learners, a child learns to be an effective citizen. What we must do is provide opportunities for children to be part of an endeavor that celebrates our ideals through cooperative group efforts, in which they strive to better themselves by developing the disposition to find things out and respect each other’s individual differences and talents. That is where democracy begins for our children.”

Maple, T.L. (2005). Beyond community helpers: The project approach in the early childhood social studies curriculum. *Childhood Education* Retrieved on April 8, 2008 from [http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_qa3614/is\\_200504/ai\\_n13498630](http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3614/is_200504/ai_n13498630)

### VI. Children Show Progress in Social Studies When They:

#### A. Families and Cultures

1. Identify and appreciate own ethnicity (e.g., know they are of the \_\_\_\_\_ tribe and value their tribal traditions)
2. Identify self as a member of a family
3. Describe what a family is
4. Understand various family roles, responsibilities, rules, and relationships
5. Appreciate the ethnic backgrounds of others
6. Share family’s daily routines, home language, and traditions
7. Demonstrate interest in learning about the routines, languages, and traditions of others
8. Demonstrate a beginning understanding of the concept of generations

#### B. Community

1. Demonstrate understanding that communities are composed of groups of people who live, play, and work together
2. Perform various tasks that contribute to the well-being of the group
3. Identify communities to which s/he belongs
4. Begin to understand that media and technology affect their lives (e.g. fear/nightmares from violence on television)
5. Recognize, describe and dramatize the roles of individuals in the community
6. Function as a member of the classroom community
7. Begin to understand the types of technology used at home, school, and work
8. Explore and discuss the various ways people communicate and travel

#### C. Decision Making

1. Confidently express individual ideas, opinions, and thoughts
2. Begin to develop a value system (e.g., utilize values in making decisions such as fairness)
3. Begin to demonstrate respect for the ideas, opinions, and thoughts of others, even when different from their own
4. Understand reasons for rules and routines
5. Understand and anticipate the consequences of not following the rules
6. Participate in classroom decision making
7. Participate in creating and following rules and routines
8. Begin to set own consequences for behaviors

9. Begin to understand various group decision-making processes (e.g., voting, consensus, handshake, “boss”)
10. Make choices about own behavior when presented with alternatives
11. Handle basic personal responsibilities related to needs
12. Demonstrate some ability to control intense feelings
13. Begin to differentiate between right, wrong, and confused

#### **D. Places and Environments**

1. Understand that maps can represent his or her surroundings
2. Use simple maps, visuals, and objects to represent places and terrains (e.g., mountains, rivers)
3. Demonstrate awareness of the need to protect and be good stewards of natural resources (e.g., water, soil, air, plants, animals)
4. Know common features (e.g., street signs, roads) found in the local environment
5. Know geographic information about oneself (e.g., the town in which he or lives, address, phone number)
6. Understand that they live in the United States of America
7. Identify characteristics of the places where they live, play, and learn
8. Identify various weather conditions and seasons and how conditions affect what they wear and what they do
9. Identify natural features of the environment (e.g., rivers, lakes, mountains)
10. Participate in environmental protection activities (e.g., reduce, reuse, recycle, doesn't litter, picks up litter, conserves)
11. Begin to understand the concept of ecosystems (e.g., fish live in water, animals live where their food is present)

#### **E. Resources**

1. Recognize how resources are used (e.g., water, soil plants, animals, people, money, time)
2. Begin to understand the bartering system (e.g., buying, selling, trading)
3. Begin to understand the value of goods and services through using the bartering system
4. Develop an understanding of how goods and services are produced and distributed
5. Demonstrate an understanding that people work to earn money to provide food, shelter, goods and services

#### **F. Passage of time**

1. Demonstrate a beginning understanding of past, present, and future
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the sequence of events
3. Understand how things, people, and places change over time
4. Demonstrate an ability to connect new ideas to past experiences
5. Anticipate recurring activities
6. Use time related vocabulary (e.g., first/last, yesterday/today/tomorrow, morning/night, in a few minutes)
7. Remember activities/events in the recent past

## Future Supplementary Materials

Several companion pieces are planned and will be posted to various websites when available. These resources will provide additional information for selected user groups. The additional sections include:

- **Evidence-based Practices:** This document provides play, learning strategies and activities that adults can use to enhance the development of children. Each indicator will have suggested learning activities through which parents, grandparents, relatives, siblings, caregivers, and teachers can engage children at home or in an early care and education setting. The suggestions and activities will be designed to foster the children's accomplishment of the indicators. Every attempt will be made to offer suggestions and activities that can be incorporated into daily routines and/or to provide an opportunity for play and interaction with the child. The ideas will represent some, but not all, of the ways that adults can interact with children to nurture their learning and development. Evidence-based practices, as defined by Dunst, Trivette and Cutspec (2000), are: "Practices that are informed by research, in which the characteristics and consequences of environmental variables are empirically established and the relationship directly informs what a practitioner can do to produce a desired outcome."
- **Alignment with K-12 Curriculum Standards and Benchmarks:** A comparison chart illustrating the ways in which the Early Learning Guidelines Ages Three through Five align and complement the K-12 Curriculum Standards and Benchmarks in North Dakota. The chart will illustrate that the Early Learning Guidelines Ages Three through Five are useful not only as a stand-alone set of expectations, but also as precursors to more complex and detailed forms of learning and behavior that are expected in the K-12 education system in North Dakota. It is important to note that this chart will not represent an early learning continuum, but rather illustrates how the Guidelines/Indicators align with North Dakota's K-12 Standards and Benchmarks.
- **Alignment with Other Early Learning Standards:** Alignment charts illustrating the ways in which the Early Learning Guidelines Ages Three through Five align with and complement the Head Start Child Frameworks Outcomes.
- **Alignment with Relevant Professional Groups:** The National Association for the Education of Young Children, the National Association for Regulatory Agencies, and the Association of Teacher Educators have published standards for education best practice in early childhood education. The North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Three through Five parallel content of many of their standards in areas addressing curriculum, assessment, adaptations, diversity, and others.
- **Inclusion Considerations:** A disability may impact access to normalized learning activities and learning environments for a child. A selection of methods and activities to enhance the participation of children with disabilities, as well as accommodations and modifications to enhance the benefit derived by children with disabilities, has been developed and is currently being edited.
- **References and Resources:** Lists of references used to create this document and of resources that adults and caregivers may wish to use in implementing the ages three through five guidelines.

## The Language of Early Education and Care

**Accommodations** - Changes in materials, supplies, settings, and experiences to meet a child's individual needs.

**Adaptive equipment** - Equipment that is changed, modified or built to meet specific needs, requirements or conditions.

**Aesthetic appreciation** - Children's attention to different sensory characteristics and their emerging ability to distinguish details and beauty.

**Aesthetic learning** - The development and demonstration of an appreciation of the arts.

**Alliteration** - The repetition of the same sound, usually a consonant, at the beginning of two or more words immediately succeeding each other or at short intervals (e.g. Ben bought blue balloons).

**Alphabetic principle** - The underlying assumption of alphabetic writing systems that each speech sound or phoneme of a language had its own distinctive graphic.

**Approaches to learning** - Refers to a child's enthusiasm, curiosity, and ability to be persistent on assigned and self-selected tasks. Other indicators include a demonstrated interest in different and new things, confidence in own ability to succeed, and a belief that adults will be helpful.

**Approved relative** - In North Dakota, is a provider, whose relationship to the child by marriage, blood, or court degree, is a: grand-parent, great-grand parent, aunt, uncle, or sibling caring for (5) or less children including their own children under the age of 12.

**Articulation** - Agreements among or between training and education systems that allow credits taken from one system to be transferred to and applied at another system.

**Assessment** - A process by which information is gathered across a range of content areas to determine each student's understanding and their ability to use (apply) their understanding.

**Attribute** - A qualitative or inherent characteristic of a person or a thing. Children are asked to group objects according to such attributes as color, size, shape and other identified characteristics.

**Attribute blocks** - Blocks in the five geometric shapes, three colors, two sizes and two thicknesses that provide children with opportunities to sort, classify and match.

**Auditory (learn through listening)** - Learns through lectures, discussion and listening and needs to talk things through.

**Authentic assessment** - A systematic examination of a child's learning and development that occurs within the child's normal routines over many points in time, usually by the teacher or caregiver of the child. An example of an authentic assessment is the Working Sampling System for preschoolers and the Ounce Scale for infants and toddlers.

**Background check** - In North Dakota, this refers to checking to see if the person's name appears on the North Dakota Child Abuse and Neglect Index showing a finding of "Services required" for child abuse or neglect and checking to see if the person is on the North Dakota Office of Attorney General List of Convicted Sex Offenders and Offenders Against Children - Public List found at <http://www.sexoffender.nd.gov/publiclisting.aspx>

**Benchmark** - A specific statement of what all students should know and be able to do at a specified time in their schooling. Benchmarks are used to measure a student's progress toward meeting the standard.

**Big books** - Oversized books that allow children to see the print and pictures as adults read them.

**Career advising** - A formal system in which knowledgeable advisors help practitioners recognize and set individual professional goals and access systems to meet those goals.

**Caregiver** - The adult responsible for the care and education of a particular child. A primary caregiver may be a teacher, parent, or guardian.

**Child Care Development Fund (CCDF)** - A federal program through which funds are allocated according to each state's lead agency to provide child care and related services. States/lead agencies specify how they will use the funds in a CCDF plan.

**Child care licensing agency** - In North Dakota, County Social Service Boards are responsible for regulation of early childhood services. Licensing is the responsibility of the state-wide Department of Human Services.

**Child care provider** - A person, groups of person, or agency who holds responsibility for the education and supervision of the child/children in their care.

**Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R)** - Part of a national network of agencies designed to help families, child care providers, and communities. In North Dakota, two agencies, together, provide services to all counties under a contract with the Department of Human Services. They also: provide child care and education information and a parent referral service; collect and maintain a database of providers; compile and analyze supply and demand data and assist communities in developing needed child care services; provide and coordinate training and administer grants to improve the quality and availability of care; and to build community awareness, involvement, and solutions for quality care and education that's affordable and available for North Dakota families.

**Child Development Associate (CDA)** - A nationally recognized early childhood professional credential awarded to individuals who successfully complete the nationally established requirements of the CDA program to work with children ages birth to five years.

**Child Development Associate (CDA) advisor** - An individual who meets the nationally established qualifications to serve as an advisor to CDA candidates.

**Child Development Associate (CDA) functional areas** - The domains of child development and early childhood programming that define the CDA approach to training and skills building.

**Classification** - The ability to recognize likenesses and differences between objects and to group them accordingly. For example by common characteristics such as color or shape.

**Code of ethics** - The agreed upon standards for professional behavior and decision making that direct the work of practitioners in the field. It is codified by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.  
<http://www.naeyc.org/about/positions/pdf/PSETH05.PDF>

**Competence** - Ability to use skills and knowledge independently and effectively.

**Comprehension** - The process in which a reader constructs meaning through interaction with text; accurately understanding what is written or said.

**Concepts about print (CAP)** - Concepts appropriate for preschool-aged children and the different ways that print works which include the following: directionality (that readers and writers move from left to right and top to bottom); spacing (used to separate words); recognition of words and letters; connection between spoken and written language; understanding the function of punctuation (meaning of a period and question mark); and parts of a book ( front, back, cover, pages).

**Concept of word** - The ability to match spoken words to printed words, as demonstrated by the ability to point to the words to memorize text while reading.

**Conceptualize** - The ability to picture, imagine, or perceive something in order to arrive at an idea or understanding.

**Concrete materials** - Physical objects that can be touched and allow children to interact with concepts by using their hands and other tools to explore, experiment, and make meaning and develop understanding; in particular, materials used in mathematics, such as counters, attribute blocks; also called manipulatives.

**Cone** - A three dimensional figure whose base is a circle and whose sides taper to a point.

**Consumer** - A person whose wants are satisfied by using goods and services.

**Continuing education units (CEU's)** - are typically issued by higher education institutions. They may be obtained at conferences of professional education organizations and may be applied to renewal of professional credentials such as the CDA or may be required for renewal of certificates and licensures.

**Cooperative play** - Making or doing things together that require the ideas, skills, and contributions of each person.

**Core body of knowledge** - The research-based knowledge that informs the fields of early childhood and child development, representing essential knowledge that those working in the early care and education field need to learn and apply.

**Core competencies** - The foundational skill base for the early childhood profession.

**Counting** - To name or list (the units of a group or collection) one by one to determine a total. At this level, children need to understand that the last number they count represents the total.

**Country** - The entire land area of a nation or state.

**Credential** - A professional award given for successful completion of pre-determined requirements and qualifications.

**Criminal background check** - Fingerprints are taken and sent to the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to determine if there is any criminal history record information regarding the person.

**Criminal history record** - A compilation of an individual's identification, arrest, conviction, incarceration, legal status, probation, warrant information, and other relevant criminal history. In the United States, these compilations are maintained and updated on the local, state and federal levels by various law enforcement agencies.

**Cube** - A geometric solid with six square faces, each perpendicular to those adjoining itself. More specifically, a rectangular solid with equal length, width, and height.

**Culture** - The shared attitudes, beliefs, histories, customs, and social or family practices that generally characterize a particular group of people. Culture and language are critical components of a child's developmental and learning processes; therefore, classroom practices cannot be developmentally appropriate unless they are appropriate and responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity.

**Curricula** - The conceptual framework or structures that guide environment design and activities and that help children succeed in achieving important developmental and learning goals. Curricula for young children should draw on their knowledge and interests and be age and culturally appropriate.

**Curriculum** - Experiences and activities that provide and meet children's needs and stimulate learning in all developmental areas: creative, physical, social, emotional, and intellectual.

**Developmentally appropriate practices** - The outcome of a decision-making process by teachers that draws on at least three critical, interrelated bodies of knowledge. These three bodies are: 1) What teachers know about the individual children in their group; 2) Knowledge of the social and cultural context in which children live and learn; and 3) What teachers know about how children develop and learn.

**Developmental delay** - This term is used when a child does not reach developmental milestones at expected times. It is an ongoing, major delay in the process of development usually diagnosed made by a medical professional based upon strict guidelines. Parents and primary caregivers usually are the first to notice if a child is not progressing.

**Developmentally appropriate** - Research-based effective and respectful caregiving, teaching practices, theories, and learning environments that have been found to lead to positive outcomes for children.

**Dictate** - The act of children speaking aloud while someone else writes the words down.

**Director/administrator** - The person most responsible for onsite, on-going, daily supervision of an early childhood program and its staff.

**Diversity** - Differences of culture, language, race, ethnicity, nationality, abilities, learning styles, age, education, life experiences, and lifestyles in individuals, families, groups, communities, and institutions.

**Domains** - Broad areas or categories of children's learning and development.

**Dramatic play center** - Area in which children, play, pretend, use their imaginations, act out social challenges, replicate what they have seen others do, practice new skills, and learn.

**Early care and education** - Experiences and relationships which enhance young children's development and learning. A number of factors influence the potential of the child's environment (in or out of home) to promote development and learning including the quality of the child's parent/caregiver relationship, a stimulating but not stressful environment, good nutrition, health care, and special needs interventions.

**Early childhood** - The period of life from birth to age eight.

**Early Childhood Services** - The office in the Department of Human Services, Division of Children and Family Services in which authority for regulating early childhood services in North Dakota rests.

**Early Childhood Services Administrative Rule** - Rules established by the North Dakota Department of Human Services, with citizen input, to regulate the direct care of young children in formal and informal child care settings. Compliance with administrative rule is supervised by the North Dakota Department of Human Services and is administered by North Dakota County Social Service Boards.

**Early Childhood Services Century Code Chapter 50-11.1** - Statutes established by the North Dakota state legislature to assure that children receiving early childhood services are provided food, shelter, safety, comfort, supervision, and learning experiences commensurate to their age and capabilities, so as to safeguard the health, safety, and development of those children. This program is administered through the North Dakota Department of Human Services.

**Early Head Start** - Early Head Start is a federally funded program that serves income eligible infants, toddlers and expectant parents. Early Head Start provides services that focus on development of children and families. Primary program focuses include prenatal development/healthy pregnancy, child development, health, nutrition, parent education/family development and parent leadership opportunities. Early Head Start reserves 10% of its enrollment for children with special needs.

**Early childhood benchmark achievement** - A level of performance that can be supported through assessment by a child, which includes observation, descriptions and documentation of a child's performance or behavior, and by samples of a child's work. Some educators may also refer to these as child outcomes.

**e.g.** - Exempli gratia (Latin) meaning "for example," "such as," and "includes but is not limited to."

**Embedded** - Established, firmly fixed in practice.

**Emergent literacy** - A range of activities and behaviors related to written language, including those undertaken by very young children who depend on the cooperation of others and/or on creative play to deal with materials; reading and writing related activities and behaviors that change over time, culminating in conventional literacy during middle childhood.

**Emergent reading** - Reading-related activities and behaviors, especially those before a child achieves the capacity to read fluently and conventionally (e.g., page turning, letter naming, pointing to words on a page, "reading" a book).

**Emergent writing** - Writing-related activities and behaviors, especially those before a child achieves the capacity to write fluently and conventionally e.g., scribbling letter-like forms, inventive spelling).

**Emotional development** - Is inclusive of the child's concept of him/herself. Healthy emotional development also includes the ability to understand and express one's own feelings.

**Empathy** - An ability to understand and identify with someone else's feelings or problems.

**Environmental print** - Print and other graphic symbols, in addition to books, that are found in the physical environment, such as street signs, billboards, television commercials, building signs, etc. Note: Environmental print affords opportunities for learners in early phases of emerging literacy to discover and explore the nature and function of graphic symbols as conveyors of meaning, even when they are not able to read in a formal sense.

**Environmental rating scale** - A set of observation tools used to assess the quality of early childhood and school age care environments.

**Evaluation** - A process by which information is gathered to determine the impact/results of a program or an intervention.

**Environmental sounds** - Sounds that are part of the world around us, such as music, voices, traffic.

**English language learners (ELL)** - People who are learning the English Language.

**Explicit instruction** - Teaching children in a systematic and sequential manner.

**Expressive language** - Being able to convey messages using words; it refers to what a child says, not how it is said.

**Facilitate** - To guide, assist, and/or scaffold through the learning process.

**Family** - The primary social group of people who share common beliefs; the definition of "family" varies across culture and according to social norms.

**Fieldwork** - A supervised or mentored caregiving or teaching experience working in the field with young children and their families.

**Fine motor skills** - Skills that use small muscle groups such as hands and fingers and frequently involve eye-hand coordination, such as writing, painting, drawing, molding clay, stringing beads, completing a puzzle, pinching clothespins.

**Fire safety inspection** - An inspection of child care facilities conducted for the state fire marshal, or other (local) fire safety entity for compliance with state's and, where applicable, local fire safety codes and laws. This inspection is in addition to those conducted by the licensing agency.

**Floor or Table Graph** - A graph made of actual objects arranged in categories on a tabletop or on the floor.

**Fluency** - The act of reading easily, smoothly and automatically with a rate appropriate for the text, indicating that students understand meaning.

**Forms of Print** - The various way print is formatted (e.g., recipes, books, magazines, newspapers, menus).

**Framework** - A document containing the necessary components to shape and guide the design and development of quality early childhood education programs.

**Geometric Figures** - Refers to rectangles, circles, and related three-dimensional solids.

**Good Start, Grow Smart** - The federal initiative that encouraged states to develop early learning guidelines, professional development systems, and quality rating systems and required Head Start programs to demonstrate progress in children's learning.

**Goods** - Objects that are capable of satisfying people's wants.

**Gross motor skills** - Skills that use large and or major muscle groups, like the arms, legs, and torso, to control body movement and for movement activities, such as bending, walking, and throwing.

**Habitat** - The native environment of an animal or plant, or the kind of place that is natural for an animal or plant.

**Head Start** - A federally funded program for families with pre-school aged children that meet income eligibility guidelines. Head Start provides the family with child development, health (dental, physical, social-emotional, nutrition) and parent services.



**Head Start Child Outcomes Framework** - Federal early learning standards for children three through five years old that guide Head Start program curriculum and assessment.

**Health/environmental inspection** - An inspection of child care facilities conducted by the health department, of other entity, for compliance with the state's and, where applicable, local health/environmental codes and laws. This inspection is in addition to those conducted by the licensing agency.

**Higher order thinking/Higher order questions**  
Instead of just asking to recall information, ask learner to restate in own words, apply what was learned, analyze information, evaluate the situation or create.

**Human characteristic/feature** - An aspect of a place of quality of the Earth's surface constructed by people including cities, parks, buildings, and roads.

**Inclusion** - An environment and the use of practices which allow all children, with a range of abilities, disabilities, cultures, etc., to feel nurtured and actively participate together. Children are respected and accepted as equal members of the learning community.

**Inclusive** - Nurturing and providing for the needs of all children.

**Independent reading** - Children select books on their own, usually in the library center, and imitate reading. Usually they picture read. They may read to another child or to a stuffed animal.

**Indicator** - A specific statement of knowledge that all students demonstrate at each grade level. The indicators serve as checkpoints that monitor progress toward the benchmarks.

**Inquiry** - A process that consists of principles and procedures for the systematic pursuit of knowledge, involving the formulation of a problem or hypotheses and the collection of data through observation and experiment.

**Integrated curriculum** - Information and activities are presented in a thematic, holistic manner connecting subject in a way that meets the needs of all children, for example, art, music, speaking, and writing are utilized to promote literacy as well as math and science learning.

**Interactions** - The connections and communication between two or more individuals. The purpose of such interactions between adults and young children is to provide opportunities for children to develop socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.

**Invented forms** - Symbols used to represent or communicate an understanding in a non-standard format (T4 to stand for the numeral 24, M for mommy or npp to represent a child has a nickel and two pennies). Invented representation gives a child a format to communicate understanding. We do not teach invented representation, but appreciate a child's desire to communicate in ways that are meaningful to him/her.

**Invented spelling** - A child's spelling system based on letter names and/or sounds. It also is called creative or estimated spelling.

**Language** - The systematic use of sounds, signs, and symbols as a method of communication; in writing, the choice of words used to convey meaning.

**Learning centers/activity areas** - A system for organizing the environment so that related materials are placed in a specific area of the classroom. For example, all materials children use for art are located in an area designated as the Art Center.

**Learning styles** - Children's different approaches to acquiring information, problem solving, and expressing knowledge and understanding. (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic)

**Legal unlicensed provider** - An approved relative or a self-declared (formerly self-certified affidavit) provider who is providing care for three or fewer infants or five or children, including their own children, under the age of 12. Tribally registered providers are also included in this category.

**Letter knowledge** - The ability to identify the names and shapes of the letters of the alphabet.

**Licensed child care center** - A program licensed in North Dakota, to provide full or part-time care to nineteen or more children birth to 12 years of age. Centers may be operated under proprietary or not-for-profit status, as part of a large chain of facilities, or by an organization.

**Licensed family child care provider** - An individual licensed by the North Dakota to provide care for no more than 7 children, including their own under the age of 12, in the individual's home. If space allows, an additional 2 school-aged children may be allowed before and after school. Most family child care involves mixed ages of children.  
note: some tribes in North Dakota also have family child care licenses.

**Licensed group child care provider** - A program licensed by the North Dakota to care for 8-18 children including the operator's own children under the age of 12. May be located in operator's home or in another facility. May require additional caregivers. Most group child care involves mixed ages of children.

**Licensed school-age child care center** - A location in North Dakota for adult supervised care of a school aged children on a regular basis for nineteen or more children who are usually between the ages of five and twelve years old.

**Life cycle** - A series of stages through which an animal or plant passes during its lifetime.

**Limited English Proficiency (LEP)** - One whose ability to understand and use English is limited, especially one from a home where English is not spoken or where English is used as a second language.

**Literacy** - The ability to read and write. Words, letter sounds, symbols, letters, books, stories, and other print and non-print material help children develop technical skills to read, understand, and write.

**Literacy-rich environment** - Literacy activities are included in every component of the program, every day, and across all environments.

**Location** - The position of a point on the Earth's surface expressed by means of a grid or in relation to the position of other places.

**Manipulatives** - (See concrete materials)

**Modeling** - Setting an example to be followed.

**Mock Letters** - Symbols or letter-like marks formed by children to represent "writing."

**Multicultural curriculum** - Understanding of and responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity that is demonstrated through plans for learning, activities, materials, and interactions.

**Multiple Intelligences** - Howard Gardner's theory of eight intelligences:

- Visual-spatial - ability to perceive the visual
- Verbal-linguistic - ability to use words and language
- Logical/mathematical - ability to use reason, logic and numbers
- Bodily/kinesthetic - ability to control body movements and handle objects skillfully
- Musical/rhythmic - ability to produce/ appreciate music
- Interpersonal - ability to relate and understand others
- Intrapersonal - ability to self-reflect and be aware of one's inner state of being
- Naturalistic - ability to categorize

**Multi-sensory** - Experiences that allow children to respond to an activity using one of the five senses.

**The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** - The world's largest professional organization working on behalf of young children. With more than 10,000 members, it works to improve the well-being of all young children, with particular focus on the quality of educational and developmental services for children from birth through age eight.

**Natural** - Existing in, or produced by nature.

**Natural Resource** - A productive resource supplied by nature (e.g., ores, trees, arable land).

**Natural World** - Refers to all of the living components (animals and plants) in the world.

**Non-Standard Measure** - Using a device to measure that is not a widely accepted tool (e.g., a measurement of six index fingers for length or 25 kernels of popcorn for volume). This method is generally used as an approximation strategy.

**Non-traditional or non-standard hour care** - Terms often used to refer to care outside the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. including evenings, nights and weekends or care provided on an intermittent basis.

**North Dakota Association for the Education of Young Children (NDAEYC)** - The North Dakota state affiliate of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and North Dakota Head Start Association (NDHSA).

**North Dakota Child Care Providers Incorporated (NDCCPI)** - A statewide non-profit organization. Membership consists of child care providers, local child care associations, and interested persons.

**North Dakota Head Start Association (NDHSA)**  
The North Dakota State affiliate of the National Head Start Association. Membership includes program Director, staff and parent representation from all Head Start and Tribal Head Starts in the State.

**North Dakota Department of Human Services (NDDHS)** - Provides services that help vulnerable North Dakotans of all ages to maintain or enhance their quality of life, which may be threatened by lack of financial resources, emotional crises, disabling conditions, or an inability to protect themselves. Supports the provision of services and care as close to home as possible to maximize each person's independence while preserving the dignity of all individuals and respecting their constitutional and civil rights.

**North Dakota Head Start-State Collaboration Office (HS-SCO)** - Is designed to create a visible presence at the state level to assist in the development of the significant, multi-agency and public-private partnerships between Head Start and the state. The following are the federally - identified purposes of the HS-SCO: Build early childhood systems and access to comprehensive services and support for all children of families with low-income; Create partnership agreements and initiatives between Head Start and appropriate state programs/agencies and

encourage Head Start's capacity to be a partner in State initiatives on behalf of children and their families; and Facilitate the involvement of Head Start in State policies, plans, processes and decisions affecting the Head Start target population and other families with low-income.

**Number** - The total or quantity (how many) in a group (e.g., three bears, five blocks).

**Number awareness** - Understanding that a word, letter or symbol represents a number.

**Number Sense** - Involves the understanding of numbers and their quantities.

**Numeral** - The symbol for how many. For example, 3 is a symbol for three items, such as three bears.

**Observe** - To watch carefully, especially with attention to details or behavior, for the purpose of arriving at a judgment.

**One-to-one correspondence** - The process of pairing items or objects in a one-to-one relationship. For example, a cup for every child at the table.

**Onset** - The initial consonant or consonant cluster of a word (e.g., bat: onset is /b/; strap: onset is /str/).

**Open-ended experiences** - Activities that have no preconceived or defined end result, thereby encouraging children to problem-solve, explore, and create.

**Open-ended questions** - Inquiries that have more than one answer and that must be answered with more than yes, no, or one word.

**Open-ended/unstructured materials** - Materials such as play dough and unit blocks, that children can use independently and play with in their own way.

**Organism** - Any living thing.

**Outcome** - The extent to which a goal has been achieved or accomplished.

**Para-professional** - An individual who assists in working with children and families under the direction of a qualified teacher or other professional.

**Parquetry blocks** - Wooden or plastic blocks, several inches in size and of varying colors and shapes such as squares and triangles.

**Patterning** - The process of creating repetitions such as a clapping patter.

**Patterns** - Designs that repeat themselves, including patterns of sounds and physical movements (e.g., stomp, stomp, clap, stomp, stomp, clap...); patterns in the environment (e.g., day follows night, repeated phrases in storybooks, patterns in carpeting of clothing); patterns in numbers or symbols (e.g., 1-2-3, 1-2-3... or aabcc, aabccd...).

**Peer** - Child of the same age or an adult colleague of a stop member.

**Phenomenon** - A fact or event of scientific interest susceptible to scientific description and explanation.

**Phonemic awareness** - The ability to hear, identify, and manipulate the individual sounds-phonemes of spoken words. Phonemic awareness is a necessary step for learning to read. To learn the correspondences between letters and sounds, one must understand that words are made up of phonemes.

**Phoneme** - The smallest unit of sound in a given language. The phonemes in a word are not always the same as the letters in a word. In the word dog, there are three phonemes (d-o-g) and three letters. In the word snow, there are three phonemes (s-n-o) but four letters. The English language has 41 phonemes.

**Phonics** - The understanding that there is a predictable relationship between phonemes (the sounds of spoken language) and graphemes (the letters and spellings that represent those sounds in written language). A way of teaching reading and spelling that stresses symbol-sound relationships, used especially in beginning instruction.

**Phonological awareness** - The ability to recognize spoken words as a sequence of sounds. Phonological awareness refers to the whole spectrum from primitive awareness of speech sounds and rhythms to rhyme awareness and sound similarities.

**Physical strategies** - A problem-solving method that incorporates building a model of the situation, acting out the problem narrative or using concrete materials.

**Physical world** - Refers to all of the non-living components in the world (e.g., air, water, sun/light, rocks, soil, and other formations and materials).

**Pictograph** - A diagram or graphic using pictured objects to convey ideas or information.

**Pivotal research** - Key or central studies and rigorous investigations of early childhood education and learning that result in confirmed facts and discoveries.

**Place** - A location having distinctive characteristics which give it meaning and character and distinguishes it from other locations.

**Play** - A dynamic process that develops and changes, becoming more varied and complex, allowing children to practice skills they will need later in life. Play is the vehicle for learning and development across domains, reflecting the social and cultural contexts in which children live.

**Portfolio** - A representative collection of work that demonstrates knowledge of a particular area(s) and/or growth and development over time; both children and professionals may have portfolios.

**Position or Directional Word** - A word that describes position or place in space (e.g., up, down, left, right, over, under, next to, beside).

**Predict** - Use of prior knowledge to guess what an outcome will be.

**Predictable books** - Books that use repetitive words, phrases and familiar patterns that make it possible for listeners or readers to know or guess what is coming next, such as "Brown bear, brown bear, what do you see?"

**Preschool** - Programs that generally serve children from age three through entrance into kindergarten.

**Print awareness** - The knowledge that printed words carry meaning and that reading and writing are ways to get ideas and information.

**Prior knowledge** - Knowledge that stems from a previous experience. Prior knowledge is a key component of reading comprehension.

**Problem solving** - The process of identifying a problem or a goal, generating ideas to solve the problem or reach the goal, and testing and analyzing solutions.

**Process-oriented experience** - An activity in which children participate that requires thinking, communicating, organizing, interacting, decision-making and solving problems, individually and in groups.

**Producer** - A person who makes goods and services.

**Product** - Something produced by human or mechanical effort or by a natural process.

**Program for Infant/Toddler Care (PITC)** - The standardized training curriculum for caregivers of infants and toddlers, developed collaboratively by the California Department of Education and WestEd, and delivered in North Dakota as a state training initiative. The PITC Philosophy: "Good infant care is neither baby-sitting nor preschool. It is a special kind of care that resembles no other."

**Prop box** - A collection of materials relevant to a particular theme, such as doctor's office, usually placed in the home living center to promote dramatic play.

**Rating scale** - An assessment or evaluation tool used to document progress over an extended period of time, such as a child's developmental progress, or a classroom environment, or a teacher's professional growth.

**Read aloud** - The act of reading a story, modeling proficient, fluent reading for the purpose of promoting enjoyment of the story and/or appreciation of literature.

**Reads** - The act of a young child imitating common reading behaviors, including holding the book right side up, following words across and down the page, turning the pages from front to back, and "telling" the story as he or she remembers or imagines it to be.

**Receptive language** - The ability to understand verbal and nonverbal communication.

**Recitation** - An experience in which a child or group of children say aloud

**Rectangle** - A four-sided figure, with equal opposite sides, and four right-angled corners

**Recycle** - To process in order to regain material for human use; the salvage and reprocessing of used materials (such as paper, metals, glass, and cloth).

**Re-enact** - A retelling of a story through dramatization.

**Registered provider** - Tribal registration in North Dakota is the care of no more than five children of which only three can be under 24 months of age. Or it may be the care of only children under 24 months of age in which no more than four children (0-24 months) can be in care at any given time. The provider's own children, who are present during the hours of care, must be counted within this ratio. (This definition may vary from one Tribe to another.)

**Registry** - A system to track and document available training, qualified trainers, and practitioner professional development, including education and other professional accomplishments.

**Relative position** - Position of an object in relation to another (e.g., above, below, under, beside, before, after).

**Representational graph** - Pictures or real objects are placed on a wall or chalkboard

**Rhyme** - A word corresponding with another in end sound (e.g., hat, bat, car, sat).

**Rhythm** - An ordered recurrent alternation of strong and weak elements in the flow of sound and silence (e.g., a clock ticking, beat of words in a nursery rhyme verse).

**Rime** - Part of a word (vowel and consonants) following the onset (e.g., bat's rime is-at; book's rime is-ook).

**Scaffolding** - Instruction in which adults build upon what children already know/express and provide support/encouragement that allows children to perform more complex tasks, to make discoveries and to problem-solve results.

**Scribbles/Writes** - The first attempts of writing by young children. This “writing” is often illegible.

**School-age care** - Daily programming and peer group activities with adult supervision for school-age children, kindergarten to eighth grade, before and after the normal school day and/or for holiday breaks and summer vacations. School-age care is provided by family child care providers, licensed child care centers, public schools, and community organizations.

**Segmented syllables** - The division of words into syllables; the minimal units of sequential speech sounds comprising a vowel sound or a vowel-consonant combination, as /a/, /ba/, /ab/, and /bab/.

**Sensory experiences** - How things look, feel, taste, smell and sound.

**Sequence** - An ordered set of objects, numbers, or pictures.

**Sequencing** - The arrangement in which objects or events follow in a logical order or a recurrent pattern; a following of one event after another in time.

**Shared Reading** - Teacher guides the entire class through stories with a high level of support; sharing and reading a story together (echo reading, choral reading, or fill in the gap reading).

**Shared Writing** - Teacher and learner work together to compose a message or story.

**Sliding fee scale** - A system of cost sharing by a family based on income and size of the family.

**Social development** - The child’s ability to interact socially and to form and sustain relationships with peers and adults. Includes the ability to understand how others feel.

**Spatial relations** - The ability to make logical connections about surroundings and the objects in them. For example, using a hoop or ring, a child is able to follow directions such as “walk around the circle” or “step inside the circle.”

**Spatial sense** - Involves building and manipulating mental representations of two- and three dimensional.

**Special needs** - Children with special needs have, or are at risk of developing, a developmental, emotional, behavioral, learning or physical condition that requires attention, services, and/or program modifications beyond what is generally needed by other children.

**Square** - a rectangle with four sides of equal lengths.

**Stable order counting** - Saying the words for numbers in a correct, consistent order when counting.

**Stakeholders** - Individuals or organizations that have a vested interest in a particular subject or project

**Staff** - Paid adults who have direct responsibilities for the education and care of children, and for the provision of support to families whose children are in their care.

**Standard** - A general statement of what all students should know and be able to do.

**Standard measurement** - A measure determined by the use of standard units (e.g., inches, feet, pounds, cups, pints, gallons).

**Strands** - Facets of learning and development within a domain.

**Storytelling/retelling** - The teacher tells a story, sometimes using related props, and involves the children in retelling the story, sequencing the major events.

**Syllable** - A word part that contains a vowel or, in spoken language, a vowel sound (e.g., rib-bon; news-pa-per).

**Symbols** - Something that represents or stands for something else. Young children often use scribbling, scribble writing, letter-like forms, letters, numbers, and pictures to represent sounds, words, ideas and feelings.

**Tactile/kinesthetic (learn through moving, doing, and touching)** - Learns best through a hands-on approach actively exploring the physical world around them.

**Teacher** - Any qualified adult who is entrusted with the education, care, and development of children from birth through entrance into kindergarten.

**Temperament** - A person's nature or customary frame of mind; personality.

**Theory** - An idea or belief about children's learning and development held by specialists in the field that is based on incomplete evidence and/or information, but widely accepted.

**Topic** - The general category of ideas, often stated in a word or phrase, which expresses what the passage or text is about (e.g., The topic of the storybook, *My Friend Rabbit*, is "friendship"); the shared focus of a conversation.

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

**Transitions** - Activities such as songs and finger plays used by teachers to move children from one activity to another. For example, from circle time to outdoors.

**Triangle** - A three-sided figure.

**Two-dimensional figure** - A shape that has two dimensions, usually described in terms of length and breadth or length and height.

**Unit blocks** - Wooden blocks which are constructed to be mathematically modular, thereby fitting together neatly and forming geometric patterns; Blocks are the best example of "unstructured" toys because children can exercise their imagination. Blocks give shape and form to ideas, teaching mathematical, scientific, social, and literacy concepts.

**Vignettes** - Stories that provide ideas about how children learn.

**Visual (learn through seeing)** - Needs to see the teacher's body language and facial expression to fully understand the lesson content.

**Visual discrimination** - The ability to see likenesses and differences. This skill is necessary for reading.

**Vocabulary** - Words we must know to communicate effectively. In general, vocabulary can be described as oral vocabulary or reading vocabulary. Oral vocabulary refers to words that are used in speaking or recognized in listening. Reading vocabulary refers to words that are recognized or used in print.

**Want** - A psychological or physical desire that can be fulfilled through the consumption of goods and services.

**Weather** - The state of the atmosphere with respect to heat or cold, wetness or dryness, calm or storm, clearness or cloudiness.

**Weight** - The amount of heaviness of a solid (e.g., objects, animals, people).

**Word recognition** - The quick and easy identification of the form, pronunciation and appropriate meaning of a word previously seen in print or writing.

**Word wall** - A large area of a wall (usually in the classroom) where important words are displayed as references for reading and writing.

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## Related Links

A link to the National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (NECTAC) Acronym Lists:  
<http://www.nectac.org/chouse/acronyms.asp>

A link to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Early Childhood Education Glossary of Union Terms:  
<http://www.aft.org/earlychildhood/glossary.htm>

A link to "The Words We Use: A Glossary of Terms for Early Childhood Standards and Assessments":  
<http://www.ccsso.org/eceaglossary>

A link to the article "Terminology in the Early Childhood Field": <http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/poptopics/terminology.html>

A link to the Head Start Office's Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC):  
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov>

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This information can be made available in an alternative format. Please contact the Department.