

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



A Resource to Support Young Children's
Development and Learning

Revised June 2005



Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines

.....Nebraska Health & Human Services System

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

We are pleased to join our many state and local partners in presenting Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for children ages three to five years!

These voluntary guidelines are 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. *Good Start, Grow Smart* seeks to strengthen Head Start, partner with states to improve early childhood education, and provide information to early childhood teachers, caregivers, and parents.

We hope you will find this document useful in better understanding what you may expect to see in a child's learning and development, as well as what you can do to encourage learning in everyday experiences, taking into consideration the individual differences and unique needs of every child. These guidelines are not intended to cover every possible aspect of early learning, but instead to offer some ideas as you think about the many creative ways you can promote the growth, learning, and well-being of children in your care each day.

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 all ensure a good start for Nebraska's children.

We hope you will find this publication useful, and we encourage you to share this information with others who work to make a difference in the lives of children in Nebraska.

Respectfully,

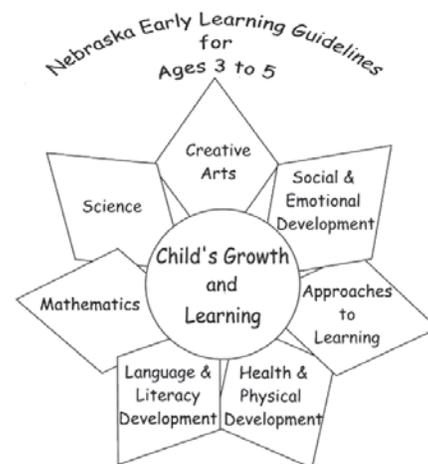
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NEBRASKA EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES for Ages 3 to 5

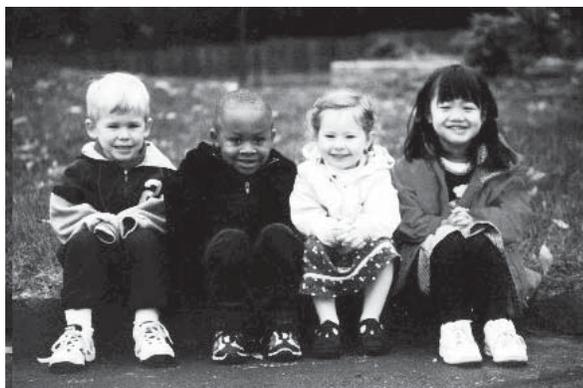


Preface

Research confirms the value of early learning experiences and high quality early childhood programs for young children. Prekindergarten programs that support effective teaching practices have been shown to lead to important growth in children's intellectual and social development, which is critical to their future success in school.

Quality programs provide a challenging but achievable curriculum, and engage children in thinking, reasoning, and communication with others.

With adult direction and guidance, children respond to the challenge and acquire important skills and concepts, while learning and growing across all areas of development.



Who was Involved in Developing the Early Learning Guidelines?

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

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

A special note of appreciation is given to Nebraska Head Start programs, whose input and previous work provided the foundation for the format and design of the Early Learning Guidelines.

As you will see on the following pages, the Development Team was composed of representatives from each of these partners. A Review Team representing higher education and other experts in the field of early care and education in Nebraska provided early feedback on the content of the Guidelines.



After several rounds of revision, the Guidelines were presented at 14 facilitated focus groups around the state to get input on usability, format, and design. The focus groups were primarily designed to get input from center- and home-based child care providers and other program staff who provide direct services to young children and their families.

Additional feedback was gathered by presenting the Guidelines to various groups around the state, including professional organizations and at early childhood conferences.

The Guidelines were placed on the Nebraska Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood web site along with a feedback form for yet another opportunity to gather information.

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What Tools Were Used in the Development of These Guidelines?

The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines are built upon several Nebraska documents and policies that are recognized as high quality, inclusive and family-centered:

- The Primary Program: Growing and Learning in the Heartland. A joint project of the Nebraska Department of Education, the Iowa Department of Education, the Iowa Area Education Agencies and the Iowa and Nebraska Head Start-State Collaboration Offices. This project is a research-based framework for curriculum, instruction, and assessment for early childhood education. The program facilitates continuous learning by accommodating the broad range of children's abilities, their learning rates and styles, and their knowledge, experiences, and interests.
- Rule 11, Regulations for Early Childhood Education Programs. Title 92 NAC, Chapter 11, Nebraska Department of Education. Rule 11 is a set of basic standards to guide program planning and development for all center-based programs serving children age birth to 5, operated by public schools and/or Educational Service Units.
- Rule 51, Regulations and Standards for Special Education Programs. Title 92 NAC, Chapter 51, Nebraska Department of Education. Rule 51 contains requirements for school districts in the provision of special education and related services for children and youth with disabilities age birth-21, specifically in Section 007: Individual Education Program (IEP) and the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP), and in Section 008: Placement of Children with Disabilities.
- Rule 24, Regulations for Certificate Endorsements. Title 92 NAC, Chapter 24, Nebraska Department of Education. Guidelines Recommended for Use with Rule 24, Nebraska Department of Education. Rule 24 and accompanying Guidelines govern the provision of teaching endorsements by approved teacher education programs in Nebraska colleges and universities. These include teaching endorsements for early childhood education, early childhood education unified, and preschool disabilities.
- Nebraska PreK-16 Initiative. A Nebraska Department of Education and University of Nebraska statewide initiative to promote a seamless educational path for Nebraska students in the areas of Mathematics, Language Arts/English, and World Languages across preschool through post secondary programs.
- Child Care Licensing Standards, 391 NAC, Department of Health and Human Services, Regulation and Licensure. These standards identify health and safety regulations for child care centers, family child care homes and preschools.
- Nebraska Mathematics Content Standards, Nebraska Reading/Writing Content Standards, Nebraska Science Content Standards, Nebraska Social Studies/History Content Standards, Title 94 NAC, Chapter 1. The State Board of Education adopted these voluntary content standards to identify what students should know and be able to do and what teachers should teach for students in grades K-12.
- Indicators of Quality. Guiding the Development and Improvement of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs, Nebraska Department of Education. The indicators are designed to promote quality and excellence in early care and education programs.

In addition to these Nebraska documents and policies, the committee also drew extensively from some national sources.

- Head Start Performance Standards. Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. These are mandatory regulations that grantees and delegate agencies must implement in order to operate a Head Start program. The Standards define the objectives and features of a quality Head Start program in concrete terms; they articulate a vision of service delivery to young children and families; and they provide a regulatory structure for the monitoring and enforcement of quality standards.
- Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. The Head Start Child Outcomes Framework is intended to guide Head Start programs in their ongoing assessment of the progress and accomplishments of children, and in their efforts to analyze and use data on child outcomes in program self-assessment and continuous improvement.
- Early Childhood Curriculum, Assessment, and Program Evaluation. A Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (NAECS/SDE). This position statement outlines ways to build an effective, accountable system in programs for children birth through age 8.
- Position Statement on Inclusion. Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children. This position statement outlines the importance for all children, regardless of abilities, to actively participate in natural and inclusive early childhood settings within their communities.
- DEC Recommended Practices in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education. Identifies effective practices based on research and shared beliefs to help early childhood educators, other practitioners, families and administrators provide quality learning experiences that result in better outcomes for young children with disabilities and their families.
- Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success. A Joint Position Statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education. This position statement defines the desired content and outcomes of young children's education.



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Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



Welcome to the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines!

This exciting new resource provides information to assist early childhood teachers, caregivers, parents, family members and other adults in promoting the learning and development of young children.

This voluntary guide has been developed to provide information about: 1) what children by the age of five can typically be expected to know and do; and 2) what adults can do to provide experiences and environments that support learning across domains. It is intended to be a resource to assist adults in planning meaningful learning experiences for young children. It is not intended to be a curriculum or a checklist. All of the individual areas of the Guidelines are considered to be equally important and should be integrated into all of the activities every day. Also, the Guidelines are not intended to limit any child's progress. The individual needs of each child must be met on a daily basis.

The Early Learning Guidelines address seven domains of development and learning:

- ✘ Social and Emotional Development
- ✘ Approaches to Learning
- ✘ Health and Physical Development
- ✘ Language and Literacy
- ✘ Mathematics
- ✘ Science
- ✘ Creative Arts

Each domain contains multiple key elements which relate to the domain area.

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

- > **Widely Held Expectations:** generalizations about most children's development and learning over time
- > **Learning in Action:** examples of what children do to show evidence that they meet the expectations, and what adults could do to support their growth and learning
- > **The Environment:** considerations to keep in mind when setting up the indoor/ outdoor space and materials
- > **Related Standards:** Nebraska K-12 Standards, Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations, and the Head Start Outcomes Framework, which are supported by the Guidelines

It is important to remember that not all children will attain all of the expectations by age five. The expectations provide a map from which adults can understand the developmental "path" that children will follow on their way to kindergarten and beyond. Children younger than five years of age will show emerging abilities toward these expectations.



Each developmental domain can be addressed every day in early childhood settings through the curriculum, the materials that are chosen and the adult support given. The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines are not a curriculum; rather they can be used as a framework to guide decisions about curriculum, materials, and the classroom environment. Use of the Guidelines promotes continuity and consistency across all settings and promotes successful transitions across environments. When adults consider children's development together with the adult's actions as addressed in the Guidelines, the result is an integrated curriculum that meets the developmental needs of all children in the program.

Although the *Early Learning Guidelines* are voluntary, adults are encouraged to use this resource as they plan activities and interact with young children. Providing rich experiences, supportive learning environments, and positive relationships with children in the years before they start school will give them the foundation for later school success.



The *Early Learning Guidelines* can also serve as a resource for families as they select quality programs for their children, and can help to broaden their understanding of the ways their children are learning.

Working together, teachers, caregivers and families can assure that every child is supported to reach his or her potential, and that the transition to kindergarten will continue to support a lifelong love of learning.



This document is intended to be used with children three to five years of age. There is a companion document, which can be used for children birth to three years of age. Materials are also being developed to assist families in learning about ways to use the *Guidelines* to support their child's growth and development at home and in the community.

Visit the website at the *Early Childhood Training Center*, <http://www.esu3.org/ectc/ELG/elg.htm>, for resources and other information to learn more about using the *Guidelines*. Current workshops and other professional development experiences are also featured there.

Guiding Principles About Young Children's Growth and Learning

- ❖ **Children are active learners.**

Children learn through experiences with people, objects and things in their world. Experience through play, knowledge, curiosity and sense of wonder are foundations for children's learning. Children's ideas about themselves impact their interactions with adults, with other children, and with how they view themselves as learners.

- ❖ **Each child learns in unique ways.**

All children are learners with unique characteristics that influence learning. The rate of development and learning varies for individuals and is not the same for every child of the same age. The individual learner is impacted by genetics, the environment and experiences, interests, motivation for and approaches to learning. Learning may be uneven or occur in spurts.

- ❖ **Learning is most meaningful when it is integrated across all areas of development.**

Children construct knowledge and integrate new ideas and concepts into their existing understandings. Their achievements in language and learning are influenced by the social and emotional aspects of their development. Communication influences mathematical and scientific understandings. There are no clear lines between the domains or areas of learning.

- ❖ **Learning is continuous and sequential.**

Children's understanding grows from simple to complex (or from concrete to abstract). New knowledge is built on previous experience and understanding.

- ❖ **Development and learning are rooted in culture and supported by the family.**

The child's language, knowledge, traditions, and family expectations are the primary influences on development. Learning is enriched by stable, nurturing relationships within the family and community.

How Adults Can Support Children's Growth and Learning

Children's learning can be enriched and extended—adults who understand young children's growth and development can influence the extent of children's learning.

- ❖ Teachers, caregivers and families value one another as partners in each child's development.
- ❖ Adults assure that time and opportunity are provided for children to work together.
- ❖ Adults use effective observational skills to understand and assess children's learning.
- ❖ Adults assure that environments are predictable and promote consistent and nurturing relationships.



The Child and the Learning Environment

It is important that the environment respect and value the diversity that children and families bring, building upon their unique strengths.

The focus of the learning environment is on activities and settings that are interesting and important to the child and family. Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth. Each child develops and learns at different rates and in different ways. Developmentally appropriate programs plan for individual differences among children, including:

- ♦ individual personality, temperament and learning style
- ♦ experiences and family background, including language, culture, ethnicity, etc.
- ♦ special health considerations
- ♦ food allergies
- ♦ physical or cognitive disabilities
- ♦ preferences based on child and family interests



The learning environment helps develop individual children's potential. Some children may have a developmental delay or disability that requires adults to make changes in materials, experiences and the physical setting so that all children will be successful. Early childhood teachers, caregivers and families are important resources in helping identify a child's special learning or developmental needs. Accommodations are made to allow children with diverse abilities and backgrounds to participate equally.

The Adult and the Learning Environment

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

The Adult:

- Relates to all children with warmth, sensitivity, and caring to establish and sustain a climate in which learning is joyful
- Invites children to participate in planning and creating a rich, stimulating environment which encourages interaction, exploration, and investigation by all children
- Provides encouragement, support, guidance and appropriate challenges to help children achieve goals
- Models respect for people, materials and equipment in the environment
- Partners with other professionals and the children to plan, create, and sustain a safe climate in which children may work harmoniously, creatively, and productively
- Makes maximum use of space and integrates a variety of materials and equipment that stimulate active learning
- Structures opportunities for children to work individually and with other children, with their teacher, caregiver and other adults, and in groups of different sizes and groupings formed for different purposes
- Focuses on the ongoing learning of each individual child using developmentally appropriate assessment and evaluation procedures
- Uses a range of teaching methods from coaching to direct instruction to maximize children's learning
- Supports or increases the child's participation in existing or desired learning activities
- Exchanges information about the child with the child and family on an ongoing basis
- Learns about each individual child in order to link previous and new learning experiences
- Models and demonstrates enthusiasm for learning, and helps children to enjoy learning as meaningful, relevant, and personally satisfying
- Uses the information gained through observation, assessment and evaluation to make thoughtful and informed interventions as needed/indicated

Ways that Families Can Use the Early Learning Guidelines

The family is the child's first and most important teacher, and provides the child with a foundation for both healthy development and a positive attitude toward learning.

Supporting families in nurturing their children is essential.

Families should be aware of programmatic goals, experiences that should be provided for children, and expectations for their children's learning and development by the end of the preschool years. Teachers, caregivers and families should work collaboratively to ensure that children are provided optimal learning experiences.

Families are the best advocates for their children. Family members can use strategies listed in the *Guidelines* to offer suggestions and promote various projects and activities both at home and within their communities.

The *Guidelines* can help families learn about what to look for as they choose programs for their young children.

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

Information about developmentally appropriate expectations can be shared with parents during these times. Teachers and caregivers can also take advantage of these opportunities to gather information from family members about their child, and the expectations that they have for their child's learning.

The early childhood setting can support families in recognizing the value of preserving their home languages and culture. The program can also provide support systems to assist children's transitions into school language and culture.

Supporting Inclusive Learning Environments

Opportunities for learning occur as part of typical life activities, and routines both planned and spontaneous. Inclusion of children with differing abilities, children from diverse cultures, and children learning English as a second language fosters caring attitudes and teaches children about interdependence and acceptance of human differences. In high quality early childhood programs, inclusion is simply an example of the regular practice of meeting the individual needs of each child and family.

All children have the right to the supports, resources, and services they need to participate actively and meaningfully in any early childhood setting. All early care and education programs must be prepared to work together with families, follow the lead of parents, make referrals when appropriate, collaborate with children's IFSP/IEP teams, modify/adapt program activities and routines (make reasonable accommodations), and implement appropriate interventions within the context of the early childhood setting.

All children and families benefit from inclusive learning environments.

Children with a Wide Range of Abilities

The following are some general accommodations that can be made to support children with special learning or developmental needs. More specific accommodation suggestions can be found in each individual section of these Guidelines. This is a sampling of the types of accommodations that might be made and should not be considered a complete list. Many of these strategies are ones that can be used by adults to support the growth and learning of all children and in all settings.

- ❖ Provide adaptive equipment and materials when the child needs support
- ❖ Provide adult assistance/support as the child initiates action, then reduce support when the child shows ability to do some actions independently
- ❖ Provide opportunities for interaction with typically developing peers
- ❖ Add new and/or specific activities as needed to meet individual needs

- ❖ Modify materials and activities so the child can participate as independently as possible
- ❖ Engage other children as models, helpers, and friends to provide praise and encouragement
- ❖ Ensure that naturally occurring events, such as opportunities to use materials both independently and cooperatively, are purposefully arranged so the child has learning opportunities
- ❖ Provide visual supports (pictures, drawings, labels, color coding, picture schedules, etc.)
- ❖ Assure that child care homes, centers, and preschool environments meet the needs of all children

Children from Diverse Cultures

For the curriculum to be developmentally appropriate, it must be individually and culturally appropriate to each child. Therefore, the children, their families, society, teachers, and caregivers are important resources for an anti-bias, multicultural curriculum (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992).

Some children may speak a home language, or first language, other than English, thus calling upon the adults to extend the child's learning of a new language while supporting and strengthening the home language. Linguistic and cultural diversity must be integrated into all aspects of the program. Children have stories, songs, dances, art, traditions, celebrations, beliefs, and values that are unique to their culture and experience. The adult uses opportunities to integrate each child and family's cultural uniqueness into the curriculum and weave it into the fabric of everyday learning experiences.



By being mindful of each child's culture, adults can achieve the goals of empathy, respect, and understanding that characterize a multicultural classroom.

**All children learn about the world when
they learn about each other.**

Supporting Children's Success in Kindergarten and Beyond

Getting a good start. The best foundation for kindergarten and later success in school is for children to have experiences that support them in growing, learning, and building relationships from the time they are born. The Early Learning Guidelines are designed to give you-as teachers, caregivers, and family members-some basic information about supporting children in all areas of learning and development as you think about and plan for their experiences.

Children are born eager to learn. The joy of learning is the best gift children can bring with them as they enter kindergarten. Adults nurture that joy by providing many different kinds of experiences for children, such as exploration, as well as one-on-one direct teaching, both individual and group activities, and through carefully planned activities and materials as well as taking advantage of spontaneous teachable moments. Children need ongoing experiences that are encouraging and challenging to keep them motivated to learn and off to a good start as successful learners.

Supporting Nebraska's K-12 Standards. Each of the components in the Early Learning Guidelines is aligned with specific K-12 standards to show how that area of learning, activities, adult support, and environment connects to the continuum of learning in achieving Nebraska's state standards.



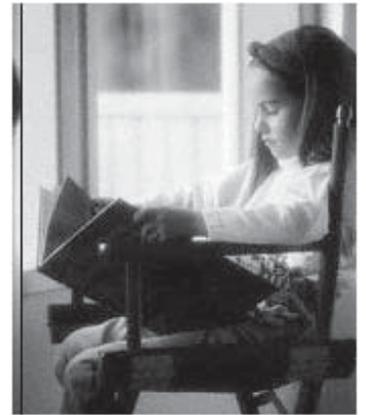
Language development and experiences with stories, books, rhymes, music and rhythm, communication through conversations and play in the early years are important in learning to read. Environments that provide everyday experiences for counting, comparing and manipulating objects, and finding out how things grow and how things work help children develop knowledge and skills in mathematics and science. Secure relationships with parents, family members, teachers, caregivers, and other adults and children help children to feel emotionally safe and confident as learners and in their social interactions with others.



Communicating with kindergarten teachers. Information about the Early Learning Guidelines has been sent to elementary principals in public schools across the state to share with kindergarten teachers. The Guidelines are available on the Nebraska Department of Education web site. Ongoing efforts are planned to assure that kindergarten teachers have opportunities to become knowledgeable about the Guidelines.

When family members, caregivers and teachers communicate about children's learning, development, and experiences in the areas identified in the Guidelines, they can create a shared understanding of the whole child to best meet the learning needs unique to each child.

Supporting the transition to kindergarten. Activities to help children become familiar with the school before they attend kindergarten help them feel more comfortable when they arrive at school. It may be possible to arrange for groups of children to visit the school to see what it is like. It is possible that elementary students from the school can visit the home- or center-based prekindergarten program to read to children, perform puppet shows or plays, demonstrate how their musical instruments work, or share other projects. Most schools have 'kindergarten round-up' as another event that signals the beginning of a formal link to the school.

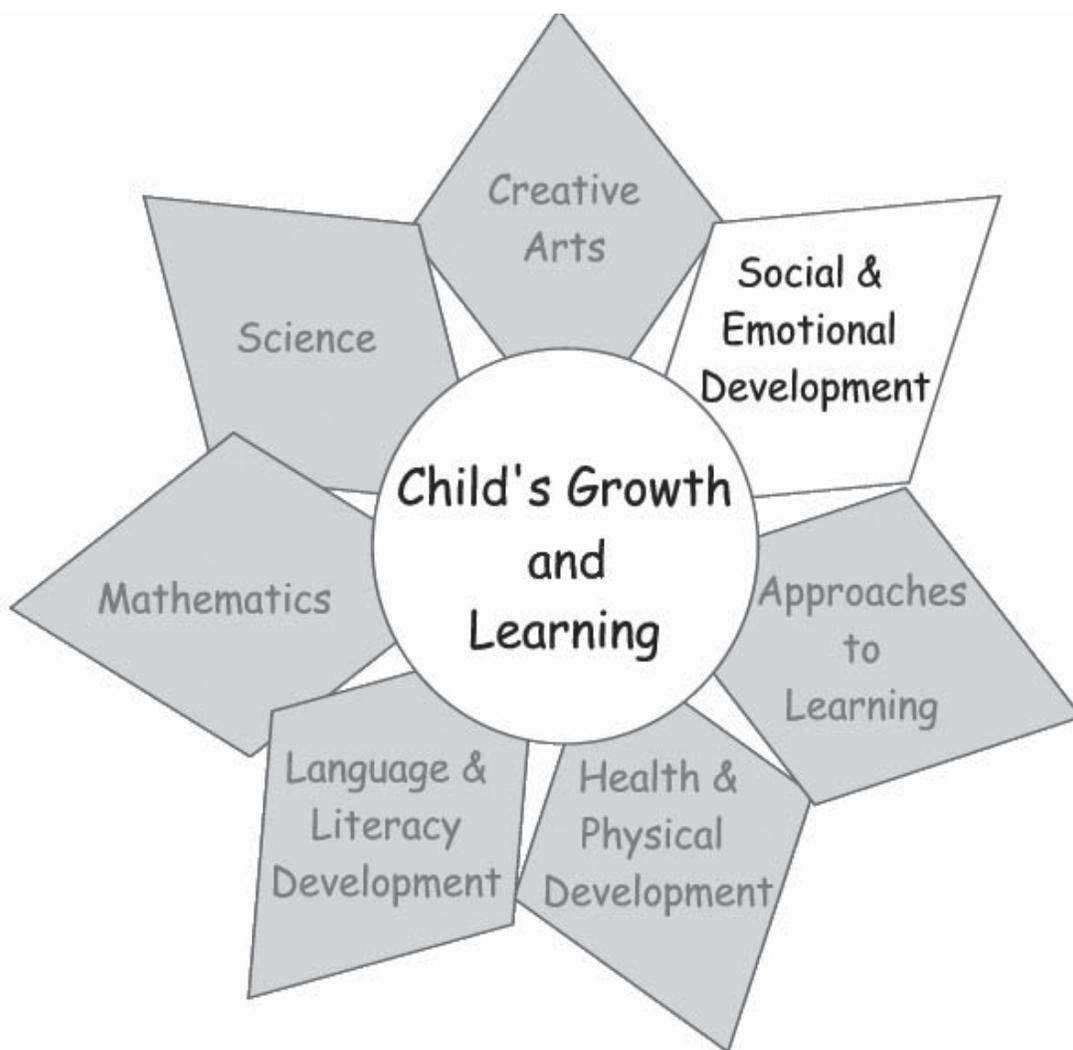


Encouraging families to participate in school activities prior to the time their children enter kindergarten helps families to have a sense of being part of the school community. Schools that are open to community activities provide opportunities for families to become familiar with the school setting and establish connections with the school. Open communication between the kindergarten teacher and prekindergarten teachers, caregivers and families help to establish relationships that lead to increasing opportunities to work together.



“Ready” schools. Schools are required to accept all age-eligible children and are responsible for being ready to support each child's learning. In Nebraska, children are entitled to attend school when they reach age 5 by October 15 of the school year. The wide range of abilities and experiences of children entering kindergarten creates a diversity that can be both exciting and, at the same time, concerning to kindergarten teachers who are challenged to meet the individual learning needs of all children. The Early Learning Guidelines can help to guide best practices that support learning and development in the years prior to kindergarten, and to also be supportive of best practices of kindergarten teachers in meeting the learning needs of the children in their classroom.

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



Social and Emotional Development

- Self Concept
- Self Control
- Cooperation
- Social Relationships
- Knowledge of Families and Communities

One of the primary goals of a quality early childhood program is to foster social and emotional development in young children. By learning how to appropriately express and manage their feelings, children will learn to get along with others. This includes learning to take turns, to lead and follow, etc. Preschool children benefit from adult support and guidance to develop the ability to negotiate issues that occur.

The key to social and emotional development is strong, positive, secure relationships. Young children need parents, extended families, teachers, caregivers and other adults who are supportive and attentive, and who provide safe and predictable environments. Such environments promote a healthy sense of self and connections with others. High quality environments provide experiences to foster independence, cooperation, and appreciation of diversity.



Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- ❖ Divide skills and behaviors into smaller steps
- ❖ Carefully observe child to child and child to adult interactions and provide opportunities that will promote positive relationships
- ❖ Provide opportunities for natural, ongoing interactions with typically developing peers
- ❖ Provide choices so children have more control over their environment

Some general accommodations to support children with special learning or developmental needs can be found on page 9 of this document and in NDE Rule 51.

Self Concept

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Is willing to try a new activity (soap painting, cooking project, etc.) and pursues it for a meaningful period of time
- Introduces self and family members to others
- Initiates interactions with others
- Selects and participates in chosen activities independently

The Adult

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

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials that encourage children's interaction, involvement, exploration and experimentation (mirrors, clay, paint, paper, etc.)
- Materials for children to learn about their own culture and the culture of others (music, family photos, books, posters, dramatic play materials, etc.)

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Reading/Writing
1.2.1
1.3.1
Social Studies/
History
1.8

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A1
004.05C
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
6.1.1
6.1.2
6.1.3

Self Control

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.2.1

1.3.1

Science

1.1.1

1.7.1

Social Studies/

History

1.6

1.8

Mathematics

1.3.2

1.3.5

1.5.1

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

Learning in Action: Examples

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A1

004.05A

2004.05D

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

The Child

- Follows simple program rules
- Helps pick up cups and napkins and puts them in the wastebasket after snack
- Keeps the sand inside the sand table after only a few reminders
- Moves from free play to clean up with ease and purpose
- Uses words and other means of communication to describe positive and negative feelings

The Adult

- Models and helps children recognize feelings and find appropriate ways to express them
- Develops responsibility and ownership in the individual child by maintaining a relatively stable schedule or sequence of activities during the day
- Establishes trusting, caring relationships with each child
- Provides words and positive responses to guide children's self control

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

6.2.1

6.2.2

6.2.3

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A posted daily schedule which provides a variety of active and quiet times, allowing for movement, physical group activities and alone times
- Clear program rules that provide supportive guidance for developmental self control
- Adequate amount of accessible materials paired with supportive encouragement for individual and cooperative play

Cooperation

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

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

The Adult

- Asks open-ended questions to expand children's understanding, "What do you think will happen next?"
- Provides building materials that encourage interactive play with others
- Encourages children to rely on each other
- Provides opportunities for children to work in small groups in which each child has a specific responsibility

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Opportunities for children to learn to take turns in conversations with peers and group discussion, as well as with materials and equipment
- Time and space for group project work (building a block tower, painting a large box, planting a garden, etc.)

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.2.1

1.3.1

Science

1.2.1

1.8.1

Social Studies/History

1.6

1.7

1.8

Mathematics

1.2.1

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A2

004.05D

004.06C

04.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

6.3.1

6.3.2

6.3.3

Social Relationships

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.2.1

1.3.1

Science

1.1.3

1.2.1

Social Studies/

History

1.6

1.8

Mathematics

1.5.1

1.5.3

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A2

004.05D

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

6.4.1

6.4.2

6.4.3

- Child interacts empathetically and cooperatively with adults and peers
 - Receives social support and shows loyalty to a friend
 - Solves problems with other children independently
 - Shows awareness of and responds to the feelings of others
 - Knows how to join a group of playing children

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

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

The Adult

- Provides opportunities for children to develop an awareness of feelings, ideas, and actions of others, such as "Susie looks really happy today!"
- Provides opportunities for children to practice listening and talking with others
- Provides opportunities and support to help children develop relationships with peers and adults
- Explains the power of words, that some words can hurt or can have both positive and negative meanings depending on how they are used

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Individual opportunities to discuss appropriate behavior in real situations, as they occur
- Constructive means of physically working off frustration

Knowledge of Families & Communities

Widely Held Expectations

- Child understands and respects similarities and differences among adults and children in their program, home, and community
 - Begins to understand various family roles, jobs, and rules
- Child expresses some understanding of familiar locations in community such as where people live, and where stores, parks, and restaurants are located
- Child uses familiar words to identify family members and workers in their community

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Reads/looks at books and writes/dictates stories about family, and/or dramatizes stories involving families etc.
- Participates in activities to help others in the group or community
- Sees self as a family member and as a boy or girl in the family
- Shares stories of family events during circle time
- Recognizes familiar places in their environment (stores, parks, restaurants, etc.)

The Adult

- Helps children describe and appreciate their own characteristics and those of others
- Invites leaders and workers in the community to come to the program
- Takes group on field trips to various places in the community
- Invites families to come and share their uniqueness (traditions, holidays, food, games, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Opportunities to expose children to a wide variety of roles and career possibilities
- Opportunities to help children learn about their school and community, and includes their families

Related Standards

- Nebraska K-12 State Standards
Reading/Writing
1.1.1
1.1.4
1.2.1
1.3.1
Social Studies/History
1.1
1.2
1.7
1.8
1.9

- Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations
004.05C
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

- Head Start Outcomes Framework
6.5.1
6.5.2
6.5.3
6.5.4

Resources

Caring Classrooms/Intelligent Schools: The Social Emotional Education of Young Children--
Jonathan Cohen

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

The Emotional Development of Young Children: Building an Emotion-Centered Curriculum--
Marilou Hyson

*Fostering Children's Social Competence: The Teacher's Role--*Lilian G. Katz and Diane E. McClellan

*Making It Better. Activities for Children Living in a Stressful World--*Barbara Oehlberg

Let's Be Friends: Peer Competence and Social Inclusion in Early Childhood Programs--
Kristen Mary Mary Kemple

*Pathways to Competence: Encouraging Healthy Social and Emotional Development in Young Children--*Sarah Landy

The Power of Guidance: Teaching Social-Emotional Skills in Early Childhood Classrooms--
Dan Gartrell

*Promoting Social and Moral Development of Young Children: Creative Approaches for the Classroom--*Carolyn P. Edwards

*Raising Self Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World: Seven Building Blocks for Developing Capable Young People--*H. Stephen Glenn and Jane Nelsen

*Teaching Children to Care: An Empathy Curriculum for Preschoolers--*Nancy Mullin-Rindler and Maureen Crowley

*You Can't Come to My Birthday Party: Conflict Resolution with Young Children--*Betsy Evans

These books and many other resources may be borrowed by Nebraska residents from the Early Childhood Training Center. A web-based search of these media materials is offered at www.esu3.org/ectc or telephone contact may be made by calling 1-402-597-4826 or 1-800-89CHILD.

Books for Children

*Abuela--*Arthur Dorros

*Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day--*Judith Viorst

*Amazing Grace--*Mary Hoffman and Caroline Binch

*Go Away, Big Green Monster!--*Edward R. Emberley

*Love You Forever--*Robert N. Munsch

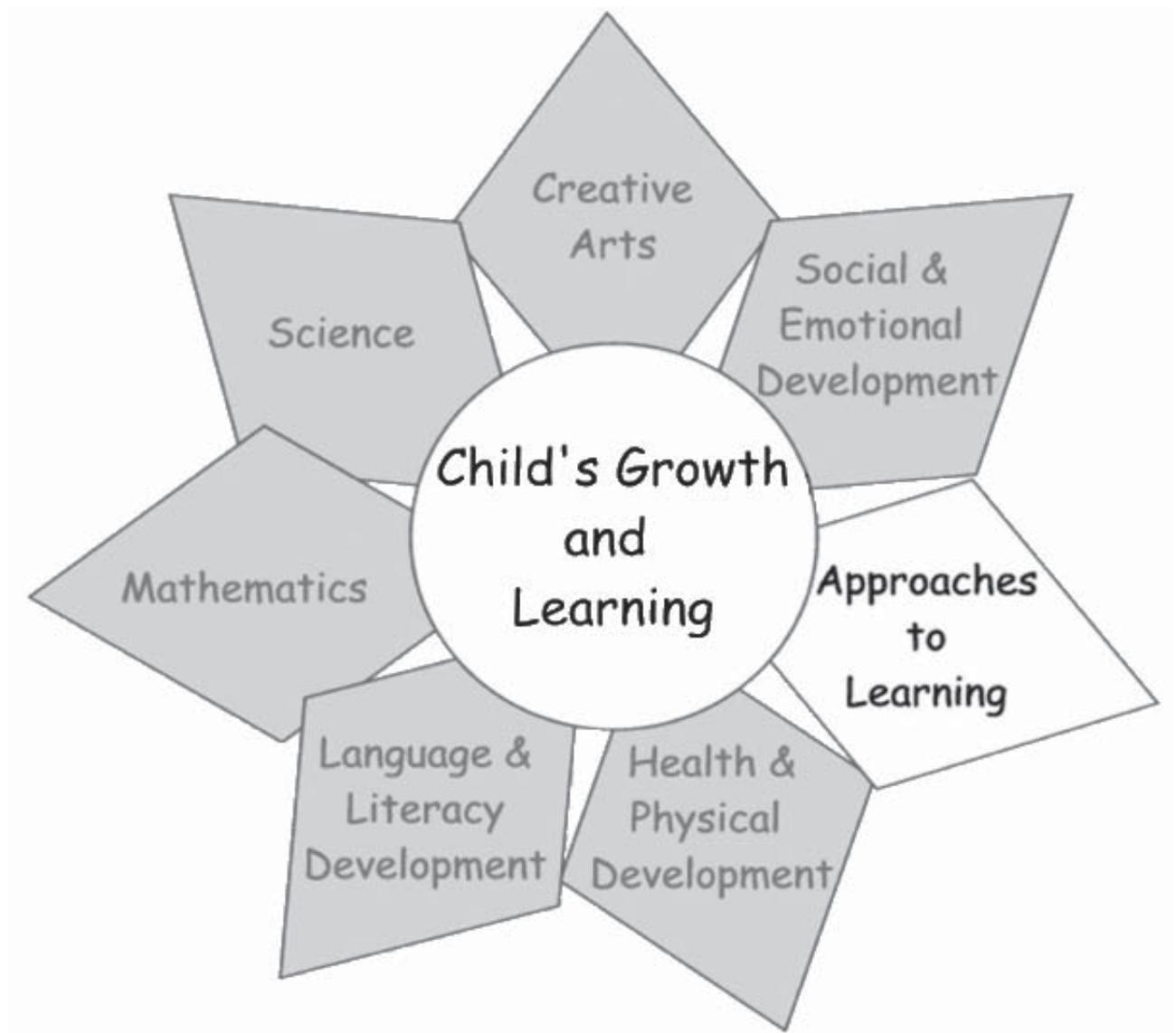
*Mama, Do You Love Me?--*Barbara M. Joosse

*Mama Zooms--*Jane Cowen-Fletcher

*Rainbow Fish--*Marcus Pfister

*Stellaluna--*Janell Cannon

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



Approaches to Learning

- Initiative and Curiosity
- Reasoning and Problem Solving



For young children, growing and learning begins with each child's personal experiences and understanding of the relationship of self to home and family. Their understanding gradually expands to include the people they meet through activities such as early childhood care and education programs, their neighborhood, the community and the larger world.

Adults need to identify children's current knowledge and understanding of their world, and use it as a basis for making new experiences, ideas, and concepts meaningful. The learning experiences for young children need to focus on concepts that are related to the child's everyday life, and provide encouragement for the child to successfully try new things.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- ❖ Use appropriate verbal, visual, and physical cues in interactions and activities to meet the special needs of individual children
- ❖ Use vocabulary and phrases in the child's native language when introducing new ideas/concepts
- ❖ Provide opportunities for natural, ongoing interactions with typically developing peers

Some general accommodations to support children with special learning or developmental needs can be found on page 9 of this document, and in NDE Rule 51.

Initiative and Curiosity

Widely Held Expectations

- Child uses initiative, curiosity and persistence to learn about the world
 - Carries out complex and varied sequences of activities independently
 - Explores ways to use new materials
- Child engages in imaginative play
- Child increasingly uses communication to ask questions and seek answers

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Asks adults to read stories, signs, or notes
- Participates with different art materials, dramatic play, and puzzles/toys/blocks
- Shows a willingness to listen to a new story or song
- Notices new displays and discusses them with the adult
- Asks questions about new materials in science area
- Tries alternative methods to solve a problem and is highly involved and persistent

The Adult

- Experiences the outside world with children
- Asks open-ended questions to engage children's imagination (require more than a one-word answer)
- Responds to children's curiosity and questions with enthusiasm and encouragement
- Asks questions and helps children find answers through active, hands-on exploration
- Sets up activities and materials for exploration

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A safe, natural space for children to visit and explore
- Opportunities for sand and water play, clay, paints, markers, books and blocks

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.2.1

1.3.1

Science

1.2.1

1.3.1

1.4.1

Mathematics

1.2.1

1.5.4

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05C

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

7.1.1

7.1.2

7.1.3

7.1.4

Reasoning and Problem Solving

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.2.1

Science

1.1.1

1.1.3

1.2.1

1.3.1

1.4.1

Mathematics

1.1.2

1.2.1

1.2.2

1.3.1

1.4.1

1.6.2

Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations

004.05D

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

7.3.1

7.3.2

7.3.3

- Child shows increasing ability to classify, compare and contrast objects, events and experiences
 - Makes comparisons among objects that have been observed
 - Sorts objects by similar qualities
- Child tries several alternative methods to solve a problem and is highly involved and persistent
 - Uses active exploration and trial and error to solve problems
 - Demonstrates persistence in problem solving
 - Increases ability to make predictions and find more than one solution
- Child reflects on experiences and information, and interprets or draws conclusions based on the information

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Asks for assistance after trying for a minute or two to put together a difficult puzzle
- Tries several methods to reach an object high on a shelf before asking for assistance
- Looks for help when trying to hang up a painting that is still wet
- Constructs a bridge with blocks using past experiences as a guide

The Adult

- Helps children identify characteristics of objects or events in their environment
- Provides opportunities to increase the child's ability to make independent choices
- Encourages and provides materials for a variety of sensory experiences
- Gives children ample time to problem solve without intervening

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

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

Resources

A Mind at a Time--Mel Levine

Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ--Daniel Goleman

Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach--Lilian G. Katz and Sylvia C. Chard

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

Group Games in Early Education: Implications of Piaget's Theory--Constance Kamii and Rheta Devries

Making Friends: The Influences of Culture and Development--Luanna H. Meyer, Hyun-Sook Park, Marquita Grenot-Scheyer, Ilene S. Schwartz and Beth Harry

Pathways to Play: Developing Play Skills in Young Children--Sandra Heidemann, Deborah Hewitt, Don Franklin, Michael Siluk, F. Wardle

Planning Around Children's Interests: The Teacher's Idea Book 2--Michelle Graves

Reconsidering children's early development and learning toward common views and vocabulary: draft report to the National Education Goals Panel--U.S. Department of Education

These books and many other resources may be borrowed by Nebraska residents from the Early Childhood Training Center. A web-based search of these media materials is offered at www.esu3.org/ectc or telephone contact may be made by calling 1-402-597-4826 or 1-800-89CHILD.

Books for Children

Alphabet Under Construction--Denise Fleming

The Art Lesson--Tomie dePaola

The Curious George series--H.A. Rey

From Head to Toe--Eric Carle

Is Your Mama a Llama?--Deborah Guarino

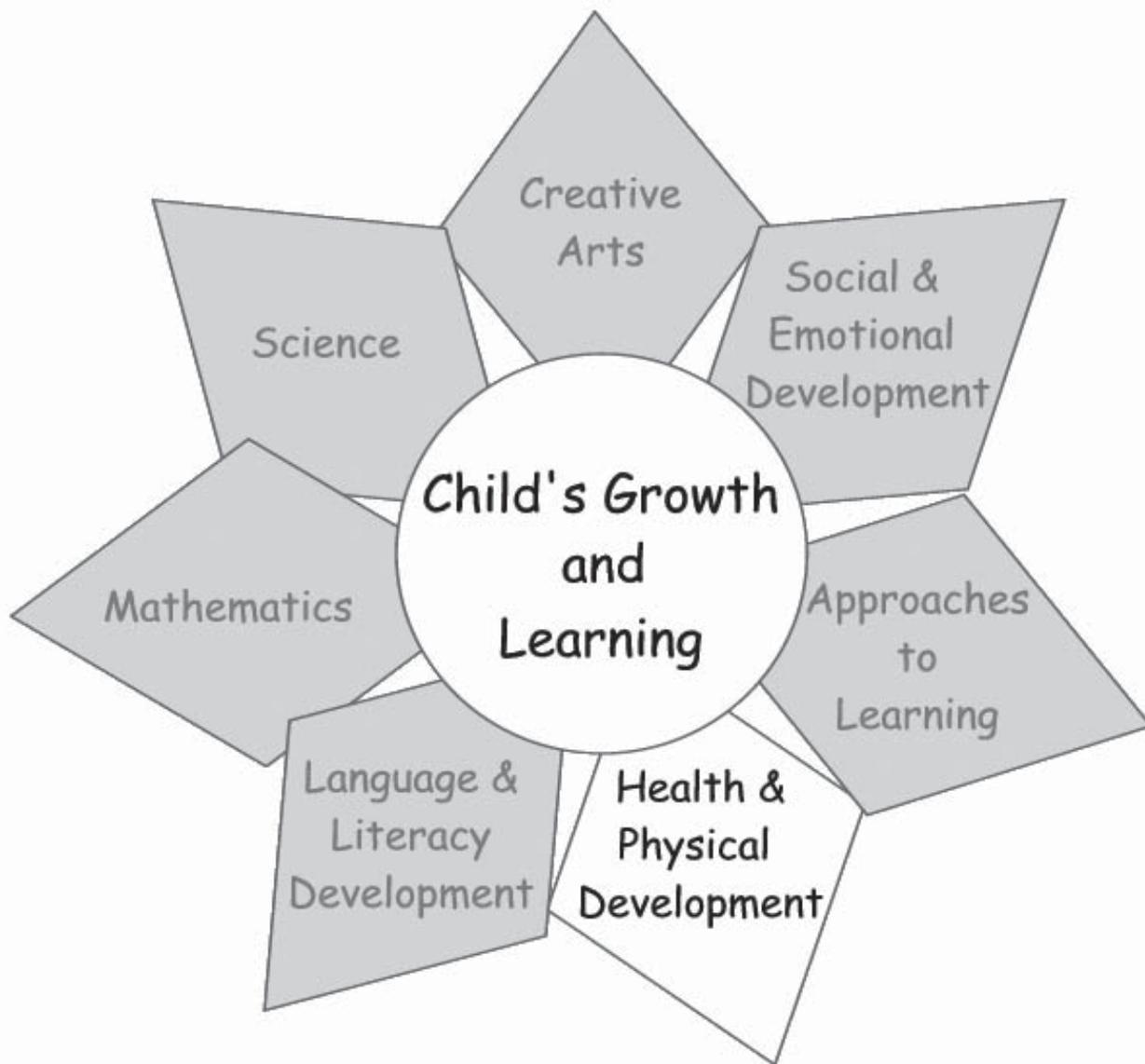
The Little Engine That Could--Watty Piper

Margaret and Margarita/Margarita y Margaret--Lynn Reiser

Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel--Virginia Lee Burton

Snow Play--Kate Spohn

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



Health and Physical Development

- Fine (Small) Motor Skills
- Gross (Large) Motor Skills
- Health Status and Practices
- Nutrition



Physical development and health and safety activities should be integrated into all areas of learning. Activities should be structured to encourage preschool children to explore their world, promote coordination and strength, enhance thinking skills, and develop an “I can do it” attitude. Adults should ensure that children’s health, safety and nutrition needs are met, and that activities contribute to the overall health and well-being of children.

Young children need indoor and outdoor space and facilities that allow them to experience a variety of developmentally appropriate physical activities.

The development of fine (small) motor and gross (large) motor skills, as well as self-help skills, is a critical part of the development of the preschool child. These skills serve as the foundation for the development of future academic skills such as writing and reading.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- ❖ Assure that materials in indoor and outdoor environments are easily accessible (height, size, location)
- ❖ Use verbal, visual, and physical cues to help children know what to do
- ❖ Assign a capable buddy to model the actions and help with materials and equipment
- ❖ Provide physical guidance/support for children having difficulty with motor tasks

Some general accommodations to support children with special learning or developmental needs can be found on page 9 of this document, and in NDE Rule 51.

Fine (Small) Motor Skills

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Participates in activities which require the use of small muscles (buttoning, squeezing, etc.)
- Handles small objects with growing skill (stringing small beads, fitting small objects into holes, etc.)
- Pulls caps off markers and puts them back on firmly, easily uses scissors, brushes, pencils, etc.
- Puts small building blocks together and pulls them apart with relative ease
- Opens/closes jars or lids on containers

The Adult

- Provides adequate time and materials for fine (small) motor skills (drawing, handwriting development, use of computer keyboard/mouse, musical instruments, etc.)
- Plans for scheduled and spontaneous activities that support the development of fine (small) motor skills
- Provides relevant and challenging activities to help children build more advanced fine (small) motor skills

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Art materials, tools, workbench, clay, toys, puzzles, blocks, beads, etc.
- A variety of materials for writing and drawing

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Science
1.1.4
1.2.1
1.6.1
1.6.2

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations
004.05A7
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start Outcomes Framework

8.1.1
8.1.2
8.1.3

Gross (Large) Motor Skills

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Science
1.1.1
1.1.4
1.2.1

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A7
004.05A8
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
8.2.1
8.2.2

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Engages in gross (large) motor activities (marching, hopping, running, dancing, pulling wagons, pushing boxes, rolling, etc.)
- Engages in complex movements (climbing, going up and down steps, riding a tricycle, skipping, throwing, catching, bouncing a ball, etc.)
- Begins to identify body parts and words used in movement (eyes, arms, head, knees, etc.)

The Adult

- Acknowledges and supports children's natural tendencies to move and be active throughout the day
- Provides adequate time for children to practice, explore, and expand their motor skills and interests
- Supports variations in gross (large) motor development
- Plans for outdoor activities on a daily basis

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

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

Health Status and Practices

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Participates actively in games, outdoor play, and other forms of exercise that enhance physical wellness
- Follows program safety rules
- Recognizes common signs of danger/warning
- Uses good hand washing skills (after toileting, eating, wiping nose, handling animals, etc.)

The Adult

- Provides health education for children and families
- Provides time for exercise and physical activity
- Provides instruction for basic health and safety rules
- Models health and safety practices during regular activities including meals and snacks
- Provides opportunities to practice necessary emergency drills (fire, tornado, emergency, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Procedures and signs for emergency evacuation (fire, tornado, etc.)
- Written health and safety policies
- Child size sinks, soap that is readily available, hand washing signs, footstools if needed, paper towels, etc.

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Reading/Writing
1.1.4
1.2.1
1.3.1
Science
1.5.3
1.7.1
Social Studies/
History
1.3
1.4

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A7
004.05A8
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
8.3.1
8.3.2
8.3.3
8.3.4
8.3.5

Nutrition

Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows knowledge of healthy eating and lifestyle habits
 - Demonstrates knowledge that some foods are healthier than others
 - Uses manners during meals/snacks, including asking for second helpings
- Child begins to develop interest in foods and eating styles of other cultures
- Child understands that healthy foods help them to grow and give them energy to play and think

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Passes food and takes child-sized portions
- Chooses to try new foods and eat a variety of foods
- Uses dramatic play materials to show awareness of different kinds of food, cooking utensils, etc.

The Adult

- Encourages children to serve and feed themselves and assist with cleanup
- Provides opportunities for children to prepare healthy snacks
- Recognizes that families have different food preferences and eating habits
- Stays current with an individual child's food allergies and provides substitute foods as needed
- Provides dramatic play props, pictures, stories and books to represent many cultures

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Books, tapes, visual media and pictures, about familiar foods and nutrition habits from around the world
- Dramatic play center props (foods, dishes, utensils, pots, pans, cookbooks, etc.)

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Science

1.1.1

1.1.4

1.4.1

1.4.2

1.7.1

Mathematics

1.5.1

1.5.2

1.5.3

1.6.2

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A7

004.05A8

004.06C

04.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

8.4.1

8.4.2

8.4.3

8.4.4

8.4.5

8.4.6

Resources

Active for Life: Developmentally Appropriate Movement Programs for Young Children--
Stephen W. Sanders

Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years--
National Association for Sports and Physical Education

Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children and Adolescents--
American Academy of Pediatrics

*Developmental Physical Education for All Children--*David L. Gallahue and Frances Cleland Donnelly

*More Than Mud Pies: A Nutrition Curriculum Guide for Preschool Children--*National Food Service
Management Institute

*Movement Activities for Early Childhood--*Carol Totsky Hammett

*Parachute Games--*Todd Strong and Dale Lefevre

*Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health--*U.S. Department of Health and Human
Services

These books and many other resources may be borrowed by Nebraska residents from the Early Childhood Training Center. A web-based search of these media materials is offered at www.esu3.org/ectc or telephone contact may be made by calling 1-402-597-4826 or 1-800-89CHILD.

Books for Children

*Bee Safe (Bee Attitudes)--*Charles Reasoner

*Children's Health Books Set--*Judith Ann Rice

- *Those Icky Sticky Smelly Cavity Causing But... Invisible Germs*
- *Itsy-Bitsy Teeny-Tiny Not-So-Nice Head Lice*
- *Those Mean Nasty Dirty Downright Disgusting But...Invisible Germs*

*Dr. De Soto--*William Stieg

*Officer Buckle and Gloria--*Peggy Rathmann

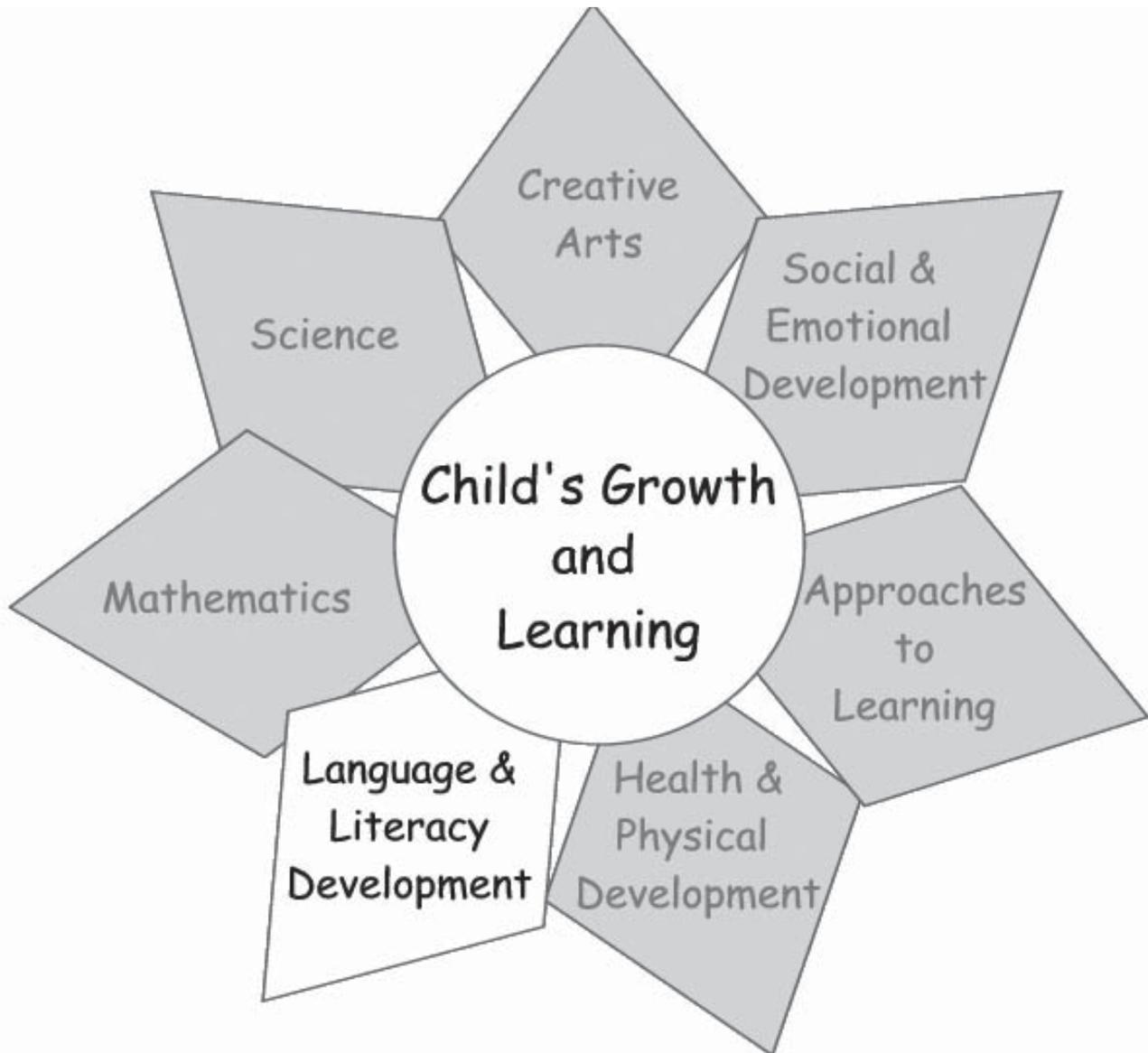
*My World--*Margaret Wise Brown

The Safety Book for Active Kids: Teaching Your Child How to Avoid Everyday Dangers--
Linda Schwartz and Beverly Armstrong

*Wash Your Hands!--*Tony Ross

*What Happens to a Hamburger?--*Paul Showers

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



Language and Literacy

- Listening and Understanding
- Speaking and Communicating
- Phonological Awareness
- Book Knowledge and Appreciation
- Print Awareness and Concepts
- Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge

Language and literacy skills develop through talking, listening, playing, reading, writing, and learning the skills that adults use to communicate.

Children develop the basis for all communication in the early childhood years. They use early nonverbal interactions (smiling, facial expressions, gestures, etc.), and then spoken language, sign language or other alternative communication methods to practice the rules of communication in their culture and family.

Between three and five years of age, children begin to understand how oral language is reflected in written symbols (letters), and also learn to create written symbols to communicate their ideas.

Language and literacy are promoted and supported through play, especially pretend play, and also through music, rhyme, and rhythm.

A solid foundation in oral language development in the early years before a child enters school will promote success in reading and writing in the future. Young children who have rich language and literacy experiences are less likely to have difficulties learning to read independently.



Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- ❖ Provide good models of communication, including sign language and other alternative methods
- ❖ Use special or adaptive devices and/or processes to increase level of communication and/or participation
- ❖ Use a favorite toy, activity or person to encourage communication and/or participation

Some general accommodations to support children with special learning or developmental needs can be found on page 9 of this document, and in NDE Rule 51.

Listening and Understanding

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

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

The Adult

- Builds upon children's comprehension skills by listening, responding and asking questions
- Greets children daily by name and with a short conversation
- Pairs non-English speaking children with bilingual peers/ adults
- Engages children in stories, songs and poems

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Stories, songs, words, games and daily schedules in English and the languages of the non-English speaking children
- Ways to assist children in the understanding of new vocabulary

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

- Reading/Writing
 - 1.1.5
 - 1.2.1
 - 1.3.1
- Social Studies/History
 - 1.8
- Mathematics
 - 1.2.1

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

- 004.05A4
- 004.05B
- 004.05C
- 004.06C
- 004.06D
- 004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

- 1.1.1
- 1.1.2
- 1.1.3
- 1.1.4

Speaking and Communicating

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.1.1

1.1.4

1.1.5

1.2.1

1.3.1

Mathematics

1.2.1

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A4

004.05B

004.05C

004.05D

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

1.2.1

1.2.2

1.2.3

1.2.4

1.2.5

- Child communicates needs, wants or thoughts through words, gestures, actions, or expressions
 - Uses sentences that include two or more separate ideas
 - Initiates interactions with adults and peers
- Child communicates for a variety of purposes
 - Attempts to solve problems with other children independently by communicating with them
 - Greets adults and peers
- Child uses English or native language to share feelings and express ideas
- Child uses new vocabulary that has been introduced

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Speaks clearly enough, or uses alternative communication methods, to be understood by others
- Asks questions to acquire more information
- Uses "please," "thank you," and "excuse me," although often needs reminders
- Uses language for a variety of purposes (role playing, rhyming, using props, describing feelings, telling jokes, conversing, etc.)

The Adult

- Uses alternate modes of communication when needed (sign language, gestures, etc.)
- Builds on children's interests to introduce new vocabulary and ideas
- Asks open-ended questions throughout the day (questions that require more than a one-word answer)
- Provides opportunities for children to engage in turn taking and dialogue in conversation

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

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

Phonological Awareness

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Listens to two words and determines whether or not they rhyme
- Notices that several words or names begin with the same sound (Marcus, Maria, Matthew, etc.)
- Claps hands for each syllable in words
- Plays with sounds to create new words

The Adult

- Provides opportunities for children to hear sounds in their native language
- Gives children the opportunity to repeat sounds in their names and other words
- Draws children's attention to the separate sounds of spoken language through playful songs, games and rhymes
- Models appropriate language, communication, reading and writing
- Provides literacy rich environment

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Children's music and a quiet place where children may listen to a variety of story and sound tapes
- Many books, pictures and visual examples of written words, as well as those that are non-print based

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Reading/Writing

1.1.1

1.1.2

1.1.5

Mathematics

1.1.2

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations

004.05A4

004.05B

004.06C

06D004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework

2.1.1

2.1.2

2.1.3

2.1.4

2.1.5

Book Knowledge and Appreciation

Related Standards

- Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Reading/Writing
1.1.3
1.1.4
1.1.5
1.2.1
1.3.1
Science
1.1.1
1.1.2
Mathematics
1.6.1

- Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A4
004.05A5
004.05B
004.05C
004.06C
04.06D
004.06E

- Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
2.2.1
2.2.2
2.2.3
2.2.4

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Asks people to read stories, signs, notes
- Answers questions about a story that has been read or repeats parts of the story
- Chooses a favorite book
- Pretends to read book titles/simple stories
- Tells stories to others, real and imaginary

The Adult

- Provides print rich environment and reads to children, both individually and as a group
- Places books and signs/posters in all interest areas on topics that are relevant
- Reads books with rich descriptive vocabulary, exploring and extending children's understanding of the meaning of new words
- Talks about the author and illustrator when introducing a story
- Assists children in relating stories to events in their own lives and in making predictions

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Soft, cozy place for looking at books (with pillows, comfortable chairs, rugs, stuffed animals, etc.)
- Many types of children's books, reference books, pictures and posters

Print Awareness and Concepts

Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows an awareness of print as a form of meaningful communication
 - Follows the print on the page, moving eyes from left to right and top to bottom (uses finger under print)
 - Identifies some letters and numbers
 - Recognizes and begins to write own name
 - "Reads" familiar environmental print (logos, posters, signs, etc.)
- Child understands that each spoken word can be written down and read

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Asks people to read stories, signs or notes
- Reads several words or a few simple phrases or sentences
- Points to words using a left to right progression when "reading" picture books
- Picks out and labels specific letters from their name when looking at book titles or program labels
- Wants to read stories to others

The Adult

- Writes children's explanations or labels on projects, artwork, block constructions, etc.
- Encourages children to help read the job chart, program rules and daily schedule
- Encourages children's interest and their attempts to copy or write their own name

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Pictures, posters, labels on cubbies, materials, toy shelves, etc.
- Easily accessible writing center filled with a wide variety of materials (books, children's names, signs, children's artwork and stories, labels, alphabet charts, pencils, markers, etc.)

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.1.1

1.1.2

1.1.3

1.1.5

1.1.6

1.1.7

Social Studies/History

1.3

1.9

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A4

004.05B

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start Outcomes

Framework

2.3.1

2.3.2

2.3.3

2.3.4

Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.1.1

1.1.2

1.1.4

1.1.5

1.1.6

1.1.7

1.2.1

Social Studies/

History

1.8

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A4

004.05B

004.06C

04.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

2.4.1

2.4.2

2.4.3

2.4.4

2.5.1

2.5.2

2.5.3

2.5.4

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Uses magnetic letters or other alphabet materials to form own name
- Labels a drawing with several randomly placed, letter-like shapes
- Copies letters from signs and labels posted around the room

The Adult

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

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Writing materials to encourage children's attempts at writing
- Books and writing tools, from crayons to computers, in each area of play
- Displays of children's art (including children's beginning attempts at writing) around the room at child's eye level

Resources

Beginning Literacy with Language: Young Children Learning at Home and School--
David K. Dickinson and Patton O. Tabors

*Building a Foundation for Preschool Literacy: Effective Instruction for Children's Reading and Writing Development--*Carol Vukelich and James Christie

*Children As Storytellers--*Kerry Mallan

*Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write--*Dorothy S. Stickland and Leslie Mandel Morrow

*Ladders to Literacy: A Preschool Activity Book--*Angela Notari-Syverson, Rollanda E. O'Connor and Patricia F. Vadasy

Learning To Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practice for Young Children--
Susan B. Newman, Carol Copple, Sue Bredekamp and NAEYC

*Much More than the ABC's: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing--*Judith Schickendanz

*One Child, Two Languages: A Guide for Preschool Educators of Children Learning English As a Second Language--*Patton O. Tabors

*The Read-Aloud Handbook--*Jim Trelease

*Phonemic Awareness in Young Children: A Classroom Curriculum--*Marilyn Jager Adams, Barbara R. Foorman, Ingvar Lundberg and Terri Beeler

*Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success--*M. Susan Burns, Catherine E. Snow and Peg Griffin

*What teachers need to know about language--*Lily Wong Fillmore

These books and many other resources may be borrowed by Nebraska residents from the Early Childhood Training Center. A web-based search of these media materials is offered at www.esu3.org/ectc or telephone contact may be made by calling 1-402-597-4826 or 1-800-89CHILD.

Books for Children

*Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See?--*Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle

*The Cat in the Hat--*Dr. Seuss

*Chicka Chicka Boom Boom--*Bill Martin Jr. and John Archambault

*Good Night Moon--*Margaret Wise Brown

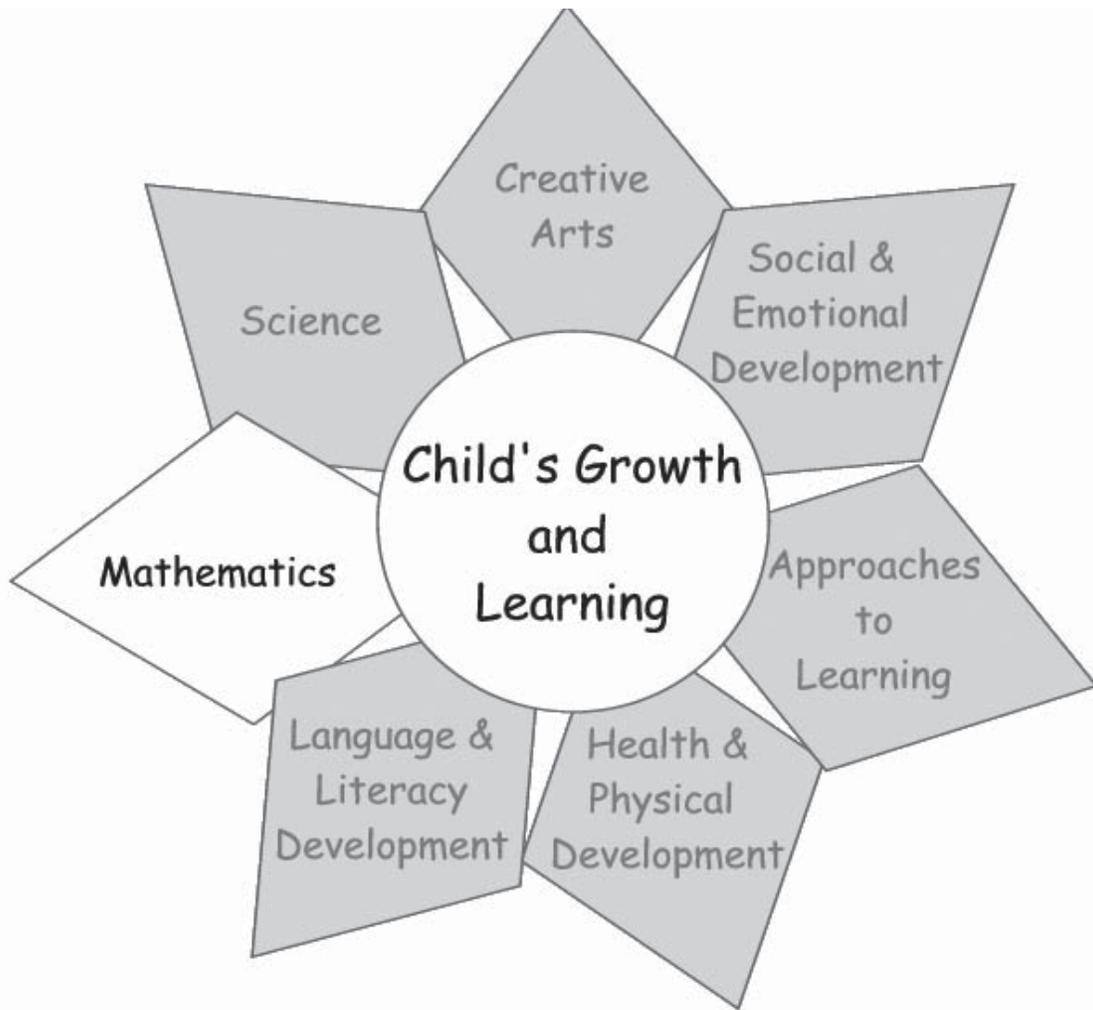
*If You Give a Mouse a Cookie--*Laura Joffe Numeroff

*The Little Red Hen--*J. P. Miller

*My First Real Mother Goose Bedtime Book--*Scholastic

*Wee Sing Nursery Rhymes and Lullabies--*Pamela Conn Beall and Susan Hagen Nipp

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



Mathematics

- Number and Operations
- Patterns and Measurement
- Geometry and Spatial Sense

Young children develop number and mathematical concepts through meaningful and active learning experiences that are broader in scope than numerals and counting.

In an inclusive, developmentally appropriate play-based environment, preschool children have opportunities to acquire and understand mathematical skills and concepts using hands-on materials and use of numbers in real-life situations.

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



Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- ❖ Simplify a complicated task by breaking it into smaller parts or reducing the number of steps
- ❖ Use shorter but more frequent activities and routines

Some general accommodations to support children with special learning or developmental needs can be found on page 9 of this document, and in NDE Rule 51.

Number and Operations

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Compares the quantities of small groups of objects, correctly using words like more/less, some/all
- Recognizes numerals, points to each object when counting, assigning the correct number to it
- Uses words such as yesterday, today, and tomorrow in conversation

The Adult

- Offers counting activities, number puzzles and books
- Provides counting finger plays, books, songs and other activities and materials throughout the daily routine and program
- Provides opportunities for children to pair objects, to count, and to develop and practice using number words
- Uses descriptive words throughout the day such as yesterday, today, tomorrow, before, and after
- Gives children opportunities to practice grouping objects and comparing quantities

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials available within the daily routine for sorting and counting (small blocks, colored bears, magnetic shapes, etc.)
- Objects that include numbers and number words (clocks, timers, calendars, thermometers, calculators, measuring cups, number lines, etc.)

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Reading/Writing
1.1.2
1.2.1
Science
1.5.2
1.5.3
Mathematics
1.1.1
1.1.2
1.1.3
1.1.4
1.3.5
1.4.1
1.5.3

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A6
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
3.1.1
3.1.2
3.1.3
3.1.4
3.1.5
3.1.6

Geometry and Spatial Sense

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Mathematics

- 1.1.1
- 1.1.2
- 1.4.1
- 1.4.2
- 1.5.3
- 1.5.4
- 1.6.2
- 1.6.3

- Child develops knowledge of geometric principles
 - > Learns about shapes
 - > Classifies and sorts different shapes
 - > Combines different shapes to make representations or patterns
- Child develops spatial sense
 - > Uses comparison words correctly
 - > Uses words that describe the relative position of things
- Child groups objects together that are the same in some way and gives reasons for groupings

Learning in Action: Examples

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

- 004.05A3
- 004.05A6
- 004.06C
- 004.06D
- 004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

- 3.2.1
- 3.2.2
- 3.2.3
- 3.2.4
- 3.2.5

The Child

- Recognizes and names simple shapes (circle, square, triangle, etc.) in various sizes and positions
- Uses a pegboard to create geometric shapes with rubber bands
- Uses descriptive words (on, off, on top of, under, in, out, behind, below, above, between, around, through, across, up, down, near, far, next to, etc.)
- Compares the various sizes of unit blocks (longer, shorter, same length) to build math skills

The Adult

- Provides blocks of various shapes and sizes to encourage children to make comparisons
- Gives children opportunities to create designs with pattern blocks; draw, paint and cut shapes in their artwork; return blocks to the shelves by sorting them; and locate shapes in the outdoor environment
- Provides empty boxes, tubes and containers for children to use in creating and constructing

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of materials (purchased, teacher made and items from nature, etc.) for counting, comparing and drawing conclusions about relationships, including blocks and other manipulatives

Patterns and Measurement

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Sorts buttons, beads or pegs into egg cartons, with each compartment holding a different color or size
- Makes a pattern with interlocking cubes (white, blue, green, white, blue, green, etc.)
- Takes leaves brought in from a class walk and arranges them from biggest to smallest
- Uses measuring tools at workbench or water table

The Adult

- Engages in conversations with children about quantity and comparisons as they interact with materials throughout the day
- Encourages children to begin to predict what comes next in a pattern or sequence of events
- Shows children how to use objects to measure things, "Look, this table is five pencils long."

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials of various sizes, colors, textures, and shapes that can be arranged in order as well as sorted and compared (blocks, beads, peg boards, matching games, etc.)
- Measuring cups, scales, rulers, unit blocks, etc.

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards Mathematics

1.1.1
1.1.2
1.2.1
1.2.2
1.3.1
1.3.2
1.4.1
1.5.2
1.5.3
1.5.4
1.6.1
1.6.2
1.6.3

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A3
004.05A6
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

3.3.1
3.3.2
3.3.3
3.3.4

Resources

Children's Mathematical Thinking: A Developmental Framework for Preschool, Primary and Special Education Teachers--Arthur J. Baroody

Counting Caterpillars and Other Math Poems--Betsy Franco

Engaging Young Children in Mathematics: Standards for Early Childhood Mathematics Education--Douglas H. Clements, Julie Sarama and Ann-Marie Dibiase

Graphing Across the Curriculum--Valeriein Williams

Learning Through Play: Math, A Practical Guide--Sandra Waite-Stupiansky

Math for the Very Young: A Handbook of Activities for Parents and Teachers--Lydia Polonsky, Dorothy Freedman, Susan Leshner and Kate Morrison

Math Games and Activities from Around the World--Claudia Zaslavsky

Mathematics in the Early Years--Juanita V. Copley

Number in Preschool and Kindergarten: Educational Implications of Piaget's Theory (NAEYC)--Constance Kamii

Showcasing Mathematics for the Young Child: Activities for Three-, Four-, and Five-Year-Olds--Juanita V. Copley

Spotlight on Young Children and Math--Derry G. Koralek

Early Childhood: Where Learning Begins, Mathematics--Carol Sue Fromboluti

These books and many other resources may be borrowed by Nebraska residents from the Early Childhood Training Center. A web-based search of these media materials is offered at www.esu3.org/ectc or telephone contact may be made by calling 1-402-597-4826 or 1-800-89CHILD.

Books for Children

Anno's Counting Book--Mitsumasa Anno

The Doorbell Rang--Pat Hutchins

Eating Fractions--Bruce McMillan

The Greedy Triangle--Marilyn Burns

How Many, How Many, How Many--Rick Walton

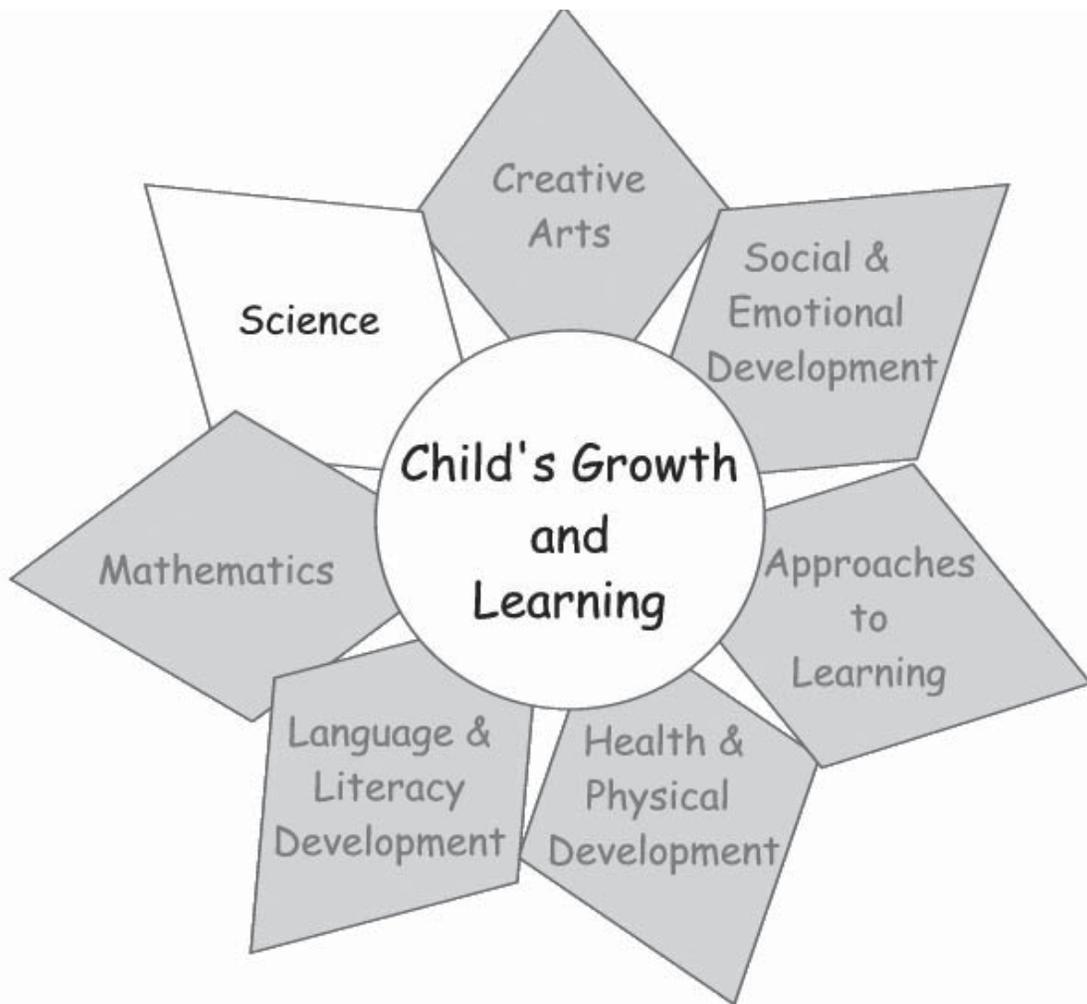
Is a Blue Whale the Biggest Thing There Is?--Robert E. Wells

Moja Means One: Swahili Counting book--Muriel L. Feelings

Over in the Meadow--Ezra Jack Keats

Too Many Tamales--Gary Soto

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



Science

- Scientific Skills and Methods
- Scientific Knowledge



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

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

Early childhood teachers and caregivers should look for opportunities to explore scientific concepts in all content areas.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- ❖ Use special or adaptive devices to increase a child's level of participation
- ❖ Encourage hands-on and sensory experiences such as touching, holding, exploring, tasting, smelling and manipulating
- ❖ Provide physical guidance/support in using science tools when needed

Some general accommodations to support children with special learning or developmental needs can be found on page 9 of this document, and in NDE Rule 51.

Scientific Skills and Methods

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Explores various materials to learn about weight, shape, size, color and temperature
- Uses a variety of tools and objects to explore the world and how things work in the world (uses magnets to pick up metal, observes through a microscope, etc.)
- Makes observations, tries things out to see what will happen, etc.

The Adult

- Encourages children to ask questions and find answers through active exploration and reflection on what they learn
- Observes nature and discusses the life cycles of animals (butterflies, frogs, etc.)
- Includes science materials to encourage exploration (magnets, magnifying glasses, and mirrors, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials that are accessible throughout the day for observation, exploration and manipulation, including natural objects and events
- Magnets, magnifying glasses, balance scales, gears, pulleys, mirrors, measuring devices, etc.

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.1.4

1.1.7

Science

1.1.1

1.1.3

1.2.1

1.3.1

1.4.2

1.5.1

1.6.1

1.6.2

1.8.1

Mathematics

1.4.2

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A3

004.05A6

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

4.1.1

4.1.2

4.1.3

4.1.4

4.1.5

Scientific Knowledge

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards Reading/Writing

1.1.4

Science

1.1.1

1.1.3

1.2.1

1.3.1

1.4.1

1.4.2

1.5.1

1.5.2

1.8.1

Social Studies/ History

1.2

1.4

Mathematics

1.1.2

1.3.1

1.3.2

1.3.3

1.3.4

1.3.5

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A3

004.05A6

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start Outcomes

Framework

4.2.1

4.2.2

4.2.3

4.2.4

- Child develops knowledge of the scientific process
 - Shows interest in active investigation
 - Begins to make comparisons among objects that have been observed
 - Describes or represents a series of events in the correct sequence
- Child demonstrates understanding of simple cause and effect relationships
- Child shows interest in measurement of time, length, distance, and weight
- Child develops increased ability to observe and discuss things that are common and things that are different

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Compares the properties of objects that float in water with objects that sink
- Uses an eye dropper to drop color in glasses of water
- Compares handprint to those of classmates
- Joins in discussions about what we do during the day and what we do at night

The Adult

- Encourages children to discuss objects and events that have been observed
- Provides opportunities to observe nature and make predictions about natural events
- Adds living things such as plants and pets to the environment
- Provides opportunities for class observation and comparison

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of materials from the natural world (plants, animals, rocks, etc.)
- Scheduled walks in the neighborhood or community to observe natural objects and events
- Materials to encourage sand and water play
- Field trips to farm, aquarium, zoo, nursery, etc.

Resources

202 Science Investigations--Marjorie Frank

Dialogue on Early Childhood, Science, Mathematics and Technology Education--
American Association for the Advancement of Science

Everybody Has a Body: Science from Head to Toe/Activities Book for Teachers of Children Ages 3-6--Robert E. Rockwell, Robert A. Williams and Elizabeth A. Sherwood

Everyday Discoveries: Amazingly Easy Science and Math Using Stuff You Already Have--
Sharon MacDonald

Exploring Science in Early Childhood: A Developmental Approach--Karen K. Lind

Math and Science for Young Children 4E--Rosalind Charlesworth and Karen K. Lind

Science Experiences for the Early Childhood Years: An Integrated Approach--Jean D. Harlan
and Mary S. Rivkin

Worms, Shadows and Whirlpools: Science in the Early Childhood Classroom--Karen Worth and
Susan Grollman

Young Children and Technology: A World of Discovery--Susan W. Haugland and June L. Wright

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Books for Children

The Carrot Seed--Ruth Krauss

From Seed to Plant--Gail Gibbons

Listen to the desert: Oye al desierto--Pat Mora

The Mitten--Jan Brett

More, Fewer, Less--Tana Hoban

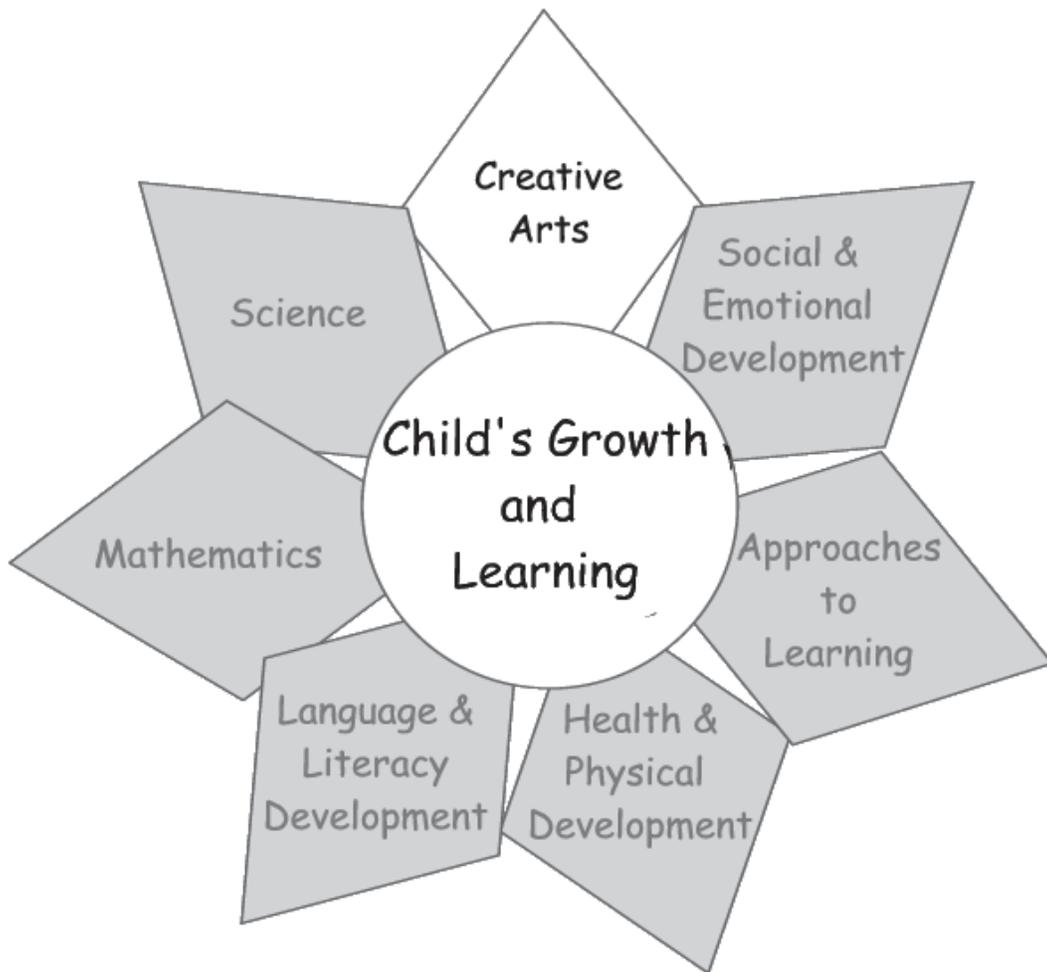
Rocks, Rocks, Big and Small--Joanne Barkan

The Surprise Garden--Zoe Hall

The Very Hungry Caterpillar--Eric Carle

When Autumn Comes--Robert Maass

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



Creative Arts

- Music
- Art
- Movement
- Dramatic Play

Creative arts activities open an avenue for the application of individual ideas, feelings, and expressions. In the preschool environment, creative arts can be integrated into all curriculum areas to develop an appreciation for the arts.

Creative arts foster creative and individual expression, self-esteem, imagination, and appreciation of cultural diversities. With the introduction of the various components—music, movement, dramatic expression, and visual arts—the preschool child is encouraged to explore and express him/herself creatively.

Creative arts help children learn to read! By using materials and tools to create “pictures,” sculptures and other two and three dimensional projects. Children develop skills in visualization and representation that are very important in the process of learning to read.



On a daily basis, young children are given opportunities for creative activities, emphasizing the experience rather than the outcome. These experiences should be concrete, hands-on learning activities, offered in a risk-free environment where all children are encouraged to express themselves freely.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- ❖ Provide materials that can be easily adapted for independent participation
- ❖ Materials should be easily accessible to encourage participation
- ❖ Adapt the environment to promote participation, engagement, and learning using a variety of textures

Some general accommodations to support children with special learning or developmental needs can be found on page 9 of this document, and in NDE Rule 51.

Music

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

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

The Adult

- Encourages children's interest in music, creative movement and dance
- Provides opportunities for children to experience movement through music
- Introduces children to different kinds of music (jazz, rock, ethnic, classical, etc.)
- Uses music or songs as cues to transition to a new activity or signal a quiet work time

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials for children to create their own instruments (strings, rubber bands, boxes, cans, etc.)
- Opportunities to hear and sing a variety of types of music (lullabies, folk music, classical, jazz, children's songs, and songs from other cultures and in other languages)

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Reading/Writing

1.1.2

1.1.4

1.2.1

1.3.1

Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations

004.05A9

004.05C

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start Outcomes Framework

5.1.1

5.1.2

5.3.2

Art

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Reading/Writing
1.1.4
Science
1.1.1
1.1.2
1.2.1

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A9
004.05C
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
5.2.1
5.2.2
5.2.3
5.2.4

- Child progresses in exploration and experimentation with new materials
 - Uses materials to make a simple representation and describes or demonstrates how it was made
- Child gains experience in making shapes and linear patterns
 - Draws or paints images with a few details
- Child broadens artistic exploration
 - Develops confidence in own creative expression through process-oriented experiences
- Child uses materials to build and create a structure to represent another item (blocks become a castle, clay becomes a snake, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Participates in individual and group art activities
- Uses new materials to paint pictures (cotton swabs, straws, twigs, marbles, etc.)
- Tries a variety of materials and ways of using the materials (using a big brush to paint broad strokes, combining colors, etc.)
- Attaches materials using tape, stapler, string, etc.

The Adult

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

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

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

Movement

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

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

The Adult

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

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials, equipment and experiences that allow children to practice developing skills in movement and rhythm
- Materials that encourage movement (riding toys, balls, obstacle courses, climbing equipment, etc.)

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Science

1.1.2

1.1.3

Mathematics

1.4.1

1.6.1

Nebraska Rule 11 Regulations

004.05A9

004.05C

004.06C

004.06D

004.06E

Head Start Outcomes Framework

5.3.1

5.3.3

Dramatic Play

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Reading/Writing
1.1.4
1.2.1
1.3.1

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A9
004.05C
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
5.4.1
5.4.2

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Expresses creativity using puppetry, storytelling, dance, plays, pantomime and theater
- Participates in discussions after attending a dramatic performance
- Acts out a story read aloud during circle time
- Talks to and plays with pretend friends, stuffed animals and other toys
- Engages in role play in various activities such as dress-up, dramatic play, in the block area, etc.

The Adult

- Provides opportunities for children to act out books, nursery rhymes and assume roles in other ways
- Encourages children to tell and act out stories, stressing beginnings and endings to introduce sequencing
- Participates with children in various forms of dramatic expression including those from other cultures

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Field trips (to art events, concerts, dance and theatrical performances, cultural fairs, etc.)
- A well equipped dramatic play center for active imaginative play with a variety of props (home-living, fire station, fast food restaurant, hospital, school, etc.)
- Materials representing various cultures (flags, pictures, foods, dolls, books, clothes, music, toys, etc.)

Resources

Active for Life: Developmentally Appropriate Movement Programs for Young Children--Stephen W. Sanders

The Big Messy Art Book: But Easy to Clean Up--Mary Ann F. Kohl

The Colors of Learning: Integrating the Visual Arts into the Early Childhood Curriculum--Rosemary Althouse, Margaret H. Johnson and Sharon T. Mitchell

Creativity and the Arts for Young Children--Rebeca T. Isbell and Shirley C. Raines

Learning to Read Through the Arts--Bernadette O'Brien

Movement Plus Music: Activities for Children Ages 3-7--Phyllis S. Weikart

More Than Painting: Exploring the Wonders of Art in Preschool and Kindergarten--Sally Moomaw and Brenda Hieronymus

Mudworks: Bilingual Edition/Edicion Bilingue--Creative Clay, Dough and Modeling Experiences/Experiencias Creativas Con Arcilla, Masa y Modelado (Spanish/English Bilingual Edition)--Mary Ann F. Kohl and Kathleen Kerr

Music In Our Lives, the Early Years (NAEYC)--Dorothy T. McDonald

Making Learning Visible: Children as Individual and Group Learners--Project Zero and Reggio Children

Visual Arts and Early Childhood Learning--Christine Marme-Thompson

Weaving In the Arts: Widening the Learning Circle--Sharon Blecher and Kathy Jaffee

These books and many other resources may be borrowed by Nebraska residents from the Early Childhood Training Center. A web-based search of these media materials is offered at www.esu3.org/ectc or telephone contact may be made by calling 1-402-597-4826 or 1-800-89CHILD.

Books for Children

A Birthday Basket for Tia--Pat Mora

Arroz con Leche--Lulu Delacre

Barn Dance--Bill Martin, Jr.

Color--Ruth Heller

From Head to Toe--Eric Carle

Harold and the Purple Crayon--Crockett Johnson

Hucklebones--Mickey Klar Marks

The Legend of the Indian Paintbrush--Tomie dePaola

Mouse Paint--Ellen Stoll Walsh

Sing a Song of Popcorn: Every Child's Book of Poems, illustrated by nine Caldecott Medal artists

Resources to Support Early Learning

These selected general resources are offered as a starting place, with words and images that may bring new appreciation for, and understanding about, our meaningful work with young children. Additional references, specific to each of the learning domains, are presented within the specific sections of the document.

These books and many other resources may be borrowed by Nebraska residents from the Early Childhood Training Center. A web-based search of these media materials is offered at www.esu3.org/ectc or telephone contact may be made by calling 1-402-597-4826 or 1-800-89CHILD.

Celebrating Children's Growth, Development and Learning

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

Eager to Learn: Educating our Preschoolers, Barbara T. Bowman, Suzanne Donovan and M. Susan Burns. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2001.

Fostering Children's Social Competence: The Teacher's Role, Lilian G. Katz and Diane E. McClellan. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1997.

From Neurons to Neighborhoods, The Science of Early Childhood Development, Jack P. Shonkoff and Deborah Phillips. Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 2000.

Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Susan B. Neuman and David K. Dickinson. Manhattan, NY: The Guilford Press, 2003.

Learning About Print in Preschool: Working With Letters, Words, and Beginning Links With Phonemic Awareness. Dorothy S. Strickland and Judith A. Schickedanz. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 2004.

Meaningful Differences in the Everyday Experience of Young American Children, Betty M. Hart and Todd R. Risley. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 1995.

Oral Language and Early Literacy in Preschool: Talking, Reading, and Writing, Kathleen A. Roskos, Patton O. Tabors and Lisa A. Lenhart. Newark, DE: International Reading Association, 2004.

Pathways to Play: Developing Play Skills in Young Children, Sandra Heidemann and Deborah Hewitt. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 1992.

Reinventing Childhood, Raising and Educating Children in a Changing World, David Elkind. Cambridge, MA: Modern Learning Press, Inc., 1998.

Rethinking the Brain: New Insights Into Early Development, Rima Shore. New York, NY: Families and Work Institute, 1997.

The Social World of Children Learning to Talk, Betty Hart and Todd R. Risley. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 1999.

Tools of the Mind: A Vygotskian Approach to Early Childhood Education, Deborah Leong and Elena Bodrova. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/Prentice Hall, 1996.

Where All Belong – Celebrating Children’s Diversity and Special Needs

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

Alerta: A Multicultural, Bilingual Approach to Teaching Young Children, Leslie R. Williams and Yvonne De Gaetano. Boston, MA: Addison Wesley, 1984.

Anti-Bias Curriculum: Tools for Empowering Young Children, Louise Derman-Sparks. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1989.

A Place for Me, Phyllis A. Chandler. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1994.

Building Blocks for Teaching Preschoolers with Special Needs, Susan R. Sandall and Ilene S. Schwartz. Baltimore, MD: Brooks Publishing Co., 2002.

Coaching Families and Colleagues in Early Childhood, Barbara E. Hanft, Dathan D. Rush and M’Lisa L. Shelden. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 2004.

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

Diversity in Children’s Lives: Children’s Books and Classroom Helps, Molly Weston and Patricia W. Wesley. Chapel Hill, NC: FPG Publications, 2002.

Diversity in the Classroom, New Approaches to the Education of Young Children, Frances E. Kendall. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1996.

Handbook of Early Childhood Intervention (Second Edition), Jack Shonkoff, Samuel Meisels. New York, NY: Cambridge Press, 2000.

One Child, Two Languages: A Guide for Preschool Educators of Children Learning English as a Second Language, Patton O. Tabors. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 1999

Resource Guide: Selected Early Childhood/Early Intervention Training Materials (11th Edition), Camille Catlett, Pamela J. Winton and Anna Mitchell. Chapel Hill, NC: FPG Publications, 2002.

Starting Small: Teaching Tolerance in Preschool and the Early Grades, Montgomery, AL: Teaching Tolerance Project, 1997.

Teaching Other People’s Children: Literacy and Learning in a Bilingual Classroom, Cynthia Ballenger. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1998.

The Respectful and Inviting Environment

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

Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children’s Environments that Work, Jim Greenman. Edmond, WA: Exchange Press, 1988.

Creating Rooms of Wonder: Valuing and Displaying Children's Work to Enhance the Learning Process, Carol Seefeldt. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2002.

Designs for Living and Learning: Transforming Early Childhood Environments, Deb Curtis and Margie Carter. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2003

Playgrounds that Work: Creating Outdoor Play Environments for Children, Pauline Berry. Baulkham Hill BC NSW, Australia: Pademelon Press, 2001.

Curriculum Approaches to Young Children's Learning

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

Bringing Reggio Emilia Home, An Innovative Approach to Early Childhood Education, Louise Boyd Cadwell and Lella Gandini. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1997.

Caring for our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs, Second Edition, American Public Health Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics. Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, 1992.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool (Fourth Edition), Diane Trister Dodge, Laura J. Colker and Cate Heroman. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 2002.

The Creative Curriculum for Family Child Care, Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1998.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (Revised Edition), Sue Bredekamp and Carol Copple. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1997.

Educating Young Children: Active Learning Practices for Preschool and Child Care Programs, Second Edition, Mary Hohmann and David P. Weikart. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 2002.

Engaging Children's Minds: The Project Approach, Second Edition, Lilian G. Katz and Sylvia C. Chard. Westport, CT: Ablex Publishing Co., 2000.

The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach-Advanced Reflections, Second Edition, Carolyn P. Edwards, Lella Gandini and George Forman. Westport, CT: Ablex Publishing Co., 1998.

Montessori Curriculum Scope and Sequence Ages 2-Sixth Grade, Montessori Foundation. Sarasota, FL: Montessori Foundation, 1996.

Reaching Potentials: Appropriate Curriculum and Assessment for Young Children, Vol. 1, Sue Bredekamp and Teresa Rosegrant. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1992.

Scaffolding Children's Learning: Vygotsky and Early Childhood Education, Laura E. Berk and Adam Winsler. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1995.

Measuring Growth – Effective Assessment Practices

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

Accreditation Criteria & Procedures of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Association for the Education of Young Children, Washington, DC: 1998.

Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System for Infants and Children, Diane D. Bricker, Kristie Pretti-Fontczak, Joann Johnson and Elizabeth Straka. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 2002.

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

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

Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Revised Edition, Thelma Harms, Richard M. Clifford and Debby Cryer. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1998.

Head Start Child Outcomes Framework, Head Start Bureau. Washington, DC: Head Start, 2001.

High/Scope Program Quality Assessment, PQA-Preschool Version Administration Manual, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 1998.

Indicators of Quality, Guiding the Development and Improvement of Early Childhood Care and Education Programs (Second Edition). Nebraska Department of Education. Lincoln, NE: 1998.

The Power of Observation, Judy R. Jablon, Amy Laura Dombro and Margo L. Dichtelmiller. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, 1999.

Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation (Third Edition), National Association for Family Child Care. Salt Lake City, UT: 2002.

The Transition to Kindergarten, Robert C. Pianta and Martha J. Cox: Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 1999.

Users Guide to the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation Toolkit, Miriam W. Smith and David K. Dickinson. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 2002.

The Work Sampling System: An Overview, Fourth Edition, Samuel J. Meisels, Judy R. Jablon, Dorothea B. Marsden, Margo L. Dichtelmeier and Aviva B. Dorfman. Lebanon, IN: Rebus/Pearson Early Learning, 2001.

Working Effectively with Families

Families play a critical role in children's growth and learning. Not only are they a child's first and primary teacher, they continue to influence their child's growth and learning throughout life. Families, teachers and caregivers who partner effectively will enjoy a meaningful relationship and share valuable communication that supports a child's sense of trust, belonging and success as a learner.

Continuity in Early Childhood: A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages, Regional Educational Laboratories' Early Childhood Collaboration Network. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1999.

First Connections with Families, Nebraska Department of Education. Lincoln, NE: 2004.

Getting Men Involved: Strategies for Early Childhood Programs, James A. Levine, Dennis T. Murphy and Sherrill Wilson. New York, NY: Scholastic, 1994.

Parenting Skills Workshop Series, John Bailey, Susan Perkins and Sandra Wilkins. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Cooperative Extension, 1995.

Partnering with Parents: 29 Easy Programs to Involve Parents in the Early Learning Process, Bob Rockwell and Janet Rockwell Kniepkamp. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2003.

School, Family and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action, Joyce L. Epstein, Lucretia Coates, Karen Clark Salinas, Mavis G. Sanders and Beth S. Simon. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 1997.

Successful Kindergarten Transition: Your Guide to Connecting Children, Families, and Schools, Robert C. Pianta and Marcia Kraft-Sayre. Baltimore, MD: Brooks Publishing Company, 2003.

Supporting and Strengthening Families: Methods, Strategies and Practices, Carl Dunst, Carol M. Trivette and Angela G. Deal. Cambridge, MA: Brookline Books, 1994.

Working With Parents, Dolores Curran. Circle Pines, MN: American Guidance Service, 1989.

Early Learning Guidelines

Definitions

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

Adaptive Equipment - Equipment made suitable to meet requirements or conditions.

Approaches to Learning - General approach to learning includes child's attitudes, habits, and learning styles.

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

Competence - Possession of required skill, knowledge, or capacity.

Cooperative Play - Making or doing something together that requires the skills, ideas, and contributions of each person.

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

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

Developmentally Appropriate - Learning environment and teaching strategies which are based on theories and research about the growth and development of children.

Domains - Key areas of children's development and learning.

Dramatic Play Center - Area for children to play, pretend, and use their imagination.

Facilitate - To guide through the process.

Fine (Small) Motor Skills - Skills that use small muscle groups such as hands and fingers and frequently involve hand-eye coordination.

Gross (Large) Motor Skills - The movement and action of large and/or major muscle groups.

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

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

Literacy Rich Environment - Program includes literacy activities in every component of the schedule, every day and throughout the environment.

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

Multicultural Curriculum - Understanding of a responsiveness to cultural and linguistic diversity in activities, materials, and actions.

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

Numeral Awareness - Understanding that a word, letter or symbol represents a number.

Open-Ended Questioning Techniques - Questions that must be answered with a response other than 'Yes' or 'No'.

Peer - Person of the same age.

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

Scientific Skills and Methods - Process used to investigate observations, solve problems and test hypotheses.

Sensory Experiences - How things look, feel, taste, sound, smell.

Social & Emotional Development - Children's abilities to form and sustain social relationships with adults and peers.

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

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For more information about this document, please visit our web site at: <http://www.nde.state.ne.us/ECH/ECH.html>.

Nebraska Department of Education



NEBRASKA HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES SYSTEM



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