NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

RULE 11

REGULATIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED BY SCHOOL BOARDS OR EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNITS AND FOR THE ISSUANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD GRANTS

TITLE 92, NEBRASKA ADMINISTRATIVE CODE,
CHAPTER 11

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State of Nebraska
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TITLE 92 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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NUMERICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECT	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	CODE SECTION
General Provisions	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	001
Definitions	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	002
Prekindergarten Program Approval	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	003
Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Established by School Boards or Educational Service Units	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	004
Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age In a Center-Based Program	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	005
Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age In a Home-Based Program	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	006
Early Childhood Education Grants	79-1101-1104, 79-318	007

TITLE 92 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHAPTER 11 - REGULATIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED BY SCHOOL BOARDS OR EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNITS AND FOR THE ISSUANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION GRANTS

SUBJECT	**STATUTORY AUTHORITY**	**CODE SECTION**
Violations, Probation, Denial, Or Loss of Program Approval and/or Loss of Grants	79-1101-1104, 79-318 84-901 et seq.	008

Appendix A
Early Childhood Program Report

Appendix B
Application for New or Expansion Grants

Appendix C
Required Information for Continuation Grants

Appendix D
Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3

Appendix E
Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5

TITLE 92 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHAPTER 11 - REGULATIONS FOR THE APPROVAL OF PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED BY SCHOOL BOARDS OR EDUCATIONAL SERVICE UNITS AND FOR THE ISSUANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION GRANTS

ALPHABETICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUBJECT	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	CODE SECTION
Definitions	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	002
Early Childhood Grants	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	007
General Provisions	79-1101-1104, 79-318	001
Prekindergarten Program Approval	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	003
Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility In a Center-Based Program	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	005
Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age In a Home-Based Program	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	006
Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Established by School Boards or Educational Service Units	79-1101 to 1104, 79-318	004

TITLE 92 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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Appendix C
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TITLE 92 - NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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001 General Provisions

001.01 Statutory Authority. This Chapter is adopted pursuant to Sections 79-1101 to 1104 and 79-318 of the Revised Statutes of Nebraska (R.R.S.).

001.02 Scope and Application of this Rule. This Chapter governs the approval of prekindergarten programs established by school boards or educational service units for children ages birth to kindergarten entrance age under the provisions of 79-1104 R.R.S. This Chapter also governs the issuance of the Early Childhood Education Grants to school districts for programs serving children ages three to kindergarten entrance age under the provisions of Sections 79-1101 to 1103 R.R.S.

001.03 Related Regulations. In addition to the requirements of this Chapter, public school districts are also governed by regulations contained in Title 92 Nebraska Administrative Code (NAC), Chapter 10, dealing with the accreditation of schools; 92 NAC Chapters 21 and 24 dealing with teacher certification and endorsement; ~~and~~ 92 NAC Chapters 51 and 52 dealing with special education programs; and 92 NAC Chapter 19 dealing with enrollment. Public school districts operating a child care program may also be governed by 391 NAC Chapter 3 dealing with licensure of child care centers.

002 Definitions

002.01 At risk when used with reference to a child means the child is experiencing conditions or factors which could have a negative impact on his or her development or learning, including but not limited to such factors as low birth weight, poverty, being a child of teen parents or parents who did not graduate from high school, or living in a home whose occupants have limited ability to speak and understand English.

002.02 Board means the State Board of Education.

002.03 Center-based program means a prekindergarten program serving ~~a group or groups of~~ children in a class~~room~~ on a part-day or full-day program basis.

002.04 Class means a group of children who are receiving early childhood services in a classroom for a specific time period established by the school district or educational service unit. When there is more than one group of children (example: a morning group and an afternoon group), each group represents a distinct class for all purposes and must meet all requirements of this Chapter. Each class shall meet instructional hour requirements for center-based programs indicated in Section 005 of this Chapter.

002.05 Commissioner means the State Commissioner of Education.

002.06 Comprehensive services means services other than the educational and family development and support components of the prekindergarten programs that are accessible to program participants including, but not limited to, nutritional, medical, dental, social, and mental health services.

002.07 Contact Hours when used in conjunction with home-based programs means that program staff shall have contact with each enrolled family at least three (3) times each month and a minimum total of 180 minutes per month.

002.0~~7~~8 Curriculum means an intentional design to enhance children's learning that is appropriate for the age and development of the children and is designed and implemented to promote positive outcomes in the areas of social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical, and aesthetic development, for all children served in the prekindergarten program.

002.0~~8~~9 Department means the State Department of Education, which is comprised of the Board and the Commissioner.

002.~~09~~10 Developmentally appropriate means that the learning environment and teaching strategies are based on widely accepted theories and research about the typical and atypical growth, development, and learning of children.

002.~~10~~11 Established, when used with reference to prekindergarten programs established by a school board or educational service unit, means a prekindergarten program that is operated by a school district or educational service unit directly; or by contract with another entity; or in coordination, cooperation, collaboration or partnership agreement with another entity.

002.~~11~~12 Family development and support means those components of a prekindergarten program which recognize the central role of the family in their children's development. Family development and support includes, but is not limited to, home visitation, parent resources and information, conferences, and referrals for additional services for children and families.

002.~~12~~13 Family literacy means education and related activities which involve children and their families in interactive literacy experiences.

002.~~13~~14 Full-day program means a prekindergarten center-based program that provides instruction, programming, and services for 6 or more hours per day in a class setting.

002.15 Home-based program means a prekindergarten program that specifically provides home visiting services and does not include a center-based component. This definition includes Sixpence programs as described in subsection 005.13, but does not apply to or include special education services in the home under Rule 51 and Rule 52 (92 NAC 51 and 52).

002.~~14~~16 Home visiting services means a method of service delivery for child and family development and support where guidance, information, and child development services are offered in partnership with the family. Services may be provided for either home- or center-based programs in the family home or at another location determined by the family and the home visiting specialist or teacher. This definition may include Sixpence programs as described in subsection 005.13, but does not apply to or include special education services in the home under Rule 51 and Rule 52 (92 NAC 51 and 52).

002.~~15~~17 Home visitor means a person who provides family development and support services under the supervision of a home visiting specialist or a teacher.

002.~~16~~18 Home visiting specialist means a person who develops, supervises, and provides home visiting services.

002.~~17~~19 Infant means a child age birth to 18 months.

~~002.18 In-home family support program means a prekindergarten program that specifically provides home visiting services. In-home family support programs are referred to as "home-based programs" in these regulations.~~

002.~~19~~20 Instructional hour when used in connection with center-based programs means a period of time, at least sixty (60) minutes long, which is used for teaching in the following areas of children's growth and learning: social-emotional development, cognitive learning in the areas of language and literacy, mathematics, science, and problem solving; creative arts, health and nutrition; and physical and motor development. Meal or snack time is part of the program curriculum and provides opportunities for learning and social development, as well as nutrition, and therefore, is included as part of the instruction time. Outdoor and gross motor time will be included as part of the instruction time. Time spent transporting, conducting parent/teacher conferences or home visits will not count as instructional time. Instructional hour when used in connection with home-based programs means contact hours.

002.2~~0~~1 Kindergarten entrance age means ~~age~~ five years of age on or before July 31 of the current school year.

002.2~~1~~2 Paraeducator means an individual who serves in a non-teaching role under the supervision of a teacher certificated to teach pursuant to 92 NAC 21.

002.2~~2~~3 Parent means parent or legal guardian.

002.2~~3~~4 Part-day program means a prekindergarten center-based program that provides instruction, programming, and services for less than 6 hours each day in a class setting.

002.2~~4~~5 Partnership agreement means, for the purposes of this Chapter, a formal written agreement that describes the level and nature of commitment of each party to the prekindergarten program. The partnership agreement should describe the following: resources contributed by each partner; rights and responsibilities of each partner; and any other relevant information agreed upon by all parties. The parties are not required by this Chapter to enter into partnership agreements or form a partnership under the Nebraska Uniform Limited Partnership Act.

002.2~~5~~6 Prekindergarten program means all early childhood part-day or full-day center-based programs (may be called preschool, Head Start, child care, Sixpence or some other name depicting a center-based program) and/or ~~in-home family support~~ home-based programs provided for children who have not reached the age of five on or before July 31 of the current school year.

002.2~~6~~7 Preschooler means a child age 3 years to kindergarten entrance age.

002.28 School year means the time period between July 1 and June 30 each year.

002.2~~7~~9 Teach means and includes, but is not limited to, the following responsibilities: (a) the organization and management of the classroom or the physical area in which the learning experience of prekindergarten age children takes place; (b) the assessment and diagnosis of the individual educational needs of the children; (c) the planning, selecting, organizing, prescribing, and directing of the learning experiences of the children; (d) the planning of teaching strategies and the selection of available materials and equipment to be used; (e) the evaluation and reporting of children's progress; and (f) the provision of a learning environment and opportunities for positive relationships with children and families.

002.~~28~~30 Teacher means a person who is certificated pursuant to 92 NAC 21 to teach.

002.~~29~~31 Toddler means a child age 18 months to 3 years.

003 Prekindergarten Program Approval Process

003.01 Intent to Operate Statement: Any public school district or educational service unit intending to establish a prekindergarten program shall provide the following information to the Department at least 60 days prior to providing any such program:

003.01A A written statement indicating the intent to establish a prekindergarten program meeting the requirements of this Chapter and a description of the prekindergarten program to be provided. The description shall include the type of service to be provided, the planned number of instructional hours for a center-based program or contact hours for a home-based program, and the ages of children in the program. This statement shall be signed by the school district superintendent or the educational service unit (ESU) administrator.

003.01B Written verification that the district or educational service unit staff member who coordinates the prekindergarten program holds a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and has at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education.

003.01C When known, name of the certificated teacher or teachers who will assume teaching responsibilities.

003.02 Approval Requirements. Prekindergarten programs established by school boards or educational service units shall be approved by the Board pursuant to this Chapter upon the recommendation of the Commissioner. Approval requires compliance with the requirements identified in this Chapter.

003.03 Duration and Continuation of Program Approval. Program approval is granted for one year from each July 1 through the following June 30. Renewal is based on the program's compliance with this Chapter during the prior school year.

003.04 Approval For the Purpose of Early Childhood Education Continuation Grants or the Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA). Prekindergarten programs established by school districts may be approved annually for purposes of TEEOSA or for Early Childhood Education continuation grants under this Chapter on the annual submission of the following by the establishing district:

003.04A An Early Childhood Program report demonstrating that the program will continue to meet the requirements of this Chapter, and, for programs receiving grants, a continuation plan demonstrating that the program will continue to meet grant requirements.

003.04B For programs receiving grants, a proposed operating budget demonstrating that the program will receive resources from other funding sources equal to or greater than the sum of any grant received pursuant to this Chapter for the prior school year plus any calculated state aid as calculated pursuant to subsection (1) of Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-1103 for the prior school year.

003.05 General Reports. The head administrator of each school district or educational service unit establishing a prekindergarten program shall include information about such programs in the Nebraska Department of Education approved data system ~~Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS) and the Consolidated Data Collection (CDC)~~. All early childhood data is due as specified by the ~~NSSRS and CDC~~ data system calendar.

003.06 Early Childhood Program Report. An Early Childhood Program Report Form shall be submitted annually by October 15, and on the form provided by the Department. The report form is contained in Appendix A of this Chapter. When the report reflects failure to comply with the requirements of this Chapter, it shall be accompanied by a written plan for correcting the violation(s). The plan is subject to approval by the Commissioner or his or her designee. The Commissioner or his or her designee may approve the plan if in his or her judgment it is reasonably calculated to correct the violation prior to the ~~beginning of the next school year~~ end of the current school year.

004 Requirements For All Prekindergarten Programs (Center-based and Home-based) Established By School Boards or Educational Service Units

004.01 Stated Purpose. Each program shall have a stated purpose of promoting social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical, and aesthetic development and learning for the children served and of promoting family development and support.

004.02 Planning. Each program shall have a planning period. The planning period shall include activities associated with:

004.02A Determining the community's unmet needs for early childhood education for prekindergarten children in terms of the number of such children in the community, an estimate of the number of children ~~children~~ birth to kindergarten entrance age who are not currently receiving services, and barriers to the provision of services.

004.02B Developing cooperative relationships with public and nonpublic providers of early childhood programs, including the development of cooperative agreements and contracts, as needed to carry out the proposed program.

004.02C Recruiting and training staff.

004.02D Identifying and listing existing school-community resources available to provide comprehensive services to the program participants.

004.03 Advisory Committee. A local Early Childhood Advisory Committee shall be established with membership representing families and community members.

004.03A An existing advisory committee such as that required for services to children below age five (5) with disabilities in Title 92 NAC Chapter 51, a Head Start Policy Council, or a Title I Advisory Committee, may serve this purpose if the representation conforms with this section and the mission is expanded to encompass the purpose of this Chapter.

004.03B Advisory Committee meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act as described in Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-1407 to 84-1414.

004.04 Coordination with Existing Programs and Funding Sources. Each program shall develop, and keep on file, a written plan to show that the program will be coordinated or contracted with existing programs, including those listed in Subsection 004.04A and nonpublic programs which meet the requirements of this Chapter. Each program shall develop and keep on file a written plan to coordinate and use a combination of local, state, and federal funding sources including, but not limited to, those listed in Subsection 004.04A in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups of children and to ensure that participating children and families have access to knowledge of comprehensive services that may be available.

004.04A For the purposes of Subsection 004.04, existing programs and funding sources are as follows:

004.04A1 Grants provided through the Early Childhood Education Grant Program for children ages three to kindergarten entrance age under Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1103 and the Early Childhood Grant Program for children ages birth to three (Sixpence Grants) under Neb. Rev Stat. §79-1104.02

004.04A2 Programs for children with disabilities below five years of age funded through the Special Education Act, the Early Intervention Act, and funds available through the flexible funding provisions under the Special Education Act.

004.04A3 The federal Head Start or Early Head Start program.

004.04A4 Title I of the federal funds provided through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and subsequent reauthorizations or other appropriate federal legislation.

004.04A5 Child care assistance through the Department of Health and Human Services.

004.04A6 Local district funds.

004.04A7 Funds obtained through contracts with other school districts, such as contracts to provide services to children below age five with disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51.

004.04A8 Private grants and gifts.

004.04A9 Parent fees from the program's locally-developed sliding scale.

004.04A10 Nonpublic prekindergarten programs which meet the requirements of Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-1104(2) and this Chapter.

004.05 Fees. Fees if charged shall not exceed the actual cost for providing prekindergarten programs. Programs charging fees shall have a plan to use a sliding fee scale in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups. Programs may waive fees on the basis of need. This Subsection does not allow any school district to fail to meet its responsibilities under the Special Education Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-1110 to 79-1167).

004.06 Program Coordinator. Prekindergarten programs shall be coordinated by either a district staff member or an employee of an agency with whom the district has a partnership agreement who holds a current Nebraska Teaching Certificate with at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education and has the authority and responsibility to ensure compliance of this Chapter.

004.07 Program and Staff Requirements. All teachers and administrators in prekindergarten programs established by school district or educational service units shall hold a valid certificate or permit to teach issued by the Department pursuant to 92 NAC 21. Each center-based part- day or full- day program shall also meet program and staff requirements in Section 005 of this Chapter. Each home-based program shall also meet the program and staff requirements in Section 006 of this Chapter.

004.08 Participation and Inclusion. Participation of children and families in any program under this Chapter shall be voluntary. Programs shall not exclude children verified as having disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51 or 52. Programs including children verified as having disabilities shall also comply with Rule 51 and/or Rule 52 (92 NAC 51 and 52). Programs shall include to the extent possible children of diverse social and economic characteristics.

004.08A Birth Certificates. Within 30 days of enrollment, parents or guardians must submit to the district a certified copy of the child's birth certificate or other documentation in compliance with the Missing Children's Identification Act Neb. Rev. Stat. 43-2001 through 43-2012.

005 Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Center-Based Program

005.01 Instructional Hours. Each class in the program shall operate a minimum of twelve (12) instructional hours per week during the school year. Programs receiving grant funds pursuant this Chapter or receiving Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA) funds shall operate a minimum of four hundred and fifty (450) instructional hours per school year.

005.01A Pursuant to the provisions of 79-213 R.R.S., school systems unable to meet the minimums for instructional hours due to epidemic sickness, severe storm conditions, or destruction of the school house may request permission from the Board to offer fewer than the minimum hours by submitting an affidavit sworn to by the secretary of the school board and explaining the circumstances resulting in the request.

005.02 Family Development and Support. Each center-based part-day or full-day prekindergarten program shall provide a strong family development and support component which recognizes the central role of parents in their children's development and establishes a working partnership with each parent. The family development and support component shall include, as a minimum:

005.02A Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures.

005.02B An orientation to the program for children and families.

005.02C At least two (2) home visits per year between the parent(s) and the teacher to discuss the child's development and learning. If the family decides to have the visit at another location other than the home, it must be conducted at a location determined jointly by the family and teacher. The child's home shall always be the preferred option.

005.02D Specified opportunities for program staff to dialogue with families through such activities as parent conferences, participation on advisory committees, needs assessments, participation as classroom volunteers, and flexible scheduling of meetings and events.

005.02E Services based on the family's needs and interests that include but are not limited to, components that will enhance parenting skills and the family's ability to access community resources.

005.03 Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment. The part-day or full-day center-based prekindergarten program shall provide a play-oriented learning environment, which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials.

005.03A A written program plan shall be developed to explain and implement the program. The written program plan shall include a description of how the program curriculum, practices and assessment provide a variety of developmentally appropriate, experiential activities which:

005.03A1 Promote a positive self-concept in each child.

005.03A2 Foster attachments for all children by ensuring they have consistent teachers and paraeducators daily.

005.03A3 Develop social skills in each child.

005.03A4 Encourage each child to think, reason, question, and experiment.

005.03A5 Foster both receptive and expressive language development and provide early literacy/pre-reading experiences.

005.03A6 Incorporate family literacy experiences.

005.03A7 Develop an understanding of mathematical concepts including quantities of things, of time, and of space.

005.03A8 Enhance each child's physical development and skills.

005.03A9 Encourage sound safety, health, and nutritional practices, including avoidance of controlled substances.

005.03A10 Stimulate each child in creative expression and appreciation of the arts.

005.03A11 Include exploratory play in a language and literacy-rich environment during a majority of the daily schedule.

005.03A12 Reflect and respect the diversity of races, national origins, gender, and physical and mental abilities in the larger society and with particular emphasis on the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children enrolled through planned activities, use of materials, and use of equipment.

005.03A13 Use positive, age-appropriate techniques of child guidance including redirection, anticipation, ~~and~~ elimination of potential problems, and encouragement.

005.03A14 Use child assessment (evaluation) practices based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning to meet the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5. The assessment data ~~is~~ shall be used to plan and implement teaching strategies and activities to meet the individual needs of each child and to meet the widely held

expectations for all domains including literacy/pre-reading and mathematics ~~children~~. Any formal assessment tools used shall meet accepted standards of reliability and validity. Developmentally appropriate practices shall be implemented for all children. Individualized support shall be provided for children who are not progressing within the widely held expectations for literacy/pre-reading and mathematics.

005.03A15 Link the prekindergarten to the district's kindergarten/primary program through a written transition plan insuring continuity, identification, and implementation of processes necessary to facilitate the transition of children. The prekindergarten program shall be included in the district school improvement plan.

005.03A16 Include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of parents in family literacy activities.

005.03A17 Provide at least one outdoor play period (weather permitting) daily.

005.04 Evaluation and Quality Assurance. The program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department and will include, but not be limited to the following:

005.04A An assessment of program quality.

005.04B A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress.

005.04C A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.

005.05 Program Staff. The prekindergarten program shall use qualified staff as set forth below.

005.05A Teacher. Any teacher in a prekindergarten program shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with ~~an~~ one of the following endorsements: ~~in Early Childhood Education (age 3 through Grade 3),~~ Early Childhood Special Education (Birth through Kindergarten), ~~or~~ Early Childhood Inclusive (Birth through Grade 3), or Early Childhood Education (Age 3 through Grade 3). The Early Childhood Education (age 3 through Grade 3) endorsement shall not be valid for teaching children below age 3. A program may use a teacher without such an endorsement if the teacher files with the Department, as part of the annual Early Childhood Program Report, a plan developed by the teacher and the cooperating college or university to complete the endorsement. The plan will require the teacher to receive at least six (6) semester hours of credit annually toward completion of the endorsement. When fifty percent (50%) of the required courses have been completed, the teacher is eligible for a provisional endorsement pursuant to 92 NAC 24.

005.05B Paraeducator. A paraeducator assigned to work as a member of a team in a classroom setting shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in child development/early childhood education, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee. Equivalencies include, but are not limited to the following:

005.05B1 Holding a current Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05B2 Holding a current Nebraska teaching certificate with a K-6 elementary endorsement shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05B3 Each two (2) years of employment in a program serving children birth through second grade shall be an equivalency for three (3) credit hours of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. ~~This~~ Four or more years of experience may count for a maximum of six (6) of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05B4 Early childhood training hours (including web-based training) provided by or sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood shall count toward the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Fifteen (15) clock hours constitute one (1) semester hour.

005.05B5 The program may employ a paraeducator who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the paraeducator completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

005.05C Home Visitor. The prekindergarten program may employ a home visitor in a center-based program who provides family development and support services under the direction of a teacher. The home visitor shall have at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas: (i) Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education; (ii) Nursing, including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development; (iii) Child Development; (iv) Sociology or Psychology, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development; or (v) Social Work, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.

~~005.05C1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education;~~

~~005.05C2 Nursing, including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development;~~

~~005.05C3 Child Development;~~

~~005.05C4 Sociology or Psychology, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development; or~~

~~005.05C5 Social Work, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.~~

005.05C1 The program may employ a home visitor who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the home visitor completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment. Equivalencies include, but are not limited to the following:

005.05C1A Holding a current Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05C1B Holding a current Nebraska teaching certificate with a K-6 elementary endorsement shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05C1C Each two (2) years of employment in a program serving children birth through second grade shall be an equivalency for three (3) credit hours of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Four or more years of experience may count for a maximum of six (6) of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

005.05C1D Holding a Nebraska Home Visitor certificate shall be equivalent to three (3) semester hours.

005.05C1E Early childhood training hours (including web-based training) provided by or sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood shall count toward the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Fifteen (15) clock hours constitute one (1) semester hour.

005.05D Orientation. All staff working in the prekindergarten program shall be provided with an orientation prior to having direct responsibility for the care and teaching of children or for providing family and development services. The orientation shall include job duties and responsibilities, building safety procedures, information about the state law regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect under Neb. Rev. Stat. 28-711, child assessment information, and daily routines and schedules.

005.05E Language Resource. If the majority of children enrolled in the program use a common language other than spoken English, at least one staff member who uses such language shall be available as an active participant to communicate with such children in classroom and group experiences. Where less than a majority of the children enrolled in the program speak a language different from the rest, one staff member or a community resource person or parent shall be identified to serve as a resource to the program.

005.05F Staff Development Plan. There shall be a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all ~~staff~~ teachers, paraeducators and home visitors working in the program who have regular contact with children and their families. The written plan shall include a professional development goal, the strategies for meeting the goal and a timeline for completion. The written plan shall be reviewed and updated annually.

005.05G Staff Development Hours. Teachers, ~~and~~ paraeducators and home visitors who have regular contact with children in early childhood programs shall participate annually in at least ~~twelve (12)~~ fifteen (15) clock hours ~~annually~~ of Early Childhood Training Center approved staff development ~~related to prekindergarten or child development~~. All staff development shall relate to prekindergarten or child development.

005.05H Background checks. Program staff who are not required to hold a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children shall be checked by program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry, before being hired. No person who appears on either Registry may be hired as staff or remain employed on staff.

005.06 Child/Staff Ratio and Group Size. Child/staff ratios and group sizes shall be maintained as indicated below with staff assigned who meet the qualifications described in Section 005.06. When age groups are mixed, the lower ratio shall prevail.

005.06A If the program serves infants, at least one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional certificated teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each four (4) children with a maximum group size of eight (8).

005.06B If the program serves toddlers, at least one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional certificated teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each six (6) children with a maximum group size of twelve (12).

005.06C If the program serves preschoolers, at least one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate for each group of twenty (20) children. A paraeducator or an additional certificated teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each ten (10) children with a maximum group size of twenty (20).

005.06D In full-day programs where children nap, the certified teacher may be out of the classroom during the nap period as long as the children are adequately supervised by other staff and the teacher is readily available.

005.07 Facilities, Equipment, Health and Safety

005.07A Classroom settings shall provide at least thirty-five (35) square feet per child of space usable by the children.

005.07B An outdoor play area that is protected by fences or physical barriers shall be available which provides at least seventy-five (75) square feet per child of play space.

005.07B1 The fence or physical barrier shall be of a type of structure that is a continuous barrier and is at least 36 inches in height, flush with the ground, and without any gaps that would allow a child to exit the protected area.

005.07C Each classroom setting and outdoor play area shall be equipped with safe, durable, age-appropriate equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor activities.

005.07D If needed, modifications of the equipment, materials, and activities shall be made to assure maximum participation in the ongoing activities of the program for children with disabilities attending the program.

005.07E Equipment and materials shall be organized into clearly defined areas of interest that are arranged to encourage independent choice; cooperative activity; and alteration between quiet and active exploration and teacher-and child-initiated activities.

005.07F Each prekindergarten program shall maintain safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the facilities used for the program and on the outdoor playground and meet applicable fire, safety, and health codes.

005.07G At least one (1) staff member per class who has received first aid and CPR training specifically designed for children shall be on duty with the children at all times. Written verification of current training shall be available.

005.08 Meals and/or Snacks. The program shall provide all children in each class at least one meal and/or snack that meets USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines each day. All tables used for meals and snack shall be properly sanitized.

005.09 Immunizations. The school district shall comply with all state statutes and regulations regarding the immunization status of all enrolled children.

005.10 Supervision. Adequate and appropriate supervision shall be provided at all times children are in attendance, including during outdoor play and field trips. Adequate and appropriate supervision includes, but is not limited to, knowing the whereabouts and being within sight or sound of children at all times.

005.11 Toileting. The program shall ensure the toileting needs of all children are met immediately. The program shall ensure wet and/or soiled clothing is changed immediately.

005.12 Infants and Toddlers. Programs serving children birth to age 3 shall meet the following requirements:

005.12A The physical, emotional and social needs of infants and toddlers shall be met consistently and promptly;

005.12B Formula and feeding schedules shall be obtained from parents;

005.12C Infants shall not sleep with bottles;

005.12D Bottles shall not be propped;

005.12E If formula is used, it shall be a commercially made product;

005.12F All breast milk and prepared formula shall be refrigerated and clearly labeled with the child's name and discard date; and unused prepared formula shall be discarded as indicated by the label;

005.12G Unfrozen breast milk shall be discarded 48 hours after being expressed; and frozen breastmilk shall be discarded three months after being expressed;

005.12H Only highchairs with three point safety straps shall be used;

005.12I Infants shall be placed on their backs to sleep except in cases where there is a medical reason the child shall not sleep on its back; and written verification of the medical reason from the child's physician shall be available;

005.12J Wet or soiled diapers shall be changed immediately and disposed of in a sanitary manner;

005.12K Individual cleaning cloths shall be used for diapering;

005.12L Diaper changing surfaces shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use and staff shall use proper hand washing techniques after each diaper change;

005.12M Toileting shall be done in a manner agreed upon with the parent;

005.12N Potty chairs shall be cleaned, disinfected, and properly stored away from play areas;

005.12O All cribs and playpens shall meet federal safety standards as indicated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission; and

005.12P All cribs and playpens shall not contain any soft objects, bumper pads, toys or loose bedding.

005.13 Sixpence Programs. School districts that receive Early Childhood Endowment birth to three grants, also referred to as Sixpence programs, may be required to meet additional grant-related program requirements established by the Endowment Board of Trustees.

006 Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Home -Based Program (Does not apply to or include special education services in the home under Rule 51 and Rule 52 (92 NAC 51 and 52).

006.01 Contact Hours in Home-Based Programs. Program staff shall have contact with each enrolled family at least three (3) times each month ~~for~~ and a minimum total of 180 minutes per month. A minimum of 120 minutes shall be face- to- face contact with the family. Contact may be completed by the home visiting specialist or the home visitor. If a school district or educational service unit contracts with another organization to provide early childhood services, the district or ESU shall ensure the adequate number of hours are provided as required in this Subsection.

006.02 Family Development and Support. Each home-base prekindergarten program shall include the following, as a minimum:

006.02A Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures;

006.02B An orientation to the program for families; and

006.02C Delivery of services that are based on family needs and interests and that focus on the child's development and positive family outcomes. Services shall be provided year round following a curriculum that meets the requirements of Subsection 006.03 of this Chapter.

006.03 Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment in Home-Based Prekindergarten Programs. Each home-based prekindergarten program shall provide curricula that are research-based and designed to work with families that facilitate the optimal growth and development of children, and that are culturally appropriate for all families served. The program shall also include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of families in literacy activities.

006.03A Each program shall have a written program plan that shall include a description of program curriculum, practices and assessments used. This plan must be provided to all parents and be available to the Department upon request.

006.03B Each program will use child assessment (evaluation) practices based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning to meet the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 and the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5. The assessment data shall be used to plan and implement teaching strategies and activities to meet the individual needs of each child and to meet the widely held expectations for all domains including literacy/pre-reading and mathematics. Any formal assessment tools used shall meet accepted standards of reliability and validity. Developmentally appropriate practices shall be implemented for each child. Individualized support shall be provided for children who are not progressing within the widely held expectations for literacy/pre-reading and mathematics.

006.04 Evaluation and Quality Assurance. Each home-based program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department's Office of Early Childhood and will include, but not be limited to the following:

006.04A An assessment of program quality;

006.04B A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress; and

006.04C A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.

006.05 Program Staff. In order to provide home-based services, each home-based program shall use one or more home visiting specialists and may in addition use one or more home visitors who meet the qualifications below:

006.05A Home Visiting Specialist. Any home visiting specialist in a home-based program shall have a bachelor's degree or higher in one of the following areas:

006.05A1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education,

006.05A2 Nursing including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family-centered practices or child and youth development,

006.05A3 Child Development,

006.05A4 Sociology or Psychology including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any area of family-centered practices or child and youth development, or

006.05A5 Social Work including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family- centered practices or child and youth development.

006.054B Home Visitor. ~~Any home visitor assigned to work as a member of the program team shall have received~~ Any home visitor shall have at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas~~, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee~~: (i) Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education; (ii) Nursing, including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development; (iii) Child Development; (iv) Sociology or Psychology, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development; or (v) Social Work, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.

~~006.054B1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education,~~

~~006.054B2 Nursing with additional coursework in Sociology/Psychology and in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development,~~

~~006.054B3 Child Development,~~

~~006.054B4 Sociology or Psychology with additional coursework in the area of family- centered practices or child and youth development, or~~

~~006.054B5 Social Work with additional coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.~~

006.05B1 The program may employ a home visitor who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the home visitor completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment. Equivalencies include, but are not limited to the following:

006.05B1A Holding a current Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

006.05B1B Holding a current Nebraska teaching certificate with a K-6 elementary endorsement shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

006.05B1C Each two (2) years of employment in a program serving children birth through second grade shall be an equivalency for three (3) credit hours of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Four or more years of experience may count for a maximum of six (6) of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement.

006.05B1D Holding a Nebraska Home Visitor certificate shall be equivalent to three (3) semester hours.

006.05B1E Early childhood training hours (including web-based training) provided by or sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood shall count toward the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Fifteen (15) clock hours constitute one (1) semester hour.

~~006.05C The program may use a home visitor who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the home visitor completes a minimum of sic (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of~~

~~employment and meets a full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.~~

006.05C Orientation. All staff working in the home-based program shall be provided with an orientation prior to having direct responsibility for the care and teaching of children or for providing family and development services. The orientation shall include job duties and responsibilities, home visiting safety procedures, information about the state law regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect under Neb. Rev. Stat. 28-711, child assessment information, and information about the importance of family routines and schedules.

006.05D Staff Development Plan. There shall be a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all home visiting specialists and home visitors working in the home-based program who have regular contact with children and their families. The written plan shall include a professional development goal, the strategies for meeting the goal and a timeline for completion. The written plan shall be reviewed and updated annually.

006.05E Staff Development Hours. Home visiting specialists and home visitors who have regular contact with children in early childhood programs shall participate annually in at least fifteen (15) clock hours of Early Childhood Training Center approved staff development. All staff development shall relate to prekindergarten or child development.

006.05F Background checks. Home visiting specialists and home visitors who do not hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children shall be checked by program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry and have a criminal background check before being hired. No person who appears on either Registry or has a criminal history may be hired as staff or remain employed on staff.

007 Early Childhood Education Grants for Prekindergarten Programs for Children Ages Three to Kindergarten Entrance Age. Any school district, individually or in cooperation with other school districts or educational service units, working in cooperation with existing nonpublic programs meeting the requirements for approval in this Chapter may submit an application for an Early Childhood Education Grant for a prekindergarten program for children ages three (3) to kindergarten entrance age that is established by the district and is approved by the Department pursuant to this Chapter. Administrative authority for Early Childhood Education Grants for prekindergarten programs for children from birth to age three (3) (Sixpence Grants) resides with the Early Childhood Education Endowment Board of Trustees.

007.01 Children Who May Be Served With Grant Funds.

007.01A All prekindergarten-age children, ages three (3) to kindergarten entrance age, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, or the social, linguistic, or economic diversity of the children's families are eligible to be served with grant funds awarded as provided in this Chapter.

007.01B Up to thirty percent of the funds granted for each prekindergarten program under this Chapter may be used to offset program costs for children who are not identified in the priorities specified in Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-1103(1)(b),(c),and (d) or who are not supported through any of the funding sources listed in Subsection 004.04 of this Chapter, in order to maximize the participation of children from diverse groups.

007.01C Early Childhood Education Grant funds shall not be used to support the participation of children who are below age three or who are eligible by age to enroll in kindergarten (those who reach age five by July 31 of the current year).

007.02 Grant Application Process.

007.02A Request For Proposals. For years in which grant funds are available, the Department shall issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) for new or expansion grants for programs for children ages three to kindergarten entrance age.

007.02B Forms. Each school district applying for new or expansion grant funding under this Chapter, individually or in cooperation with other school districts or educational service units, shall submit an application on the forms in Appendix B of this Chapter. The application process for continuation grants is established online and requires electronic submission of information identified in Appendix C of this Chapter.

007.02C Applications. Applications shall be rated on the basis of conformance with the requirements of this Chapter.

007.02D Panel. The Commissioner or his or her designee shall appoint a panel of persons knowledgeable in early childhood education to evaluate the applications and to recommend proposals for funding to the Commissioner.

007.02E Commissioner's Recommendation. Application funding recommendations by the Commissioner shall be made at a meeting of the State Board of Education. Upon action by the Board, all applicants shall be notified of the outcome.

007.02F Funding Distribution. Grant funds shall be distributed by the Department using the priorities and limitations specified in Neb. Rev. Stat. §79-1103(1), (b), (c), and (d). The Department shall make an effort to fund programs across the state in both rural and urban areas.

007.03 Grant Funding.

007.03A Each prekindergarten program approved under the provisions of this Chapter shall be eligible to apply for grant funding subject to the following:

007.03A1 Appropriation of the funds by the Legislature.

007.03A2 An annual review of compliance with the requirements of this Chapter and meeting quality indicators using a process designed by the Department.

008 Violations, Probation, or Loss of Program Approval and/or Loss of Grant Funds

008.01 Violations. When the Commissioner or his or her designee determines that the prekindergarten program is in violation of any requirement specified in this Chapter, written notice shall be given to the school district or educational service unit. Any prekindergarten program in violation of any requirements specified in this Chapter shall submit a written plan to the Commissioner or his or her designee describing how violations will be corrected prior to the beginning of the next school year.

008.02 Continued violation of any requirements indicated in this Chapter may result in probation, loss of approval and/or loss of grant funding as described in this Chapter. The Commissioner may, at his or her discretion, make recommendations to the State Board to end or deny program approval and/or grant funding or place a program on probation.

008.03 Recommendations from the Commissioner to the Board to either end or deny program approval pursuant to Sections 004, 005 and 006 or to end grant funding pursuant to Section 007 may be appealed by filing a petition and request for hearing with the State Board of Education pursuant to 92 NAC 61 no later than 15 calendar days after the date of receipt of written notice of the recommendation from the Commissioner or his or her designee. All hearings arising under this Chapter shall be conducted in accordance with the hearing procedures of 92 NAC 61, including provisions of that Chapter relating to evidence.

008.04 When the Commissioner makes a recommendation to the Board to end or deny program approval or end grant funding, notice of the recommendation and of the right to request a hearing shall be given by certified mail returned receipt requested sent at least thirty (30) calendar days prior to the date of the Board meeting at which the recommendation is to be considered. The notice will be sent to the superintendent of the school district or head administrator of the educational service unit responsible for the program. The notice shall specify the basis for the recommendation.

008.05 Upon review of the Commissioner's recommendation and following any hearing, the Board shall make a determination regarding the program's approval or grant funding and shall inform the superintendent of the school district or the head administrator of the educational service unit of the Board's decision in writing by certified mail.

Return to: Nebraska Department of Education
Office of Early Childhood
PO Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509

NDE 24-012
Revised 2/15
Date Due: October 15

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM REPORT
For _____ School Year

District Name/ESU Number:		County District Number:
Address:	City:	Zip Code:
Program Contact:	Title:	
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

PROGRAM OPERATION

☐ **Yes**, this public school district/ESU **does** operate a prekindergarten program in the _____ school year.

*If you checked **yes**, please complete pages 2-10, sign below and return to the NDE Office of Early Childhood at the address above.*

☐ **No**, this public school district/ESU **does not** operate a prekindergarten program in the _____ school year.

*If you checked **no**, please sign below and return this page to the NDE Office of Early Childhood at the address above.*

Signature of District Superintendent/ESU Administrator:	Date:
By signing this you are confirming that this form is completed accurately and to your best knowledge.	

REGULATIONS for PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

004.00
Requirements For All Prekindergarten (Center-based and Home-based) Established By School Boards or Educational Service Units

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**004.01** Stated Purpose. Each program shall have a stated purpose of promoting social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical, and aesthetic development and learning for the children served and of promoting family development and support.
		004.02 Planning. Each program shall have a planning period. The planning period shall include activities associated with:
☐	☐	A Determining the community's unmet needs for early childhood education for prekindergarten children in terms of the number of such children in the community, an estimate of the number of children at risk, kinds of programs available, numbers of children birth to kindergarten entrance age who are not currently receiving services, and barriers to the provision of services.
☐	☐	B Developing cooperative relationships with public and nonpublic providers of early childhood programs, including the development of cooperative agreements and contracts, as needed to carry out the proposed program.
☐	☐	C Recruiting and training staff.
☐	☐	D Identifying and listing existing school-community resources available to provide comprehensive services to the program participants.
☐	☐	**004.03** Advisory Committee. A local Early Childhood Advisory Committee shall be established with membership representing families and community members.
☐	☐	A An existing advisory committee such as that required for services to children below age five (5) with disabilities in Title 92 NAC Chapter 51, a Head Start Policy Council, or a Title I Advisory Committee, may serve this purpose if the representation conforms with this section and the mission is expanded to encompass the purpose of this Chapter. N/A ☐
☐	☐	B Advisory Committee meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act as described in Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-1407 to 84-1414. (Advisory Committee meetings follow the requirements of the Open Meetings Act)
		004.04 Coordination with Existing Programs and Funding Sources. Each program shall develop, and keep on file, a written plan to show that the program will be coordinated or contracted with existing programs and, including those listed in Subsection 004.04A and nonpublic programs which meet the requirements of this Chapter. Each program shall develop and keep on file a written plan to coordinate and use a combination of local, state, and federal funding sources including, but not limited to, those listed in Subsection 004.04A in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups of children and to ensure that participating children and families have access to knowledge of comprehensive services that may be available.
		A For the purposes of Subsection 004.04, existing programs and funding sources are as follows:
☐	☐	A1 Grants provided through the Early Childhood Education Grant Program for children ages three to kindergarten entrance age under Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1103 and the Early Childhood Grant Program for children ages birth to three (Sixpence Grants) under Neb. Rev Stat. 79-1104.02
☐	☐	A2 Programs for children with disabilities below five years of age funded through the Special Education Act, the Early Intervention Act, and funds available through the flexible funding provisions under the Special Education Act.
☐	☐	A3 The federal Head Start or Early Head Start program.
☐	☐	A4 Title I of the federal funds provided through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and subsequent reauthorizations or other appropriate federal legislation.
☐	☐	A5 Child care assistance through the Department of Health and Human Services.
☐	☐	A6 Local district funds.
☐	☐	A7 Funds obtained through contracts with other school districts, such as contracts to provide services to children below age five with disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51.
☐	☐	A8 Private grants and gifts.
☐	☐	A9 Parent fees from the program's locally developed sliding scale.
☐	☐	A10 Nonpublic prekindergarten programs which meet the requirements of Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1104(2) and this Chapter.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**004.05** Fees. Fees charged shall not exceed the actual cost for providing prekindergarten programs. Programs charging fees shall have a plan to use a sliding fee scale in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups. Programs may waive fees on the basis of need. This Subsection does not allow any school district to fail to meet its responsibilities under the Special Education Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. 79-1110 to 79-1167).
☐	☐	**004.06** Program Coordinator. Prekindergarten programs shall be coordinated by a staff member who holds a Nebraska Teaching Certificate with at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education.
☐	☐	**004.07** Program and Staff Requirements. Each center-based part- day or full- day program shall meet program and staff requirements in Section 005 of this Chapter. Each home-based program shall meet the program and staff requirements in Section 006 of this Chapter.
☐	☐	**004.08** Participation and Inclusion. Participation of children and families in any program under this Chapter shall be voluntary. Programs shall not exclude children verified as having disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51 or 52. Programs shall include to the extent possible children of diverse social and economic characteristics.

005.00

Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Center-Based Program

☐		**District does not operate a Center-Based Program. Do not complete 005.01 – 005.13**
Yes	**No**	
☐	☐	**005.01** Instructional Hours. Each class in the program shall operate a minimum of twelve (12) instructional hours per week during the school year. Programs receiving grant funds pursuant this Chapter or receiving Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA) funds shall operate a minimum of four hundred and fifty (450) instructional hours per school year.

Early Childhood (Pre-Kindergarten) instructional program hours are being collected through the Consolidated Data Collection (CDC). Districts must indicate the total number of hours per week and per year for each classroom group of children.

Yes	No	
		005.02 Family Development and Support. Each center-based part- day or full- day prekindergarten program shall provide a strong family development and support component which recognizes the central role of parents in their children's development and establishes a working partnership with each parent. The family development and support component shall include, as a minimum:
☐	☐	**A** Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures.
☐	☐	**B** An orientation to the program for children and families.
☐	☐	**C** At least two (2) home visits per year between the parent(s) and the teacher to discuss the child's development and learning. If the family decides to have the visit at another location other than the home, it must be conducted at a location determined jointly by the family and teacher.
☐	☐	**D** Specified opportunities for program staff to dialogue with families through such activities as parent conferences, participation on advisory committees, needs assessments, participation as classroom volunteers, and flexible scheduling of meetings and events.
☐	☐	**E** Services based on the family's needs and interests that include but are not limited to, components that will enhance parent skills and the family's ability to access community resources.
☐	☐	**005.03** Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment. The part- day or full- day center- based prekindergarten program shall provide a play-oriented learning environment, which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials.
☐	☐	**A** A written program plan shall be developed to explain and implement the program. The written program plan shall include a description of how the program curriculum, practices, and assessment provide a variety of developmentally appropriate, experiential activities which:
☐	☐	**A1** Promote a positive self-concept in each child.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.03	A2 Foster attachments for all children by ensuring they have consistent teachers and paraeducators daily.
☐	☐		A3 Develop social skills in each child.
☐	☐		A4 Encourage each child to think, reason, question, and experiment.
☐	☐		A5 Foster both receptive and expressive language development and provide early literacy experiences.
☐	☐		A6 Incorporate family literacy experiences.
☐	☐		A7 Develop an understanding of quantities of things, of time, and of space.
☐	☐		A8 Enhance each child's physical development and skills.
☐	☐		A9 Encourage sound safety, health, and nutritional practices, including avoidance of controlled substances.
☐	☐		A10 Stimulate each child in creative expression and appreciation of the arts.
☐	☐		A11 Include exploratory play in a language and literacy-rich environment during a majority of the daily schedule.
☐	☐		A12 Reflect and respect the diversity of races, national origins, gender, and physical and mental abilities in the larger society and with particular emphasis on the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children enrolled through planned activities, use of materials, and use of equipment.
☐	☐		A13 Use positive, age-appropriate techniques of child guidance including redirection, anticipation, and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement.
☐	☐		A14 Use child assessment (evaluation) practices based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning. The assessment data is used to plan activities to meet the individual needs of children. Any formal assessment tools used shall meet accepted standards of reliability and validity.
☐	☐		A15 Link the prekindergarten to the district's kindergarten/primary program through a written transition plan insuring continuity, identification, and implementation of processes necessary to facilitate the transition of children. The prekindergarten program shall be included in the district school improvement plan.
☐	☐		A16 Include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of parents in family literacy activities.
☐	☐		A17 Provide at least one outdoor play period (weather permitting) daily.
		005.04	Evaluation and Quality Assurance. The program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department and will include, but not be limited to the following:
☐	☐		A An assessment of program quality.
☐	☐		B A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress.
☐	☐		C A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.
		005.05	Program Staff. The prekindergarten program shall use qualified staff as set forth below.
☐	☐		A Teacher. Any teacher in a prekindergarten program shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with an endorsement in Early Childhood Education (age 3 through Grade 3), Early Childhood Special Education (Birth through Kindergarten), or Early Childhood Inclusive (Birth through Grade 3). A program may employ a teacher without such an endorsement if the teacher files with the Department a plan developed by the teacher and the cooperating college or university to complete the endorsement as part of the annual Early Childhood Program Report. The plan will require the teacher to receive at least six (6) semester hours of credit annually toward completion of the endorsement. When fifty percent (50%) of the required courses have been completed, the teacher is eligible for a provisional endorsement pursuant to 92 NAC 24.

Teacher qualification information is being collected through the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS). Districts must complete a Staff Template and Staff Assignment Template for each teacher. All early childhood teachers must be reported as prekindergarten. For any program employing a teacher not having an early childhood education endorsement, the teacher's plan for and progress toward completion of the endorsement must be submitted yearly to NDE, Office of Early Childhood.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**005.05 B** Paraeducator. A paraeducator assigned to work as a member of a team in a classroom setting shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in child development/early childhood education, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee. Equivalencies include, but are not limited to the following: 1 Holding a current Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. 2 Holding a current Nebraska teaching certificate with a K-6 elementary endorsement shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. N/A ☐ 3 Each two (2) years of employment in a program serving children birth through second grade shall be an equivalency for three (3) credit hours of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. This experience may count for a maximum of six (6) of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. 4 Early childhood training hours (including web-based training) provided by or sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood shall count toward the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Fifteen (15) clock hours constitute one (1) semester hour. 5 The program may employ a paraeducator who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the paraeducator completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

Indicate the total number of paraeducators in the program and indicate how many meet the specified Rule 11 requirement.

	005.05B5 How many paras are in year 1 of employment and are completing 6 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	005.05B5 How many paras that are in year 2 of employment and are completing 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	005.05B5 How many paras have completed 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	Total **Number** (add boxes above) of paraeducators that are in year 1, year 2 and have completed 12 hours are in the district's early childhood program

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**005.05 C** The prekindergarten program may employ a home visitor in a center- based program who provides family development and support services under the direction of a teacher. The home visitor shall have at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas: 1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education; N/A ☐ 2 Nursing, including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development; 3 Child Development; 4 Sociology or Psychology, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development; or 5 Social Work, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.
☐	☐	**D** Orientation. All staff working in the prekindergarten program shall be provided with an orientation prior to having direct responsibility for the care and teaching of children or for providing family and development services. The orientation shall include job duties and responsibilities, building safety procedures, information about the state law regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect, child assessment information, and daily routines and schedules.
☐	☐	**E** Language Resource. If the majority of children enrolled in the program use a common language other than spoken English, at least one staff member who uses such language shall be available as an active participant to communicate with such children in classroom and group experiences. Where less than a majority of the children enrolled in the program speak a language different from the rest, one staff member or a community resource person or parent shall be identified to serve as a resource to the program. N/A ☐

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.05	F Staff Development Plan. There shall be a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all staff working in the program who have regular contact with children and their families.
☐	☐		G Staff Development Hours. Teachers and paraeducators who have regular contact with children in early childhood programs shall participate in at least twelve (12) clock hours annually of staff development related to prekindergarten or child development.
☐	☐		H Background checks. Program staff who are not required to hold a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children shall be checked by program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry before being hired.
		005.06	Child/Staff Ratio and Group Size. Child/staff ratios and group sizes shall be maintained as indicated below with staff assigned who meet the qualifications described in Section 005.06. When age groups are mixed, the lower ratio shall prevail.
☐	☐	N/A ☐	A If the program serves infants, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each four (4) children with a maximum group size of eight (8). (See definition of infant)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	B If the program serves toddlers, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each six (6) children with a maximum group size of twelve (12). (See definition of toddler)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	C If the program serves preschoolers, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate for each group of twenty (20) children. A paraeducator or additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each ten (10) children with a maximum group size of twenty (20). (See definition of preschooler)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	D In full- day programs where children nap, the certified teacher may be out of the classroom during the nap period as long as the children are adequately supervised by other staff and the teacher is readily available.
		005.07	Facilities, Equipment, Health and Safety.
☐	☐		A Classroom settings shall provide at least thirty-five (35) square feet per child of space usable by the children.
☐	☐		B An outdoor play area that is protected by fences or physical barriers shall be available which provides at least seventy-five (75) square feet per child of play space.
☐	☐		B1 The fence or physical barrier shall be of a type of structure that is a continuous barrier and is at least 36 inches in height, flush with the ground, and without any gaps that would allow a child to exit the protected area.
☐	☐		C Each classroom setting and outdoor play area shall be equipped with safe, durable, age-appropriate equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor activities.
☐	☐		D If needed, modifications of the equipment, materials, and activities shall be made to assure maximum participation in the ongoing activities of the program for children with disabilities attending the program.
☐	☐		E Equipment and materials shall be organized into clearly defined areas of interest that are arranged to encourage independent choice; cooperative activity; and alteration between quiet and active exploration and teacher-and child-initiated activities.
☐	☐		F Each prekindergarten program shall maintain safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the facilities used for the program and on the outdoor playground and meet applicable fire, safety, and health codes.
☐	☐		G At least one (1) staff member per class who has received first aid and CPR training specifically designed for children shall be on duty at all times. Written verification of current training shall be available.
☐	☐	005.08	Meals and/or Snacks. The program shall provide each class at least one meal and/or snack that meets USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines each day. All tables used for meals and snack shall be properly sanitized.
☐	☐	005.09	Immunizations. The school district shall comply with all state statutes and regulations regarding the immunization status of all enrolled children.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.10	Supervision. Adequate and appropriate supervision shall be provided at all times children are in

		attendance, including during outdoor play and field trips. Adequate and appropriate supervision includes, but is not limited to, knowing the whereabouts and being within sight or sound of children at all times.
☐	☐	**005.11** Toileting. The program shall ensure the toileting needs of all children are met immediately. The program shall ensure wet and/or soiled clothing is changed immediately.

	☐	**District does not operate an infant and toddler program. Do not complete 005.12 – 005.12P**
Yes	**No**	
		005.12 Infants and Toddlers. Programs serving children birth to age 3 shall meet the following requirements:
☐	☐	**A** The physical, emotional and social needs of infants and toddlers shall be met consistently and promptly;
☐	☐	**B** Formula and feeding schedules shall be obtained from parents;
☐	☐	**C** Infants shall not sleep with bottles;
☐	☐	**D** Bottles shall not be propped;
☐	☐	**E** If formula is used, it shall be a commercially made product;
☐	☐	**F** All breast milk and prepared formula shall be refrigerated and clearly labeled with the child's name; and unused prepared formula shall be discarded as indicated by the label;
☐	☐	**G** Unfrozen breast milk shall be discarded after 48 hours; and frozen breastmilk shall be discarded after three months;
☐	☐	**H** Only highchairs with three point safety straps shall be used;
☐	☐	**I** Infants shall be placed on their backs to sleep except in cases where there is a medical reason the child shall not sleep on its back, and written verification of the medical reason from the child's physician shall be available;
☐	☐	**J** Wet or soiled diapers shall be changed immediately and disposed of in a sanitary manner;
☐	☐	**K** Individual cleaning cloths shall be used for diapering;
☐	☐	**L** Diaper changing surfaces shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use and staff shall use proper hand washing techniques after each diaper change;
☐	☐	**M** Toileting shall be done in a manner agreed upon with the parent;
☐	☐	**N** Potty chairs shall be cleaned, disinfected, and properly stored away from play areas;
☐	☐	**O** All cribs and playpens shall meet federal safety standards as indicated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission; and
☐	☐	**P** All cribs and playpens shall not contain any soft objects, bumper pads, toys or loose bedding.

	☐	**District does not operate a Sixpence program. Do not complete 005.13**
Yes	**No**	
☐	☐	**005.13** Sixpence Programs. School districts that receive Early Childhood Endowment birth to three grants, also referred to as Sixpence programs, may be required to meet additional grant related program requirements established by the Endowment Board of Trustees. (District meets Sixpence Requirements)

006.00
Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Home-Based Program
(Do not complete for Home-Based Early Childhood Special Education)

	District does not operate a Home-Based Program. Do not complete 006.00 – 006.05C
☐	

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**006.01** Contact Hours in Home-Based Programs. Program staff shall have contact with each enrolled family at least three (3) times each month for a minimum total of 180 minutes. A minimum of 120 minutes shall be face- to- face contact with the family. Contact may be completed by the home visiting specialist or the home visitor. If a school district or educational service unit contracts with another organization to provide early childhood services, the district or ESU shall ensure the adequate number of hours are provided as required in this subsection.
		006.02 Family Development and Support. Each home-based prekindergarten program shall include the following, as a minimum:
☐	☐	**A** Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures;
☐	☐	**B** An orientation to the program for families; and
☐	☐	**C** Delivery of services that are based on family needs and interests and that focus on the child's development and positive family outcomes. Services shall be provided year round following a curriculum that meets the requirements of subsection 006.05
☐	☐	**006.03** Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment in Home-Based Prekindergarten Programs. Each home-based prekindergarten program shall provide curricula that are researched-based and designed to work with families that facilitate the optimal growth and development of children and that are culturally appropriate for all families served. The program shall also include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of families in literacy activities.
☐	☐	**A** Each program shall have a written program plan that shall include a description of program curriculum, practices and assessments used. This plan must be provided to all parents and be available to the Department upon request.
		006.04 Evaluation and Quality Assurance. Each home- based program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department's Office of Early Childhood and will include, but not be limited to the following:
☐	☐	**A** An assessment of program quality;
☐	☐	**B** A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress; and
☐	☐	**C** A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.
		006.05 Program Staff. In order to provide home-based services, each home-based program shall use one or more home visitor specialists and may in addition use one or more home visitors who meet the qualifications below:
☐	☐	**A** Home Visiting Specialist. Any home visitor specialist in a home-based program shall have a bachelor's degree or higher in one of the following areas: **1** Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education, **2** Nursing including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development, **3** Child Development, **4** Sociology or Psychology including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any area of family- centered practices or child and youth development, or **5** Social Work including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family- centered practices, or child and youth development.

Yes	No

☐	☐	N/A ☐ **B** Home Visitor. Any home visitor assigned to work as a member of the program team shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee: 1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education, 2 Nursing with additional coursework in Sociology/Psychology and in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development, 3 Child Development, 4 Sociology or Psychology with additional coursework in the area of family- centered practices or child and youth development, or 5 Social Work with additional coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.
		C The program may employ a home visitor who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the home visitor completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets a full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

Indicate the total number of home visitor in the program and indicate how many meet the specified Rule 11 requirement.

	006.05C How many home visitors are in year 1 of employment and are completing 6 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	006.05C How many home visitors that are in year 2 of employment and are completing 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	006.05C How many home visitors have completed 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
	Total Number (add boxes above) of home visitors that are in year 1, year 2 and have completed 12 hours are in the district's early childhood program

Enrollment Information
This data is used for state aid calculations.

Child enrollment information is being collected through the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS). Districts must complete a Student Template and Program Fact Template for each student participating in an early childhood program.

All children birth to kindergarten entrance age served by the district must be included in NSSRS.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	All children enrolled in the program are below the age of kindergarten entrance eligibility.
If no, please explain		

How many classes of children does your district serve?	**Part-Day (Less than 6 hours)**	**Full Day (6 hours or more)**

Class means a group of children who are receiving early childhood services in a classroom for a specific time period established by the school district or educational service unit.

Note: For any regulation checked no, please provide information below that describes in detail the plan for correcting the Rule 11 violations and making the necessary changes. Attach documentation as necessary.

Regulation Number	Areas of noncompliance and plan for making corrections in progress

Return to: Nebraska Department of Education
Office of Early Childhood
PO Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509

NDE: 24-012
Revised: 10/17
Date Due: October 15

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAM REPORT
For _____ School Year

District Name/ESU Number:		County District Number:
_____		_____
Address:	**City:**	**Zip Code:**
_____	_____	_____

Program Contact:	Title:
_____	_____
Telephone Number:	**E-mail Address:**
_____	_____

Program Coordinator:	Title:
_____	_____
Telephone Number:	**E-mail Address:**
_____	_____

PROGRAM OPERATION

☐ **Yes**, this public school district/ESU **does** operate a prekindergarten program in the _____ school year.

*If you checked **yes**, please complete pages 2-11, sign below and return pages 1-3 to the NDE Office of Early Childhood at the address provided.*

☐ **No**, this public school district/ESU **does not** operate a prekindergarten program in the _____ school year.

*If you checked **no**, please sign below and return this page only to the NDE Office of Early Childhood at the address provided.*

Signature of District Superintendent/ESU Administrator:	Date:
By signing this you are confirming that this form is completed accurately and to your best knowledge.	_____

For definitions refer to the definitions section of Rule 11 (002.00).

Please check yes or no for each program type.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	**Center-Based Preschool Program**	Does this public school/ESU operate a center-based preschool program?
☐	☐	**Center-Based Infant-Toddler Program**	Does this public school/ESU operate a center-based infant-toddler program?
☐	☐	**Sixpence Program**	Does this public school/ESU operate a Sixpence prekindergarten program?
☐	☐	**Home-based Program**	Does this public school/ESU operate a home-based prekindergarten program serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age?
☐	☐	**Childcare**	Does this public school/ESU operate childcare?

How many classes of children does your district serve?	**Total Part-Day (Less than 6 hours)**	**Total Full-Day (6 hours or more)**
	____	____

***Class** means a group of children who are receiving early childhood services in a classroom for a specific time period established by the school district or educational service unit.*

Example: A district operates a morning part-day class and afternoon part-day class in the same classroom = **2 Total Part-Day Classes**

Please check yes or no for each regulation.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	**004.04**	Coordination with Existing Programs and Funding Sources. Each program shall develop, and keep on file, a written plan to show that the program will be coordinated or contracted with existing programs, including those listed in Subsection 004.04A and nonpublic programs which meet the requirements of this Chapter. Each program shall develop and keep on file a written plan to coordinate and use a combination of local, state, and federal funding sources including, but not limited to, those listed in Subsection 004.04A in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups of children and to ensure that participating children and families have access to knowledge of comprehensive services that may be available.
			A For the purposes of Subsection 004.04, existing programs and funding sources are as follows:
☐	☐		**A1** Grants provided through the Early Childhood Education Grant Program for children ages three to kindergarten entrance age under Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1103 and the Early Childhood Grant Program for children ages birth to three (Sixpence Grants) under Neb. Rev Stat. § 79-1104.02
☐	☐		**A2** Programs for children with disabilities below five years of age funded through the Special Education Act, the Early Intervention Act, and funds available through the flexible funding provisions under the Special Education Act.
☐	☐		**A3** The federal Head Start or Early Head Start program.
☐	☐		**A4** Title I of the federal funds provided through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and subsequent reauthorizations or other appropriate federal legislation.
☐	☐		**A5** Child care assistance through the Department of Health and Human Services.
☐	☐		**A6** Local district funds.
☐	☐		**A7** Funds obtained through contracts with other school districts, such as contracts to provide services to children below age five with disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51.
☐	☐		**A8** Private grants and gifts.
☐	☐		**A9** Parent fees from the program's locally-developed sliding scale.
☐	☐		**A10** Nonpublic prekindergarten programs which meet the requirements of Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1104(2) and this Chapter.

Complete the Supplemental Regulation Checklist (pages 4-11), then answer the question below based on it.

☐ **Yes,** this public school district/ESU **does** meet all regulations required by Rule 11.
If check yes, keep completed supplemental regulation checklist (pages 4-11) on file.

☐ **No,** this public school district/ESU **does not** meet all regulations required by Rule 11.
*If you checked **no**, complete the chart listed below. Keep completed supplemental regulation checklist (pages 4-11) on file.*

Note: For any regulation checked NO, on the supplemental regulation checklist, please identify the regulation and provide information below that describes in detail the plan for correcting the Rule 11 violations and making the necessary changes. Attach documentation as necessary. ***Failure to provide a detailed plan will result in a noncompliance letter.***

Regulation Number	Areas of noncompliance and plan for making corrections in progress

SUPPLEMENTAL REGULATION CHECKLIST for PREKINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS

004.00
Requirements For All Prekindergarten (Center-based and Home-based) Established By School Boards or Educational Service Units

Yes	No		
☐	☐	004.01	Stated Purpose. Each program shall have a stated purpose of promoting social, emotional, intellectual, language, physical, and aesthetic development and learning for the children served and of promoting family development and support.
		004.02	Planning. Each program shall have a planning period. The planning period shall include activities associated with:
☐	☐		A Determining the community's unmet needs for early childhood education for prekindergarten children in terms of the number of such children in the community, an estimate of the number of children at risk, kinds of programs available, numbers of children birth to kindergarten entrance age who are not currently receiving services, and barriers to the provision of services.
☐	☐		B Developing cooperative relationships with public and nonpublic providers of early childhood programs, including the development of cooperative agreements and contracts, as needed to carry out the proposed program.
☐	☐		C Recruiting and training staff.
☐	☐		D Identifying and listing existing school-community resources available to provide comprehensive services to the program participants.
☐	☐	004.03	Advisory Committee. A local Early Childhood Advisory Committee shall be established with membership representing families and community members.
☐	☐	N/A ☐	A An existing advisory committee such as that required for services to children below age five (5) with disabilities in Title 92 NAC Chapter 51, a Head Start Policy Council, or a Title I Advisory Committee, may serve this purpose if the representation conforms with this section and the mission is expanded to encompass the purpose of this Chapter.
☐	☐		B Advisory Committee meetings are subject to the Open Meetings Act as described in Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-1407 to 84-1414. (Advisory Committee meetings follow the requirements of the Open Meetings Act)
☐	☐	004.05 N/A ☐	Fees. Fees if charged shall not exceed the actual cost for providing prekindergarten programs. Programs charging fees shall have a plan to use a sliding fee scale in order to maximize the participation of economically and categorically diverse groups. Programs may waive fees on the basis of need. This Subsection does not allow any school district to fail to meet its responsibilities under the Special Education Act (Neb. Rev. Stat. § 79-1110 to § 79-1167).
☐	☐	004.06	Program Coordinator. Prekindergarten programs shall be coordinated by either a district staff member or an employee of an agency with whom the district has a partnership agreement who holds a current Nebraska Teaching Certificate with at least 9 college credit hours in early childhood education and has the authority and responsibility to ensure compliance of Rule 11.
☐	☐	004.07	Program and Staff Requirements. All teachers and administrators in prekindergarten programs established by the Department pursuant to 92 NAC 21. Each center-based part-day or full-day program shall meet program and staff requirements in Section 005 of this Chapter. Each home-based program shall meet the program and staff requirements in Section 006 of this Chapter.
☐	☐	004.08	Participation and Inclusion. Participation of children and families in any program under this Chapter shall be voluntary. Programs shall not exclude children verified as having disabilities pursuant to 92 NAC 51 or 52. Programs including children verified as having disabilities shall also comply with 92 NAC 51 and/or 52. Programs shall include to the extent possible children of diverse social and economic characteristics.
☐	☐	004.08	A Birth Certificates. Within 30 days of enrollment, parents or guardians must submit to the district a certified copy of the child's birth certificate or other documentation in compliance with the Missing Children's Identification Act Neb. Rev. Stat. 43-2001 through 43-2012.

005.00
Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Center-Based Program
(Also referred to as: Prekindergarten, PK program, Preschool, Childcare, etc.)

Yes	No		
☐	☐		**Does the District/ESU operate a Center-Based Program?** **If marked NO, do not complete 005.01 – 005.13, proceed to section 006.00 on page 10.**
☐	☐	005.01	Instructional Hours. Each class in the program shall operate a minimum of twelve (12) instructional hours per week during the school year. Programs receiving grant funds pursuant this Chapter or receiving Tax Equity and Educational Opportunities Support Act (TEEOSA) funds shall operate a minimum of four hundred and fifty (450) instructional hours per school year.
☐	☐	005.01 A	Pursuant to the provisions of 79-213 R.R.S., school systems unable to meet the minimums for instructional hours due to epidemic sickness, severe storm conditions, or destruction of the school house may request permission from the Board to offer fewer than the minimum hours by submitting an affidavit sworn to by the secretary of the school board and explaining the circumstances resulting in the request.

Early Childhood (Prekindergarten) instructional program hours are being collected through the Consolidated Data Collection (CDC). Districts must indicate the total number of hours per week and per year for each classroom group of children.

Yes	No		
		005.02	Family Development and Support. Each center-based part-day or full-day prekindergarten program shall provide a strong family development and support component which recognizes the central role of parents in their children's development and establishes a working partnership with each parent. The family development and support component shall include, as a minimum:
☐	☐	A	Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures.
☐	☐	B	An orientation to the program for children and families.
☐	☐	C	At least two (2) home visits per year between the parent(s) and the teacher to discuss the child's development and learning. If the family decides to have the visit at a location other than the home, it must be conducted at a location determined jointly by the family and teacher. The child's home shall always be the preferred option.
☐	☐	D	Specified opportunities for program staff to dialogue with families through such activities as parent conferences, participation on advisory committees, needs assessments, participation as classroom volunteers, and flexible scheduling of meetings and events.
☐	☐	E	Services based on the family's needs and interests that include but are not limited to, components that will enhance parenting skills and the family's ability to access community resources.
☐	☐	005.03	Developmentally and Culturally Appropriate Curriculum, Practices, and Assessment. The part-day or full-day center-based prekindergarten program shall provide a play-oriented learning environment, which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials.
☐	☐	A	A written program plan shall be developed to explain and implement the program. The written program plan shall include a description of how the program curriculum, practices, and assessment provide a variety of developmentally appropriate, experiential activities which:
☐	☐	A1	Promote a positive self-concept in each child.
☐	☐	005.03 A2	Foster attachments for all children by ensuring they have consistent teachers and paraeducators daily.
☐	☐	A3	Develop social skills in each child.
☐	☐	A4	Encourage each child to think, reason, question, and experiment.
☐	☐	A5	Foster both receptive and expressive language development and provide early literacy/pre-reading experiences.
☐	☐	A6	Incorporate family literacy experiences.
☐	☐	A7	Develop an understanding of mathematical concepts including quantities of things, of time, and of space.
☐	☐	A8	Enhance each child's physical development and skills.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**A9** Encourage sound safety, health, and nutritional practices, including avoidance of controlled substances.
☐	☐	**A10** Stimulate each child in creative expression and appreciation of the arts.
☐	☐	**A11** Include exploratory play in a language and literacy-rich environment during a majority of the daily schedule.
☐	☐	**A12** Reflect and respect the diversity of races, national origins, gender, and physical and mental abilities in the larger society and with particular emphasis on the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children enrolled through planned activities, use of materials, and use of equipment.
☐	☐	**A13** Use positive, age-appropriate techniques of child guidance including redirection, anticipation, and elimination of potential problems, and encouragement.
☐	☐	**A14** Use child assessment (evaluation) practices based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning to meet the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines. The assessment data shall be used to plan and implement teaching strategies and activities to meet the individual needs of each child and to meet the widely held expectations for all domains including literacy/pre-reading and mathematics. Any formal assessment tools used shall meet accepted standards of reliability and validity. Developmentally appropriate practices shall be implemented for all children. Individualized support shall be provided for children who are not progressing within the widely held expectations for literacy/pre-reading and mathematics.
☐	☐	**A15** Link the prekindergarten to the district's kindergarten/primary program through a written transition plan insuring continuity, identification, and implementation of processes necessary to facilitate the transition of children. The prekindergarten program shall be included in the district school improvement plan.
☐	☐	**A16** Include a well-defined language development and early literacy emphasis, including the involvement of parents in family literacy activities.
☐	☐	**A17** Provide at least one outdoor play period (weather permitting) daily.
		005.04 Evaluation and Quality Assurance. The program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department and will include, but not be limited to the following:
☐	☐	**A** An assessment of program quality.
☐	☐	**B** A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress.
☐	☐	**C** A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.
		005.05 Program Staff. The prekindergarten program shall use qualified staff as set forth below.
☐	☐	**A** Teacher. Any teacher in a prekindergarten program shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate with one of the following endorsements: Early Childhood Special Education (Birth through Kindergarten), Early Childhood Inclusive (Birth through Grade 3), or Early Childhood Education (age 3 through Grade 3). The Early Childhood Education (age 3 through Grade 3) endorsement shall not be valid for teaching children below age 3. A program may use a teacher without such an endorsement if the teacher files with the Department, as part of the annual Early Childhood Program Report, a plan developed by the teacher and the cooperating college or university to complete the endorsement. The plan will require the teacher to receive at least six (6) semester hours of credit annually toward completion of the endorsement. When fifty percent (50%) of the required courses have been completed, the teacher is eligible for a provisional endorsement pursuant to 92 NAC 24.

Teacher qualification information is being collected through the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS). Districts must complete a Staff Template and Staff Assignment Template for each teacher. All early childhood teachers must be reported as prekindergarten. For any program employing a teacher not having an early childhood education endorsement, the teacher's plan for and progress toward completion of the endorsement must be submitted yearly to NDE, Office of Early Childhood.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.05 N/A ☐	**B** Paraeducator. A paraeducator assigned to work as a member of a team in a classroom setting shall have received at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in child development/early childhood education, or the equivalent in prior training or experience as determined by the Commissioner or his or her designee. Equivalencies include, but are not limited to the following: **1** Holding a current Child Development Associate Credential issued by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C. shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. **2** Holding a current Nebraska teaching certificate with a K-6 elementary endorsement shall be an equivalent for the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. **3** Each two (2) years of employment in a program serving children birth through second grade shall be an equivalency for three (3) credit hours of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Four or more years of experience may count for a maximum of six (6) of the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. **4** Early childhood training hours (including web-based training) provided by or sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Early Childhood shall count toward the twelve (12) semester hour requirement. Fifteen (15) clock hours constitute one (1) semester hour. **5** The program may employ a paraeducator who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the paraeducator completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

Indicate the total number of paraeducators in the program and indicate how many meet the specified Rule 11 requirement.

____	005.05B5 **How many paras** are in year 1 of employment and are completing 6 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
____	005.05B5 **How many paras** that are in year 2 of employment and are completing 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
____	005.05B5 **How many paras** have completed 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
____	Total **Number** (add boxes above) of paraeducators that are in the district's early childhood program. (year 1, year 2 and have completed 12 hours)

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.05 N/A ☐	**C** Home Visitor. The prekindergarten program may employ a home visitor in a center-based program who provides family development and support services under the direction of a teacher. The home visitor shall have at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas: i. Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education; ii. Nursing, including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development; iii. Child Development; iv. Sociology or Psychology, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development; or v. Social Work, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.
		005.05	**C1** The program may employ a home visitor who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the home visitor completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.
☐	☐		**D** Orientation. All staff working in the prekindergarten program shall be provided with an orientation prior to having direct responsibility for the care and teaching of children or for providing family and development services. The orientation shall include job duties and responsibilities, building safety procedures, information about the state law regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect under Neb. Rev. Stat. 28-711, child assessment information, and daily routines and schedules.
☐	☐	N/A ☐	**E** Language Resource. If the majority of children enrolled in the program use a common language other than spoken English, at least one staff member who uses such language shall be available as an active participant to communicate with such children in classroom and group experiences. Where less than a majority of the children enrolled in the program speak a language different from the rest, one staff member or a community resource person or parent shall be identified to serve as a resource to the program.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.05	F Staff Development Plan. There shall be a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all teachers, paraeducators and home visitors working in the program who have regular contact with children and their families. The written plan shall include a professional development goal, the strategies for meeting the goal and a timeline for completion. The written plan shall be reviewed and updated annually.
☐	☐		G Staff Development Hours. Teachers, paraeducators and home visitors who have regular contact with children in early childhood programs shall participate annually in at least fifteen (15) clock hours of Early Childhood Training Center approved staff development. All staff development shall relate to prekindergarten or child development.
☐	☐		H Background checks. Program staff who are not required to hold a Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children shall be checked by program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry before being hired. No person who appears on either Registry may be hired as staff or remain employed on staff.
		005.06	Child/Staff Ratio and Group Size. Child/staff ratios and group sizes shall be maintained as indicated below with staff assigned who meet the qualifications described in Section 005.06. When age groups are mixed, the lower ratio shall prevail.
☐	☐	N/A ☐	A If the program serves infants, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each four (4) children with a maximum group size of eight (8). (See definition of infant)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	B If the program serves toddlers, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate. A paraeducator or an additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each six (6) children with a maximum group size of twelve (12). (See definition of toddler)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	C If the program serves preschoolers, one (1) staff member in the classroom setting shall hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate for each group of twenty (20) children. A paraeducator or additional teacher shall be assigned to assure a ratio of at least one (1) adult for each ten (10) children with a maximum group size of twenty (20). (See definition of preschooler)
☐	☐	N/A ☐	D In full-day programs where children nap, the certified teacher may be out of the classroom during the nap period as long as the children are adequately supervised by other staff and the teacher is readily available.
		005.07	Facilities, Equipment, Health and Safety.
☐	☐		A Classroom settings shall provide at least thirty-five (35) square feet per child of space usable by the children.
☐	☐		B An outdoor play area that is protected by fences or physical barriers shall be available which provides at least seventy-five (75) square feet per child of play space.
☐	☐		B1 The fence or physical barrier shall be of a type of structure that is a continuous barrier and is at least 36 inches in height, flush with the ground, and without any gaps that would allow a child to exit the protected area.
☐	☐		C Each classroom setting and outdoor play area shall be equipped with safe, durable, age-appropriate equipment and materials for indoor and outdoor activities.
☐	☐		D If needed, modifications of the equipment, materials, and activities shall be made to assure maximum participation in the ongoing activities of the program for children with disabilities attending the program.
☐	☐		E Equipment and materials shall be organized into clearly defined areas of interest that are arranged to encourage independent choice; cooperative activity; and alteration between quiet and active exploration and teacher-and child-initiated activities.
☐	☐		F Each prekindergarten program shall maintain safe, healthful, and sanitary conditions within the facilities used for the program and on the outdoor playground and meet applicable fire, safety, and health codes.
☐	☐		G At least one (1) staff member per class who has received first aid and CPR training specifically designed for children shall be on duty with the children at all times. Written verification of current training shall be available.
☐	☐	005.08	Meals and/or Snacks. The program shall provide all children in each class at least one meal and/or snack that meets USDA Child Nutrition Program guidelines each day. All tables used for meals and snack shall be properly sanitized.
☐	☐	005.09	Immunizations. The school district shall comply with all state statutes and regulations regarding the immunization status of all enrolled children.

Yes	No		
☐	☐	005.10	Supervision. Adequate and appropriate supervision shall be provided at all times children are in attendance, including during outdoor play and field trips. Adequate and appropriate supervision includes, but is not limited to, knowing the whereabouts and being within sight or sound of children at all times.
☐	☐	005.11	Toileting. The program shall ensure the toileting needs of all children are met immediately. The program shall ensure wet and/or soiled clothing is changed immediately.

Enrollment Information

This data is used for state aid calculations.

Child enrollment information is being collected through the Nebraska Student and Staff Record System (NSSRS). Districts must complete a Student Template and Early Childhood Programs Fact Template for each student participating in an early childhood program.

All children birth to kindergarten entrance age served by the district must be included in NSSRS.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	All children enrolled in the program are below the age of kindergarten entrance eligibility.
If no, please explain		_____

Yes	No		
☐	☐	**Does the District/ESU operate an infant and toddler program? If marked NO, do not complete 005.12 – 005.12P**	
		005.12	Infants and Toddlers. Programs serving children birth to age 3 shall meet the following requirements:
☐	☐	A	The physical, emotional and social needs of infants and toddlers shall be met consistently and promptly;
☐	☐	B	Formula and feeding schedules shall be obtained from parents;
☐	☐	C	Infants shall not sleep with bottles;
☐	☐	D	Bottles shall not be propped;
☐	☐	E	If formula is used, it shall be a commercially made product;
☐	☐	F	All breast milk and prepared formula shall be refrigerated and clearly labeled with the child's name; and unused prepared formula shall be discarded as indicated by the label;
☐	☐	G	Unfrozen breast milk shall be discarded after 48 hours; and frozen breastmilk shall be discarded after three months;
☐	☐	H	Only highchairs with three point safety straps shall be used;
☐	☐	I	Infants shall be placed on their backs to sleep except in cases where there is a medical reason the child shall not sleep on its back; and written verification of the medical reason from the child's physician shall be available;
☐	☐	J	Wet or soiled diapers shall be changed immediately and disposed of in a sanitary manner;
☐	☐	K	Individual cleaning cloths shall be used for diapering;
☐	☐	L	Diaper changing surfaces shall be cleaned and disinfected after each use and staff shall use proper hand washing techniques after each diaper change;
☐	☐	M	Toileting shall be done in a manner agreed upon with the parent;
☐	☐	N	Potty chairs shall be cleaned, disinfected, and properly stored away from play areas;
☐	☐	O	All cribs and playpens shall meet federal safety standards as indicated by the Consumer Product Safety Commission; and
☐	☐	P	All cribs and playpens shall not contain any soft objects, bumper pads, toys or loose bedding.

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**Does the District/ESU operate a Sixpence program?** **If marked YES, you must also complete either/both regulations 005.12 and 006.00.** **If marked NO, do not complete 005.13.**
☐	☐	005.13 Sixpence Programs. School districts that receive Early Childhood Endowment birth to three grants, also referred to as Sixpence programs, may be required to meet additional grant-related program requirements established by the Endowment Board of Trustees. (District meets Sixpence Requirements)

006.00
Additional Program and Staff Requirements for Prekindergarten Programs Serving Children Birth to Kindergarten Eligibility Age in a Home-Based Program

Yes	No	
☐	☐	**Does the District/ESU operate a Home-Based Program?** **(Do not complete for Home-Based Early Childhood Special Education)** **If marked NO, do not complete 006.00 – 006.05C.**
☐	☐	006.01 Contact Hours in Home-Based Programs. Program staff shall have contact with each enrolled family at least three (3) times each month for a minimum total of 180 minutes. A minimum of 120 minutes shall be face- to- face contact with the family. Contact may be completed by the home visiting specialist or the home visitor. If a school district or educational service unit contracts with another organization to provide early childhood services, the district or ESU shall ensure the adequate number of hours are provided as required in this subsection.
		006.02 Family Development and Support. Each home-based prekindergarten program shall include the following, as a minimum:
☐	☐	A Written information for families about the program's philosophy, policies, and procedures;
☐	☐	B An orientation to the program for families; and
☐	☐	C Delivery of services that are based on family needs and interests and that focus on the child's development and positive family outcomes. Services shall be provided year round following a curriculum that meets the requirements of subsection 006.05.
☐	☐	006.03 Each home-based prekindergarten program shall provide curricula that are research-based and designed to work with families that facilitate the optimal growth and development of children and that are culturally appropriate for all families served. The program shall also include a well-defined language development and early literacy/pre-reading emphasis, including the involvement of families in literacy activities.
☐	☐	A Each program shall have a written program plan that shall include a description of program curriculum, practices and assessments used. This plan must be provided to all parents and be available to the Department upon request.
☐	☐	B Each program will use child assessment (evaluation) practices based on documentation gathered through an established system of ongoing observation and assessment to provide objective measures of each child's performance and progress in development and learning to meet the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines. The assessment data shall be used to plan and implement teaching strategies and activities to meet the individual needs of each child and to meet the widely held expectations for all domains including literacy/pre-reading and mathematics. Any formal assessment tools used shall meet accepted standards of reliability and validity. Developmentally appropriate practices shall be implemented for each child. Individualized support shall be provided for children who are not progressing within the widely held expectations for literacy/pre-reading and mathematics.
		006.04 Evaluation and Quality Assurance. Each home-based program shall participate in periodic program evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes. The evaluation process will be designed by the Department's Office of Early Childhood and will include, but not be limited to the following:
☐	☐	A An assessment of program quality;
☐	☐	B A report of child outcomes including at least one objective measure of child performance and progress; and
☐	☐	C A written plan for dissemination of the results of the evaluation.

Yes	No		
		006.05	Program Staff. In order to provide home-based services, each home-based program shall use one or more home visitor specialists and may in addition use one or more home visitors who meet the qualifications below:
☐	☐		A Home Visiting Specialist. Any home visitor specialist in a home-based program shall have a bachelor's degree or higher in one of the following areas: 1 Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education, 2 Nursing including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development, 3 Child Development, 4 Sociology or Psychology including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any area of family- centered practices or child and youth development, or 5 Social Work including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family- centered practices, or child and youth development.
☐	☐	006.05 N/A ☐	B Home Visitor. The prekindergarten program may employ a home visitor in a center-based program who provides family development and support services under the direction of a teacher. The home visitor shall have at least twelve (12) semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit in one or a combination of the following areas: i. Early Childhood Education or Early Childhood Special Education; ii. Nursing, including at least twelve (12) graduate or undergraduate hours in any combination of family centered practices or child and youth development; iii. Child Development; iv. Sociology or Psychology, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development; v. Social Work, including coursework in the area of family centered practices or child and youth development.
		006.05	B1 The program may employ a home visitor who does not meet the twelve (12) semester hour requirement as long as the home visitor completes a minimum of six (6) semester hours or the equivalent in training or experience within the first year of employment and meets the full twelve (12) semester hour requirement before the end of the second year of employment.

Indicate the total number of home visitors in the program and indicate how many meet the specified Rule 11 requirement.

____	006.05C **How many home visitors** are in year 1 of employment and are completing 6 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
____	006.05C **How many home visitors** are in year 2 of employment and are completing 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
____	006.05C **How many home visitors** have completed 12 semester credit hours in child development/early childhood education or the equivalent
____	Total **Number** (add boxes above) of home visitors that are in the district's early childhood program. (year 1, year 2 and have completed 12 hours)

Yes	No		
☐	☐	006.05	C Orientation. All staff working in the home-based program shall be provided with an orientation prior to having direct responsibility for the care and teaching of children or for providing family and development services. The orientation shall include job duties and responsibilities, home visiting safety procedures, information about the state law regarding reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect under Neb. Rev. Stat. 28-711, child assessment information, and information about the importance of family routines and schedules.
☐	☐	006.05	D Staff Development Plan. There shall be a written plan detailing staff development opportunities for all home visiting specialists and home visitors working in the home-based program who have regular contact with children and their families. The written plan shall include a professional development goal, the strategies for meeting the goal and a timeline for completion. The written plan shall be updated annually.
☐	☐	006.05	E Staff Development Hours. Home visiting specialists and home visitors who have regular contact with children in early childhood programs shall participate annually in at least fifteen (15) clock hours of Early Childhood Training Center approved staff development. All staff development shall relate to prekindergarten or child development.
☐	☐	006.05	F Background checks. Home visiting specialists and home visitors who do not hold a valid Nebraska Teaching Certificate and who have contact with children shall be checked by program administration against the Nebraska Central Registry of Child Abuse and Neglect, and the Nebraska Adult Protective Services Registry and have a criminal background check before being hired. No person who appears on either Registry or has a criminal history may be hired as staff or remain employed on staff.

Return to: Nebraska Department of Education
Office of Early Childhood
PO Box 94987
Lincoln, NE 68509

NDE 24-006
Revised: 2/15
Date Due: As Required

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
APPLICATION for NEW or EXPANSION GRANTS

District Name/ESU Number:			U.S. Congressional District (check one) ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3
Address:	City:		Zip Code:
Grant Application Category: ☐ Option 1(11-20 children per classroom) ☐ Option 2 (7-10 children pre classroom)	Amount of Grant Funds Requested for Operating Budget:	Amount of Grant Funds Requested for Start-up Budget:	Amount of Local Share to be Provided:

Authorized Representative (NDE considers the Superintendent/ESU Administrator to be the Authorized Representative):		Signature of Authorized Representative:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

Program Contact/Coordinator:		Title:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

Fiscal Contact:		Title:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT of COMMITMENT

Directions: This form should be completed by each local partner (agency, organization, etc.), including the applicant district/ESU. Please make copies of this form for each partner to complete and submit with the application.

Partner Name:		
Address:	**City:**	**Zip Code:**
Contact Person:	**Title:**	
Telephone Number:	**Email Address:**	

As a partner in the program, this agency will commit the following resources, time, ongoing representation, etc. to assure that the program provides a high quality early childhood experience:

The partner's signature on this form verifies participation in the development of the grant application, a full awareness of the content of the grant application, and agreement to participate in the development of a written partnership agreement.

Signature of Partner:	Date:

APPLICATION NARRATIVE

(PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the application template will automatically expand to include all necessary information.)

Grant Applications will be scored on a 100 point scale.

Application Summary

In one or two sentences, identify how the grant funds will be used (i.e., number of groups of children, number of children, number of days and hours).

Program Planning (Maximum 10 points)

1) Current Status: Provide information regarding the current status of preschool age children in the proposed service area.

_____ Number of licensed child care centers
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of licensed preschools
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of licensed family child care homes
_____ Total licensed capacity
_____ Number of Head Start classrooms
_____ Total funded capacity
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Head Start
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, with a verified disability
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part A services
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part C (Migrant services)
_____ Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Homeless services
_____ District-wide percentage of free & reduced lunch eligibility
_____ District-wide percentage of English Language Learners
_____ Total number of 3 year-old children
_____ Total number of 4 year-old children
_____ Kindergarten enrollment for the current school year
_____ Anticipated kindergarten enrollment for the next school year

Kindergarten is offered:

☐ All-Day Every-Day
_____ Total number of hours per year

☐ Half-Day Every-Day
_____ Total number of hours per year

Define the proposed service area.

2) Need: Provide a justification of the need for an early childhood education program grant in the proposed service area. Describe the community's unmet needs for three- and four-year-old children. Describe the needs of working families and how the proposed program will impact these families. Describe the barriers to services.

3) Community Characteristics: Describe any significant characteristics of the community and/or changes in the community demographics (i.e., immigrant population, economic status).

Partnerships (Maximum 25 points)

1) Partners: Identify the partners with whom you have, or will have, a formal written partnership agreement. Check all that apply and include the name of the partner program as appropriate. **A Partnership Statement of Commitment form must be included for each partner that is checked.**

- ☐ Programs for Children with Disabilities below 5 years of age funded through the Special Education Act
- ☐ Early Intervention
- ☐ Head Start _____
- ☐ Title 1, Part A
- ☐ Migrant (Title 1, Part C)
- ☐ Title 1 Homeless
- ☐ Child Care Center _____
- ☐ Family Child Care Home _____
- ☐ Community Preschool _____
- ☐ Local School District _____
- ☐ Educational Service Unit _____
- ☐ Early Childhood Professional Development Partnership or Regional Training Coalition _____
- ☐ Health & Human Services
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____

Describe the efforts to include community partners. If community partners declined to participate, identify the partner and cite the reason(s) for not participating. List the partners that participated in the program planning process and those partners submitting an attached Partnership Statement of Commitment.

Describe the participation of the partners in the program planning process. Describe how the partners will be involved in the start-up process and in the implementation of the early childhood education program.

Describe the plan for development of local written partnership agreements.

2) Advisory Committee: Describe the plan for establishing the local early childhood advisory committee. Include a purpose statement and identify the roles and/or individuals to be represented. Describe the responsibilities of the committee members.

Program Description (Maximum 50 points)

1) Start-up Plan: Identify the anticipated activities and timeline for implementing the early childhood program. Describe the role of the classroom teacher in the start-up activities. Include the projected date the program will begin serving children.

2) Program Design: Identify the elements of the early childhood education program. Check all that apply.

Length of the Day
- ☐ Part Day (less than 6 hours per session)
  - _____ Number of hours per day
- ☐ Full Day (6 hours or more per session)
  - _____ Number of hours per day

Days of programming
- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday

Length of program year
- ☐ School Year (9 months)
  - _____ Total number of hours per year
- ☐ Full-Year (12 months)
  - _____ Total number of hours per year

Classroom Ratios
- _____ Number of classroom groups of children
- _____ Number of children per classroom group
- _____ Number of staff per classroom group

Program Facility
- ☐ Existing site _____
- ☐ New site _____

☐ Type of facility _____

Describe how the program meets the applicable fire, safety and health codes.

Describe how the program will provide adequate space and appropriate equipment both indoors and outdoors.

Meals and/or Snacks Meeting USDA Guidelines

- ☐ Breakfast provided
- ☐ Morning snack provided
- ☐ Lunch provided
- ☐ Afternoon snack provided
- ☐ Participate in School Lunch Program
- ☐ Participate in Child and Adult Care Food Program

Transportation

- ☐ Provided for all enrolled children
- ☐ Provided for some enrolled children
- ☐ Not provided

Describe the family development and support activities, including family literacy activities. Identify a plan for conducting home visits. Describe how the program will meet the economic and logistical needs and circumstances of families.

Describe the plan for supporting children's transition to kindergarten. Describe how developmentally and culturally appropriate curriculum, practices, and assessment will support the transition and continuity between the program and the kindergarten and elementary grades. Include information about how staff will communicate and work together.

Describe how the early childhood education program will be part of the district school continuous improvement process.

3) Student Population: Identify the population of children who will be served in the early childhood education program. Check all that apply and add estimated numbers as appropriate.

☐ Children whose family income qualifies them for participation in the federal free or reduced lunch program.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who reside in a home where a language other than spoken English is used as the primary means of communication.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who were born prematurely or at low birth weight as verified by a physician.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children whose parents are younger than eighteen or who have not completed high school.
_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who have been verified with a disability.
☐ Children who qualify for or who are enrolled in the federal Head Start program.
☐ Children who qualify for or who are enrolled in Title I
☐ Children who do not qualify for one of the above.

_____ Estimated number of children who will participate in year 1 of the early childhood education program grant.
_____ Estimated total number of four-year-olds to be served (age as of July 31).
_____ Estimated number of three-year-olds to be served (age as of July 31).

4) Staff: Describe how the program will recruit and assure that all teachers and paraeducators will meet the requirements of ***Rule 11 – Regulations for Early Childhood Education Programs***.

If staff (teacher and/or paraeducator) for the early childhood education program has been identified, provide the name, position, and teaching endorsement or qualifications, as applicable.

Describe how the early childhood staff will be supported to provide time for the teacher(s) and para(s) to plan together for curriculum/instruction and assessment.

Describe the governance structure. Specifically identify who is responsible for supervising and evaluating staff in the early childhood education program. Identify the program coordinator/administrator and the number of early childhood credits earned by that person.

5) Curriculum Framework: Identify the curriculum framework selected for use in the early childhood education program.

Describe how the selected curriculum provides a research-based and play-oriented learning environment which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials. Include a description of how language development and early literacy are supported.

Describe how the ***Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 – 5*** will be used to support the curriculum.

If applicable, describe how technology and interactive media will be integrated into the curriculum and will support the learning and development of the children.

6) Child Assessment and Program Evaluation. Describe how data from child assessments and program quality assessments will be used to connect assessment, curriculum, teaching strategies, and classroom practices to meet the group and individual needs of the children.

Check the box below to indicate the applicant's agreement to participate in a program evaluation process:

☐ The program agrees to participate in periodic evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes as part of the evaluation process designed by the Department of Education.

7) Professional Development: Describe how individual staff and program professional development needs will be determined.

Identify the training needed to implement the selected curriculum framework and child assessment. Identify the training resources available within the partnership and the timeline for providing the training.

Describe how the early childhood education program will coordinate with the regional *Early Learning Connection* to provide professional development opportunities. If known, identify the person(s) who will serve as a member of the *Early Learning Connection* regional partnership.

Coordinate and Use a Combination of Local, State, and Federal Funding Sources (Maximum 15 points)

Identify the program's plan to use multiple funding sources to maximize participation of economically and categorically diverse groups and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services. Check all funding sources that will be used in the program:

- ☐ Early Childhood Special Education
- ☐ Special Education Flexible Funding
- ☐ Federal Head Start
- ☐ Title 1, Part A
- ☐ Migrant (Title 1, Part C)
- ☐ Title 1 Homeless
- ☐ Child Care Assistance through Health and Human Services
- ☐ Local School District
- ☐ Parent Fees Based on a Sliding Fee Scale
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____

Identify the program's plan to use a sliding fee scale to maximize participation of economically and categorically diverse groups and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services.

Return to:
Nebraska Department of Education
Office of Early Childhood
kristine.luebbe@nebraska.gov

NDE 24-006
Revised: 12/2017

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
APPLICATION for NEW or EXPANSION GRANTS

District Name/ESU Number:			U.S. Congressional District (check one) ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3
Address:	City:		Zip Code:
Grant Application Category: ☐ Option 1(11-20 children per classroom) ☐ Option 2 (7-10 children pre classroom)	Amount of Grant Funds Requested for Operating Budget:	Amount of Grant Funds Requested for Start-up Budget:	Amount of Local Share to be Provided:

Authorized Representative (NDE considers the Superintendent/ESU Administrator to be the Authorized Representative):		Signature of Authorized Representative:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

Program Contact/Coordinator:		Title:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

Fiscal Contact:		Title:
Telephone Number:	FAX Number:	E-mail Address:

PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT of COMMITMENT

Directions: This form should be completed by each local partner (agency, organization, etc.), including the applicant district/ESU. Please make copies of this form for each partner to complete and submit with the application.

Partner Name:		
Address:	**City:**	**Zip Code:**
Contact Person:	**Title:**	
Telephone Number:	**Email Address:**	

As a partner in the program, this agency will commit the following resources, time, ongoing representation, etc. to assure that the program provides a high quality early childhood experience:

The partner's signature on this form verifies participation in the development of the grant application, a full awareness of the content of the grant application, and agreement to participate in the development of a written partnership agreement.

Signature of Partner:	Date:

APPLICATION NARRATIVE

(PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the application template will automatically expand to include all necessary information.)

Grant Applications will be scored on a 100 point scale.

Application Summary

In one or two sentences, identify how the grant funds will be used including number of groups of children, number of children, number of days and hours.

Program Planning (Maximum 10 points)

1) Current Status: Provide information regarding the current status of preschool age children in the proposed service area.

Number of licensed child care centers
Total licensed capacity
Number of licensed preschools
Total licensed capacity
Number of licensed family child care homes
Total licensed capacity
Number of Head Start classrooms
Total funded capacity
Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Head Start
Number of children, age 3 & 4, with a verified disability
Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part A services
Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Part C (Migrant services)
Number of children, age 3 & 4, enrolled in Title 1, Homeless services
District-wide percentage of free & reduced lunch eligibility
District-wide percentage of English Language Learners
Total number of 3 year-old children
Total number of 4 year-old children
Kindergarten enrollment for the current school year
Anticipated kindergarten enrollment for the next school year

Kindergarten is offered:

☐ All-Day Every-Day
Total number of hours per year
☐ Half-Day Every-Day
Total number of hours per year

Define the proposed service area.

2) Need: Provide a justification of the need for an early childhood education program grant in the proposed service area. Describe the community's unmet needs for three- and four-year-old children. Describe the needs of working families and how the proposed program will impact these families. Describe the barriers to services.

3) Community Characteristics: Describe any significant characteristics of the community and/or changes in the community demographics (i.e., immigrant population, economic status).

Partnerships (Maximum 25 points)

1) Partners: Identify the partners with whom you have, or will have, a formal written partnership agreement. Check all that apply and include the name of the partner program as appropriate. **A Partnership Statement of Commitment form must be included for each partner that is checked.**

- ☐ Programs for Children with Disabilities below 5 years of age funded through the Special Education Act
- ☐ Early Intervention
- ☐ Head Start
- ☐ Title 1, Part A
- ☐ Migrant (Title 1, Part C)
- ☐ Title 1 Homeless
- ☐ Child Care Center
- ☐ Family Child Care Home
- ☐ Community Preschool
- ☐ Local School District
- ☐ Educational Service Unit
- ☐ Early Childhood Professional Development Partnership or Regional Training Coalition
- ☐ Health & Human Services
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Other

Describe the efforts to include community partners. If community partners declined to participate, identify the partner and cite the reason(s) for not participating. List the partners that participated in the program planning process and those partners submitting an attached Partnership Statement of Commitment.

Describe the participation of the partners in the program planning process. Describe how the partners will be involved in the start-up process and in the implementation of the early childhood education program.

Describe the plan for development of local written partnership agreements.

2) Advisory Committee: Describe the plan for establishing the local early childhood advisory committee. Include a purpose statement and identify the roles and/or individuals to be represented. Describe the responsibilities of the committee members.

Program Description (Maximum 50 points)

1) Start-up Plan: Identify the anticipated activities and timeline for implementing the early childhood program. Describe the role of the classroom teacher in the start-up activities. Include the projected date the program will begin serving children.

2) Program Design: Identify the elements of the early childhood education program. Check all that apply.

Length of the Day
- ☐ Part Day (less than 6 hours per session)
  - Number of hours per day
- ☐ Full Day (6 hours or more per session)
  - Number of hours per day

Days of programming
- ☐ Monday
- ☐ Tuesday
- ☐ Wednesday
- ☐ Thursday
- ☐ Friday

Length of program year
- ☐ School-Year (9 months)
  - Total number of hours per year
- ☐ Full-Year (12 months)
  - Total number of hours per year

Classroom Ratios
- Number of classroom groups of children
- Number of children per classroom group
- Number of staff per classroom group

Program Facility
- ☐ Existing site
- ☐ New site
- ☐ Type of facility

Describe how the program meets the applicable fire, safety and health codes.

Describe how the program will provide adequate space and appropriate equipment both indoors and outdoors.

Meals and/or Snacks Meeting USDA Guidelines

- ☐ Breakfast provided
- ☐ Morning snack provided
- ☐ Lunch provided
- ☐ Afternoon snack provided
- ☐ Participate in School Lunch Program
- ☐ Participate in Child and Adult Care Food Program

Transportation

- ☐ Provided for all enrolled children
- ☐ Provided for some enrolled children
- ☐ Not provided

Describe the family development and support activities, including family literacy activities. Identify a plan for conducting home visits. Describe how the program will meet the economic and logistical needs and circumstances of families.

Describe the plan for supporting children's transition to kindergarten. Describe how developmentally and culturally appropriate curriculum, practices, and assessment will support the transition and continuity between the program and the kindergarten and elementary grades. Include information about how staff will communicate and work together.

Describe how the early childhood education program will be part of the district school continuous improvement process.

3) Student Population: Identify the population of children who will be served in the early childhood education program. Check all that apply and add estimated numbers as appropriate.

☐ Children whose family income qualifies them for participation in the federal free or reduced lunch program.
Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who reside in a home where a language other than spoken English is used as the primary means of communication.
Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children who were born prematurely or at low birth weight as verified by a physician.
Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

☐ Children whose parents are younger than eighteen or who have not completed high school.

_____ Estimated number of four-year-olds who will be eligible to attend kindergarten in the following year.

- ☐ Children who have been verified with a disability.
- ☐ Children who qualify for or who are enrolled in the federal Head Start program.
- ☐ Children who qualify for or who are enrolled in Title I.
- ☐ Children who do not qualify for one of the above.

_____ Estimated number of children who will participate in year 1 of the early childhood education program grant.
_____ Estimated total number of four-year-olds to be served (age as of July 31).
_____ Estimated number of three-year-olds to be served (age as of July 31).

4) Staff: Describe how the program will recruit and assure that all teachers and paraeducators will meet the requirements of ***Rule 11 – Regulations for the Approval of Prekindergarten Programs established by School Boards or Educational Service Units and for the Issuance of Early Childhood Education Grants***.

_____

If staff (teacher and/or paraeducator) for the early childhood education program has been identified, provide the name, position, and teaching endorsement or qualifications, as applicable.

_____

Describe how the early childhood staff will be supported to provide time for the teacher(s) and para(s) to plan together for curriculum/instruction and assessment.

_____

Describe the governance structure. Specifically identify who is responsible for supervising and evaluating staff in the early childhood education program. Identify the program coordinator/administrator and the number of early childhood credits earned by that person.

_____

5) Curriculum Framework: Identify the curriculum framework selected for use in the early childhood education program.

_____

Describe how the selected curriculum provides a research-based and play-oriented learning environment which facilitates the optimal growth and development of children, with opportunities for age-appropriate learning experiences through active involvement with people and materials. Include a description of how language development, early literacy, and mathematics are supported.

_____

Describe how the ***Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 – 5*** will be used to support the curriculum.

If applicable, describe how technology and interactive media will be integrated into the curriculum and will support the learning and development of the children.

6) Child Assessment and Program Evaluation: Describe how data from child assessments and program quality assessments will be used to connect assessment, curriculum, teaching strategies, and classroom practices to meet the group and individual needs of the children.

Check the box below to indicate the applicant's agreement to participate in a program evaluation process:

☐ The program agrees to participate in periodic evaluations to assure program quality and positive child outcomes as part of the evaluation process designed by the Department of Education.

7) Professional Development: Describe how individual staff and program professional development needs will be determined.

Identify the training needed to implement the selected curriculum framework and child assessment. Identify the training resources available within the partnership and the timeline for providing the training.

Describe how the early childhood education program will coordinate with the regional *Early Learning Connection* to provide professional development opportunities. If known, identify the person(s) who will serve as a member of the *Early Learning Connection* regional partnership.

Coordinate and Use a Combination of Local, State, and Federal Funding Sources (Maximum 15 points)

Identify the program's plan to use multiple funding sources to maximize participation of economically and categorically diverse groups and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services. Check all funding sources that will be used in the program:

- ☐ Early Childhood Special Education
- ☐ Special Education Flexible Funding
- ☐ Federal Head Start
- ☐ Title 1, Part A
- ☐ Even Start Family Literacy (Title 1, Part B)
- ☐ Migrant (Title 1, Part C)

- ☐ Title 1 Homeless
- ☐ Child Care Assistance through Health and Human Services
- ☐ Local School District
- ☐ Parent Fees Based on a Sliding Fee Scale
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ Other _____

Identify the program's plan to use a sliding fee scale to maximize participation of economically and categorically diverse groups and to ensure that participating children and families have access to comprehensive services.

_____

OPERATING BUDGET with MULTIPLE FUNDING SOURCES

All state funds should be specified on a line item basis, as applicable. Cells with **XXXXXX** indicate categories which cannot be supported by a particular funding source. Any of the funding sources listed in 79-1103(2) R.R.S. can be used to support the Early Childhood Program.

FUNDING SOURCE / BUDGET CATEGORIES	State Early Childhood Grant	IDEA Part B Base	IDEA Part B Enrollment/ Poverty	Special Education Act Flex Funding (State)	Head Start	Title 1 Part A	Title 1 Part C (Migrant)	Local District Funds	HHSS Child Care Assistance	Parent Fees (Sliding Fee Scale)	Other
SHARE (indicate % of TOTAL BUDGET)											
Personnel (100)											
Fringe Benefits (200)											
Facility/Operating Costs (300)				XXXXXX							
Child Transportation (300)				XXXXXX							
Contractual Services (300)											
Classroom Materials/Supplies (400)											
Child Food (400)		XXXXXX	XXXXXX	XXXXXX							
Classroom Equipment (500)											
Minor Facility Modifications (500)		XXXXXX		XXXXXX		XXXXXX					
Family Involvement (600)											
Evaluation (600)				XXXXXX							

Staff Development (600)											
Staff Travel (600)											
Other (specify) (600)				XXXXXX							
Administrative/ Indirect Costs											
TOTAL											

BUDGET NARRATIVE

PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the budget template will expand to include all necessary information. *All anticipated costs necessary to operate the program must be explained. The budget must relate directly to the activities and staff identified in the application and should provide a rationale for the projected costs (e.g., how employee benefits are derived). The budget should clearly indicate the portions to be supported through grant funds as well as the matching funding or services provided by the applicant or partner agencies.*

Personnel:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Fringe Benefits:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Facility/Operating Costs:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Child Transportation:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Contractual Services:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Classroom Materials/Supplies:

Grant Funds

Match Funds

Child Food:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Classroom Equipment:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Minor Facility Modifications:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Family Involvement:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Evaluation:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Staff Development:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Staff Travel:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Other:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

Administrative/Indirect Costs:

Grant Funds
Match Funds

START-UP BUDGET

PLEASE NOTE: Text boxes within the budget template will expand to include all necessary information. *This form supplements the operating budget form and is intended to clarify the request for start-up funds separate from ongoing operating costs. Start-up funds may be requested in an amount up to $25,000. Complete all line items as applicable. A detailed budget narrative for use of the start-up funds must also be included on this form.*

BUDGET CATEGORIES	Start-up Request	Budget Narrative
Personnel (100)		
Fringe Benefits (200)		
Contractual Services (300)		
Classroom Materials/Supplies (400)		
Classroom Equipment (500)		
Minor Facility Modifications (500)		
Staff Development (600)		
Staff Travel (600)		
Other (specify) (600)		
Administrative/Indirect Costs		
TOTAL		

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
REQUIRED INFORMATION for CONTINUATION GRANTS

Allocations

Program Information
- Contact Information
  - Authorized Representative
  - ~~Program contact~~ Project Director
  - ~~Fiscal~~ Financial Contact
- Summary
  - ~~Summary of p~~Previous year activities including successes and challenges
  - Planning for next year
- Program Design
  - Hours, days, and term of operation
  - Classroom ratios and group size
  - ~~Indoor and outdoor space and equipment~~
  - Health and safety standards
  - Meals ~~and~~ /snacks
  - ~~Transportation~~
  - Family development and support activities
  - ~~Program i~~Integration ~~with~~ into district school improvement process
- Student Populations
  - Enrollment data on participating children
- Staff
  - ~~Identification of p~~Program Coordinator~~/administrator~~ (including endorsement qualifications)
  - ~~Identification of c~~Classroom Teacher~~(s)~~ (including endorsement qualifications)
  - ~~Identification of p~~Para~~c~~Educator~~(s)~~ (including qualifications)
  - Identification of other staff paid with grant funds

Program Framework
- Partners
  - Identification of inter-agency and intra-agency partners
  - Dates of partnership agreements
- Advisory Committee
  - Description of ~~local advisory committee~~ membership and structure

Professional Development

Plan for ~~professional development for teachers and paraeducators~~ the upcoming year for staff

Curriculum Framework

Identification of curricula being used

Description of Early Learning Guidelines as support to curriculum

Evaluation Measures

Agreement to participate in evaluation process

Description of how program assessment data has been used

Identification of child assessment measures being used other than GOLD

Budget

Identification of local, state, and federal funding sources

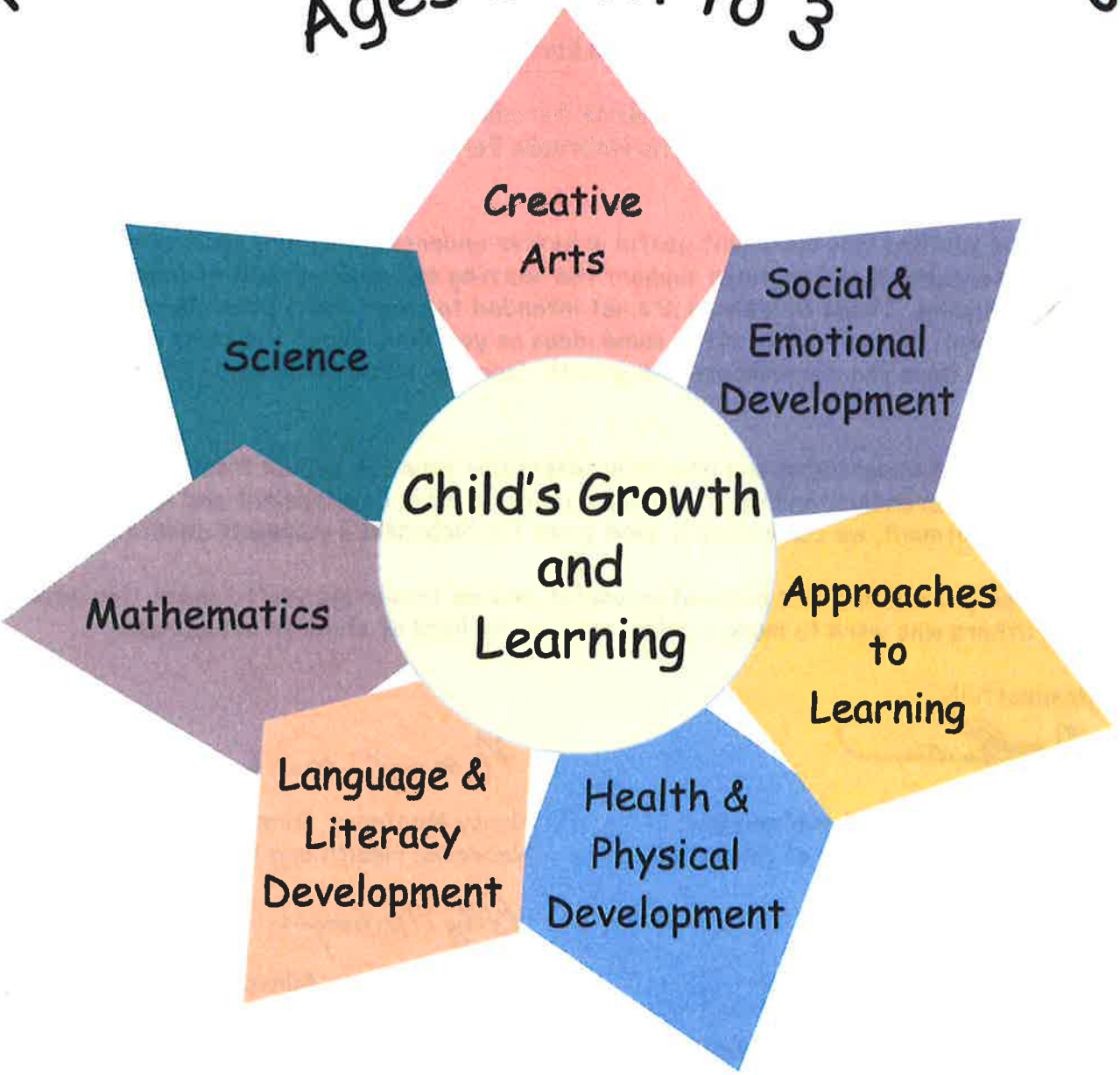
Operating budget detail with matching sources of funding equal to or greater than the grant plus any calculated state aid

Operating budget summary

Use of sliding fee scale

Assurances

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3



Nurturing the Development and Learning of Infants and Toddlers through Responsive Caregiving

Nebraska Department of Education

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines

Nebraska Health and Human Services System

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

We are pleased to present the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3!

These voluntary guidelines are a resource for adults who care for infants and toddlers, and they serve as a companion to the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 published in January 2005.

We hope you find this document useful in better understanding how positive relationships, care, interactions, and routines support the learning and development of babies from the very beginning. These Guidelines are not intended to cover every possible aspect of early development, but instead to offer some ideas as you think about the many interesting and supportive ways you can promote the growth, learning, and well-being of children in your care every day.

Your interest in nurturing and providing responsive care for babies from the time they are born shows an understanding of the importance of early development and learning. With your commitment, we can ensure a good start for Nebraska's youngest 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,

Doug Christensen, Commissioner
Nebraska Department of Education

Nancy Montanez, Director
Nebraska Health and Human Services System

Marcia Corr, Administrator
Office of Early Childhood
Nebraska Department of Education

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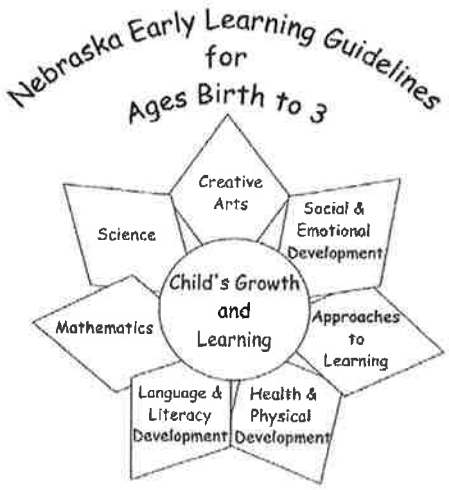
Child Care, Community Services Block Grant
Homeless Assistance Program
Nebraska Health and Human Services System

NEBRASKA EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES for Ages Birth to 3



Preface

Research shows that the first three years of life is the period of most rapid development for a child. Infants are born with well-developed senses, and have a wide range of reflexive abilities with which to begin the important tasks of forming relationships and developing trust, having their basic physical needs met and exploring the world around them. With nurturing and responsive caregiving, appropriate environmental stimulation, optimal health, and adequate nutrition, babies will grow from being totally dependent to becoming active participants in exploring and shaping their world.

The human brain is not fully developed at birth. Sensitive, trusting interactions with people and the environment are necessary to complete the infant brain's network of connections. These connections grow most rapidly in the child's first three years of life and establish the foundation for all future learning.

Infants and toddlers are eager and curious learners, gaining knowledge and understanding of themselves and the world around them from every experience of daily living. Dramatic changes occur in every area of development, and growth in one area influences growth in all other areas.

Each child is born with a unique, natural disposition that shapes behaviors and plays a significant role in the development of relationships with parents, family members, caregivers and other children. From birth, infants display differences in temperament, activity level, biological rhythm, mood, intensity of reaction, sensitivity, adaptability, distractibility, and persistence. Recognizing and understanding these differences is essential to develop nurturing and responsive relationships and to create optimal learning opportunities.

Who was Involved in Developing the Early Learning Guidelines?

Several partners took a leadership role in the development of the Guidelines. These partners were the Nebraska Department of Education, the Nebraska Health and Human Services System, the Nebraska Head Start Association, the Nebraska Head Start-State Collaboration Office and the Early Childhood Training Center. Additional guidance and expertise was provided by infant and toddler specialists from across the state.

As you will see on the following pages, the Development Team was composed of representatives from each of these partners and from early childhood consultants. The document was sent to a Review Team comprised of representatives from higher education and state organizations as well as other experts in the field of early care and education in Nebraska.

Additional feedback was gathered by presenting the Guidelines at various meetings and to groups around the state including professional organizations and parent groups. 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.

This document is designed to address the growth and development of children from birth to age 3. It is further divided into two distinct age categories: birth to 18 months (Infants), and 18 months to 3 years (Toddlers). This was done intentionally so that the age breakdowns would match Nebraska's child care licensing statutes as they relate to adult:child ratios.

It is important to note that children in both of these age categories go through periods of rapid growth and development, and not all of them go through these changes at the same time or at the same pace. This is especially true in the health and physical development areas, as all children follow their own internal schedules for such things as walking, talking, toileting, etc. Through predictable routines and secure attachments, children will feel secure and develop competence and confidence as they progress through their preschool years.

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What Tools Were Used in the Development of These Guidelines?

The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for ages birth to 3 are formatted to represent the continuum of development that precedes ages 3 to 5. These Guidelines are consistent with 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 settings.

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.

The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3 are connected to the Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5 through the use of the same design, layout, and developmental domains. The information, resources and activities described in these Guidelines, when used as a set, provide a strong foundation for the growth and development of children ages birth to 5.

It is important to note that both sets of Guidelines are not only aligned with Nebraska's K-12 Standards, but also to other state and national standards and regulations to ensure best practice. These publications are an effort to recognize and promote early care and education experiences that support lifelong growth and development.

Table of Contents

Introduction

Welcome to the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines 1
Guiding Principles About Infants' and Toddlers' Growth and Learning 4
How Adults Can Support Infants' and Toddlers' Growth and Learning 5
Creating Learning Environments for Infants and Toddlers 6
The Adult and the Learning Environment 7
The Early Learning Guidelines Support Family Relationships 8
Supporting Inclusive Learning Environments 9

Domains and Key Elements Supporting Growth and Learning

Social and Emotional Development 11
Social Relationships - Infants 14
Social Relationships - Toddlers 15
Sense of Self - Infants 16
Sense of Self - Toddlers 17
Self Regulation - Infants 18
Self Regulation - Toddlers 19
Resources 20

Approaches to Learning 21
Initiative and Curiosity - Infants 24
Initiative and Curiosity - Toddlers 25
Sensory Exploration and Problem Solving - Infants 26
Sensory Exploration and Problem Solving - Toddlers 27
Resources 28

Health and Physical Development 29
Fine (Small) Motor Skills - Infants 32
Fine (Small) Motor Skills - Toddlers 33
Gross (Large) Motor Skills - Infants 34
Gross (Large) Motor Skills - Toddlers 35
Health Behaviors and Practices - Infants 36
Health Behaviors and Practices - Toddlers 37
Nutrition - Infants 38
Nutrition - Toddlers 39
Self Help - Infants 40
Self Help - Toddlers 41
Resources 42

Language and Literacy Development 43
Listening and Understanding - Infants 46
Listening and Understanding - Toddlers 47
Speaking and Communicating - Infants 48
Speaking and Communicating - Toddlers 49
Book Knowledge and Appreciation - Infants 50
Book Knowledge and Appreciation - Toddlers 51
Print Awareness and Early Writing - Infants 52
Print Awareness and Early Writing - Toddlers 53
Resources 54

Mathematics 55
Number and Operations - Infants 58
Number and Operations - Toddlers 59
Spatial Sense - Infants 60
Spatial Sense - Toddler 61
Patterns and Measurement - Infants 62
Patterns and Measurement - Toddlers 63
Resources 64

Science 65
Scientific Skills and Methods - Infants 68
Scientific Skills and Methods - Toddlers 69
Scientific Knowledge - Infants 70
Scientific Knowledge - Toddlers 71
Resources 72

Creative Arts 73
Music - Infants 76
Music - Toddlers 77
Art - Infants 78
Art - Toddlers 79
Movement - Infants 80
Movement - Toddlers 81
Dramatic Play - Infants 82
Dramatic Play - Toddlers 83
Resources 84

Resources to Support Early Learning 86

Early Learning Guidelines Definitions 88

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3

Welcome to the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines!

This exciting new resource provides information to assist parents, family members, early childhood teachers, caregivers, and other adults in promoting the learning and development of young children ages birth to three. It is a companion to the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5, and uses the same format and domains of development.

This voluntary guide has been developed to provide information about: 1) what to expect in the development and learning of young children from the time they are born to age 3, and 2) what adults can do to provide experiences and environments that support learning across developmental domains. It is intended to be a resource for teachers, caregivers, family members and other adults to develop positive relationships with infants and toddlers and to plan meaningful learning experiences. All of the individual areas of the guide are considered important, and should be integrated into all of the daily routines, interactions and activities. Also, the guide is not intended to limit any child's progress. The individual needs of each child must be met on a daily basis. It is important to remember that infants and toddlers develop skills, knowledge and abilities at their own pace. These Guidelines should not be used as a developmental checklist, rather as a general guide to how infants and toddlers develop and learn.

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 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 can do to support their growth and learning
- **The Environment:** considerations to keep in mind when setting up the indoor/ outdoor space and materials

It is important to remember that infants and toddlers are growing and learning all of the time, and that not all children will attain all of the expectations by age three. The Guidelines provide a map from which adults can understand the developmental "path" that children will follow as they develop and learn during the first three years of life. Infants and toddlers will show emerging abilities toward these expectations as they grow. To reflect this growth, the Guidelines provide information on each domain specifically for infants (birth to 18 months) and toddlers (18 to 36 months).

Each developmental domain can be addressed every day in homes and early childhood settings through the activities and materials that are chosen and the adult support provided. The Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines is not a curriculum; rather it can be used as a framework to guide decisions about activities, materials, and the environment.

Use of the Guidelines can help to promote continuity and consistency across all settings and promote successful transitions across environments. When adults consider using children's development together with the adults' actions as described in the Guidelines, the result is an environment that meets the developmental needs of all children.

Although the Early Learning Guidelines are voluntary, adults are encouraged to use this resource as they plan activities and interact with infants and toddlers. Providing rich learning experiences, supportive learning environments, and positive relationships with children during the first three years will provide the critical foundation for learning.

The Early Learning Guidelines can also serve as a resource for families as they select quality programs for their very young children. The Guidelines can help to broaden their understanding of development and learning from the time their child is born, as well as identify ways parents can effectively interact with their children and support their learning.

Working together, adults and families can assure that all children have a good start in life, and that their early experiences will continue to support a lifelong love of learning.

This document is intended to be used to guide practices with children ages birth to three. A companion document, intended to be used for children ages three to five, is available from the Nebraska Department of Education. Parent materials and training plans for teachers and caregivers of young children are also being developed.

Visit the web site 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.

Resources to support each domain are included at the end of each domain section, as well as a list of recommended books for children. More general resources as well as a page of definitions can be found at the back of the document.

Guiding Principles About Infants' and Toddlers' Growth and Learning

- **Nurturing relationships are the foundation for healthy growth and development.**
  Strong attachments created between adults and very young children are the key to establishing infants' and toddlers' capacity to learn and grow. It is only through these consistent nurturing relationships that children feel safe and secure, providing them with the necessary support to freely explore and discover how their world works.

- **Learning is integrated across all areas of development.**
  Children construct knowledge and integrate new ideas and concepts into their existing understanding. Their development in language and learning is influenced by the social and emotional aspects of their environment. Communication influences mathematical and scientific understandings. There are no clear lines between the individual domains or areas of learning. Young children learn best when activities are integrated across all areas of growth and learning.

- **Each child is an individual learner.**
  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.

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

- **Learning is continuous and sequential.**
  Children's understanding grows from simple to complex (or from concrete to abstract). New skills are built on earlier acquired concepts. As a result, infants and toddlers are uniquely different from older preschool children, and interactions need to match their developing skills and abilities.

- **Development and learning are rooted in culture and supported by the family.**
  The language, knowledge, traditions, and expectations of the family are the primary influences on the growth and development of infants and toddlers. Learning is enriched by stable, nurturing relationships within the family and community.

How Adults Can Support Infants' and Toddlers' Growth and Learning

Children's learning is fostered and enriched by adults who understand young children's growth and development, and who establish positive relationships which influence the extent of children's learning.

During the first three years of life, a child's development undergoes changes that are more rapid and dramatic than at any other time. Changes in body proportion, coordination and strength reflect the increase in brain development. This allows infants and toddlers to make extraordinary gains in physical and sensory coordination, dexterity and balance. Physical health and well being are important for the success of this development. Ensuring optimal health and well being requires the commitment and vigilance of parents, caregivers, and teachers. Some key points about how adults can support the learning of infants and toddlers are:

- Relationships and responsive interactions with adults and peers are the basis of high quality experiences for infants and toddlers.
- Environments and adults are predictable, consistent, and nurturing.
- Families, teachers, and caregivers are valued partners in each child's development and share information regularly.
- Adults use effective observational skills to understand and assess children's learning.
- Physical wellness is maintained through partnerships between families and the professionals with expertise in infant and toddler development from the health, mental health, dental, and nutrition fields.

Creating Learning Environments for Infants and Toddlers

It is important that the environment respect and value the diversity that children and families bring, and build 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 a different rate 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, and ethnicity
- special health considerations, including 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 program staff to make changes in materials, routines or experiences so that all children will be successful.

The environment should be a place that gives infants and toddlers freedom to safely explore the world in their unique way in both home- and center-based programs. It should:

- allow for choice
- be a place for socialization in a climate of trust, and foster a sense of belonging
- be a place to explore the physical world, both indoors and outdoors, to build their motor and language skills
- be a place to use their play to explore and build trust in a new learning experience
- provide separate and appropriate places for sleeping, eating, diapering and/or toileting, and for movement and play
- include interest areas where materials with similar use are placed together in an organized fashion
- provide safe, child-sized furnishings and supplies to promote independence and harmony that are both available and accessible throughout the day
- include a daily schedule with materials and activities that are designed to meet the individual needs of each child

The Adult and the Learning Environment

The role of the adult is to provide a responsive and supportive environment. Adults should interact with infants and toddlers in ways that support the child's growth and learning through discovery.

The adult:

- **Builds** relationships with families and **exchanges** information about the child with the family on an ongoing basis
- **Learns** about each individual child in order to be responsive to each child's interests, needs and development
- **Relates** and **responds** to all children with warmth, sensitivity, and consistent caring to establish and sustain a climate in which learning is trusting and joyful
- **Invites** children to participate in a rich, safe and stimulating environment which encourages interaction, exploration, and choices by all children
- **Provides** encouragement, support, and appropriate challenges to help young children develop trust and independence to grow
- **Models** respect for people, materials and equipment in the environment
- **Partners** with other professionals and families to plan, create, and sustain a safe climate and healthy environment in which children may grow and play harmoniously and creatively
- **Maximizes** use of space and **integrates** a variety of materials and equipment that stimulate active learning
- **Structures** opportunities for infants and toddlers to play individually and to form caring relationships with other children, with 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 observation, assessment and evaluation procedures
- **Supports** or **increases** the young child's participation in existing or desired learning activities
- **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, informed, and appropriate interventions as needed/indicated
- **Acknowledges** personal beliefs and biases regarding children and families, and is able to make objective decisions and act in the best interests of the child
- **Reflects** children's home language and culture in daily routines

The Early Learning Guidelines Support Family Relationships

The family is the strongest and most important influence on a child's development because the time that children spend with their family members generally exceeds the time spent with other caregivers. Attributes such as language, culture, values, and beliefs are part of the child's early experiences in the family setting, and provide the basis for learning throughout life.

It is through strong partnerships between family members, teachers and caregivers that the child's needs are truly met.

Infants and toddlers need the security of loving relationships in order to grow. This security most often begins in the home and is extended to other settings through partnerships between families and high quality early childhood programs.

The Early Learning Guidelines can assist families in being more effective advocates for their children. They are available to guide parents in understanding what to look for as they choose programs for their young children. Strategies that are listed can be used to help provide appropriate developmental activities at home and in other settings.

A key responsibility of the adults who are involved with infants and toddlers is to support the relationship between parents and their children. The bond between infants/toddlers and their parents is often still developing when the child is enrolled in an early childhood program. The adult provides encouragement to parents and other family members in defining their evolving role as the most important adults in the child's life.

The early childhood setting supports the family by incorporating the child's home language and culture as much as possible. Words, foods, care practices, music and objects that are familiar to the child provide a greater sense of comfort. These increased feelings of safety and security make it possible for learning to occur more readily.

Through their partnership with teachers and caregivers, family members can provide information about their expectations, as well as the child's abilities, needs, preferences, etc. Teachers and caregivers can provide guidance on child development and what the program can offer the child and family. Family members, teachers and caregivers can share information and work together to reach their shared dreams for the child. Families' participation in the program is welcomed; adults are flexible in accommodating families' interests and abilities.

Other characteristics of the partnership between family members and their child's teacher or caregiver include open communication, mutual respect, trust, and honesty.

It is through strong partnerships between family members and the teacher or caregiver that the child's needs are truly met. Such partnerships build a foundation that impacts the future of the child far beyond the first three years of life.

Supporting Inclusive Learning Environments

Opportunities for learning occur as part of typical life activities, and in 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. This means that every child is an active participant in daily interaction with responsive adults, other children and the environment.

All children and families benefit from inclusive learning environments.

Children with a Wide Range of Abilities

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 also be prepared to work together with families. Teachers need to know how to make referrals, if there are concerns, to the Early Development Network (888-806-6287), collaborate with children's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP)/Individual Education Program (IEP) teams, modify/adapt program activities, routines, and materials/equipment (make reasonable accommodations), and implement appropriate interventions within the context of the family and/or early childhood setting.

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 and in the Resources to Support Early Learning on page 86 of this document. This is a sampling of the types of accommodations that might be made and should not be considered a complete list. It is also important to remember that not only are adaptations needed within the learning environment to accommodate children with disabilities, sometimes the expectations or standards themselves need to be adapted. 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 to be active and successful in program routines and activities

- Provide adult assistance/support/modeling as the child initiates interest or action, then reduce adult supports when the child shows ability to do some actions independently

- Provide regular, ongoing opportunities for interaction with adults, and companionship, support from and play with typically developing peers

- Add new, interesting and/or adapted activities as needed to meet individual needs

- Modify materials and/or activities so the young child can participate with increasing independence

- Natural learning opportunities are intentionally provided throughout daily routines and activities to encourage children to use materials both independently and cooperatively

- Provide visual supports in addition to verbal interactions (pictures, drawings, labels, color coding, picture schedules, etc.)

- Assure that child care homes, centers, and preschool environments meet the physical, health and emotional needs of all children

Children from Diverse Cultures

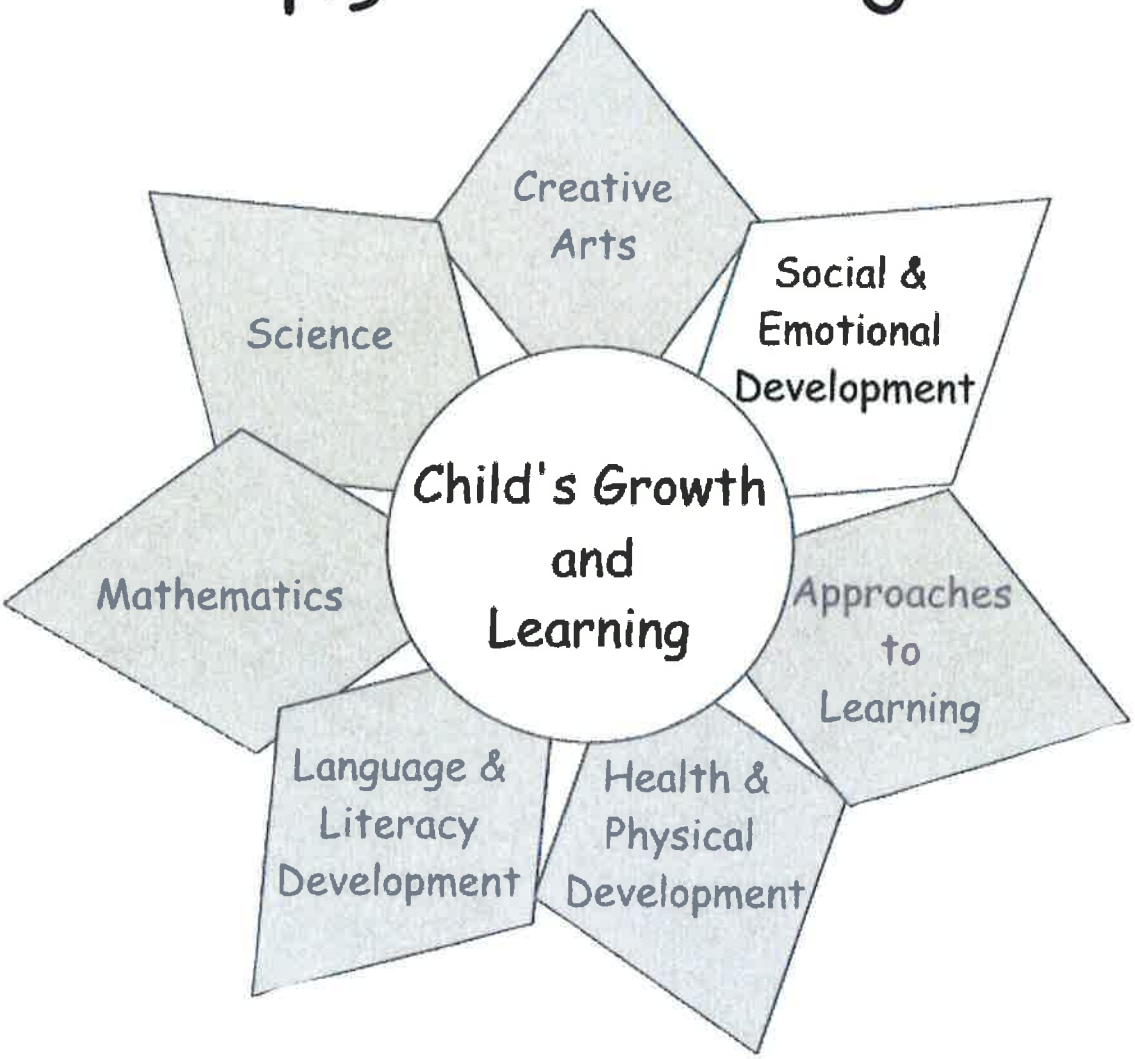
For activities to be developmentally appropriate, they must be individually and culturally appropriate to each child. Therefore, the children, their families, society, teachers, and caregivers are important resources for an anti-bias, multicultural curriculum (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992).

Some children may be learning to speak a home 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 woven into all aspects of the program. Children have words, actions, stories, songs, dances, art, traditions, celebrations and beliefs, that are unique to their family, culture and experience. The adult uses opportunities to integrate each child and family's history, cultural uniqueness and family practices into the curriculum and weave it into the fabric of everyday learning experiences. Families should be encouraged to talk with their children in their home language, even as their children are developing English language skills.

By being mindful of the home and family culture for each child, adults can achieve the goals of empathy, respect, and understanding that characterize a multicultural, family-centered classroom.

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

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3



Social and Emotional Development

- Social Relationships
- Sense of Self
- Self Regulation

One of the primary goals of a quality program for infants and toddlers is to foster social and emotional development. When babies and young children feel emotionally and physically secure, they have the opportunity to freely explore their environment. They are able to interact with adults and other children, and gain a sense of identity through an understanding and confidence in themselves as individuals.

Strong, positive, secure relationships are the key to social and emotional development. Infants and toddlers need consistent, nurturing adults who are supportive and responsive. Caring adults provide safe, stable, and predictable environments that support young children's growing independence. Such environments promote a healthy sense of self and connections with others.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- 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 and socially competent 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.

Social & Emotional Development

Social Relationships
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child is responsive in interactions with others and shows evidence of attachment process
  - Develops an attachment with caring adults
  - Begins to develop a curiosity about others
  - Shows an interest in things in the environment
  - Displays pleasure when with familiar people

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Responds to familiar adults' and childrens' interactions (gazes, cuddles, accepts assistance from familiar adult, etc.)
- Engages in social games with familiar people through playful back and forth interactions (exchanges smiles, coos, plays peek-a-boo, etc.)
- Expresses self using verbal and nonverbal cues (cries, laughs, turns head away, reaches for familiar adult, etc.)

The Adult

- Knows and builds a trusting relationship with each child
- Understands and responds to different temperaments of children
- Provides opportunities and participates in back and forth communication (uses eye contact and allows sufficient time for children to respond)
- Interacts playfully with babies, verbally describes infants' actions
- Meets infants' bodily needs for comfort (responds to cries, holds baby when bottle feeding, makes eye contact while diapering, etc.)
- Provides opportunities and support to help children develop close relationships with caring adults (responds to children's cues, talks to them during routine care, etc.)
- Provides opportunities for non-mobile infants to interact with other children
- Uses a calm, soothing voice; holds and cuddles each child routinely throughout the day
- Provides opportunities for children to develop an awareness of their own feelings, as well as ideas and actions of others

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Unbreakable mirrors and accessible materials for independent choice
- Interesting toys and materials that represent families and diverse cultures (family photographs, sturdy picture books, etc.)
- Predictable schedules and routines, individualized for each child

Social Relationships
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child is responsive in interactions with others and begins to build relationships
  - Develops and maintains secure relationships with caring adults
  - Demonstrates growing interest in interactions with adults and other children
  - Imitates the social interactions of others
  - Shows awareness of and responds to the feelings of others
  - Develops social play (peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake, finger plays, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Engages in social games (playful give and take, itsy-bitsy spider, etc.)
- Recognizes familiar people, in person or in a photograph
- Expresses self verbally and nonverbally (laughs, cries, says "No", names the emotion, etc.)
- Responds to and initiates interaction with others (offers toy, hugs, pats, asks to be read to, etc.)
- Begins to show empathy toward others (identifies feelings of others, comforts or offers a comfort item, etc.)
- Plays alongside a peer, imitating actions or using similar materials

The Adult

- Knows the children and families as individuals, and appreciates differences in values and backgrounds
- Provides opportunities for children to develop an awareness of their own feelings, as well as ideas and actions of others
- Provides opportunities for children to feel accepted in the group
- Comforts children when they are distressed
- Builds trust by providing support while children are interacting with others
- Speaks to child in a calm voice at eye level
- Provides consistent routines (group time, lunch time, nap time, etc.)
- Interprets children's communication attempts to other children and adults ("You said, 'ba'- do you want the ball?")
- Encourages turn-taking and cooperation during communication and play

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Duplicate materials and accessible equipment that allow for young children to explore alone or together with others
- Interesting toys and materials that represent families and diverse cultures (family photographs, dolls, play materials, books representing other cultures, etc.)

Social & Emotional Development

Sense of Self
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child initiates, explores and plays with objects and materials
- Child begins to distinguish self from others
- Child shows likes and dislikes for people and materials
- Child shows growing independence in a range of activities, routines and tasks

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Begins to discover self (puts fingers or toes in mouth, coos and babbles, touches own image in the mirror, etc.)
- May become upset when an unfamiliar person approaches
- Notices and mimics responses as reflected by adults
- Explores materials and the environment freely by looking, tasting, smelling, feeling and hearing
- Engages in natural problem solving activities (looks at or reaches for desired object, repeats an action to make something happen, etc.)
- Provides cues to indicate needs (turns head away when full, reaches for bottle, feeds self finger food when ready for table food, etc.)

The Adult

- Observes child and responds based on individual needs throughout the daily routine
- Consistently nurtures and responds to the physical and emotional needs of the child
- Provides a variety of interesting materials for children to explore using their senses (different textures, colors, scents, tastes, etc.)
- Models self-confidence and positive attitude in interactions with children and others
- Promotes independence and self-help skills
- Follows child's lead during play and exploration

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Safe space with interesting materials that encourage children's interaction, involvement, exploration and experimentation (mirrors, water and sand play areas, shape sorters, etc.)
- Materials that reflect the lives of the children and their families, and the world around them (family photos, pictures, books, dolls, foods, etc.)

Sense of Self
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Social & Emotional Development

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to distinguish self from others

- Child develops independence, confidence, and competence
  - Likes self and shows pride in accomplishments
  - Shows growing independence and problem solving in a range of play activities, routines and tasks
  - Shows initiative through decision making and exploration
  - Shows increasing concentration or persistence on tasks

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Identifies self and others in person, in the mirror, and through photographs
- Openly expresses moods, emotions and desires (laughs, cries, states desires, "Me do it", "Mine", "Up", "No", etc.)
- Selects and explores chosen materials and activities independently, engages in pretend play
- Practices problem solving skills (crawls out from under a table before standing up, going around an object that is in the way of the push toy, etc.)
- Does things for self (assists with dressing, feeding, drinking from a cup, etc.)
- Accomplishes part or all of tasks (begins to use the toilet, washes hands, etc.)

The Adult

- Observes child and responds based on individual needs throughout the daily routine
- Provides individualized care throughout the daily routine
- Consistently nurtures and responds to the physical and emotional needs of the child (answers questions, responds to attempts at language, reflects emotions, etc.)
- Provides a variety of interesting materials for children to explore using their senses (different textures, colors, scents, tastes, etc.)
- Models self-confidence in interactions with children and others
- Promotes independence and self-help skills
- Invites families to share traditions, special games, foods, dance, etc.

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Safe space with materials that encourage children's interaction, involvement, exploration and experimentation (mirrors, water and sand play areas, shape sorters, etc.)
- Materials that reflect the lives of the children and their families, and the world around them (family photos, pictures, books, dolls, foods, etc.)

Social & Emotional Development

Self Regulation
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child expresses emotions and begins to initiate ways to calm self
- Child explores the environment freely, responding to supportive guidance
- Child provides cues indicating wants and needs through purposeful actions and gestures
- Child depends on frequent reminders to learn boundaries

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Communicates feelings through nonverbal cues (smiles, cries, laughes, gestures, etc.)
- With support from trusted adults, recovers from distress and calms self with familiar comfort items (sucks thumb, touches and smells a favorite blanket, etc.)
- Calms when adults provide nurturing and consistent responses to children's signals throughout the daily routine (for attention, food, diaper change, rest, etc.)
- Responds appropriately to repeated reminders and redirection

The Adult

- Establishes a trusting, caring, relationship with each child
- Provides words and positive responses to guide children's behavior
- Models how to treat people and materials gently
- Maintains consistent and individualized routines to meet the physical and emotional needs of the children
- Soothes and calms the child in response to the child's feelings and behaviors

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A consistent daily routine designed to meet the individual needs of each child
- A safe space for exploration (low shelves, carpeted and tile areas, grass, etc.)
- Softness and harmony to promote relaxation (soft lighting, comforting music, and gentle voices, etc.)

Self Regulation
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child expresses emotions and shows concern for others
  - Expresses emotions nonverbally, eventually developing the communication skills to express self verbally or through other alternative means
  - Shows awareness and responds appropriately to the feelings of others
  - Calms self after excitement or frustration

- Child begins to develop an understanding of boundaries and routines, and follows them when reminded
  - Responds appropriately to supportive guidance
  - Anticipates daily events in a consistent routine

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Expresses feelings and emotions through gestures, sounds, and words
- Calms self with familiar comfort items and reminders (touches and smells a favorite blanket, looks at pictures of familiar adults, etc.)
- Begins to participate in the daily routine (assists with picking up before going outside, washes hands before meal time, etc.)
- Begins to learn behaviors to deal with aggressive feelings (uses words, finds adult, walks away, etc.)
- Carries out simple rules when stated in positive, brief statements and are reminded in advance ("We walk down the hall," "Feet on the floor," etc.)

The Adult

- Establishes trusting, caring and reassuring relationships with each child
- Assists and encourages child to use language rather than aggressive actions in their relationships with others (asks peers to share, expresses feelings, etc.)
- Remains calm and supportive during children's struggles with independence
- Coaches and reinforces positive social interaction (turn-taking, hugs, playing side by side, etc.)
- Anticipates the actions of toddlers to prevent them from getting hurt or hurting others
- Maintains consistent and individualized routines to meet the physical and emotional needs of the children
- Provides reminders of ways that children can calm themselves

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A consistent daily routine that allows for a variety of active and quiet times, movement, and time to explore alone or with others
- A safe space for exploration (low shelves, carpeted and tile areas, grass, etc.)
- Spaces and/or materials that allow children to calm themselves (cozy area, books, soft toys, stuffed animals, etc.)

Resources

Social & Emotional Development

Baby Minds: Brain Building Games Your Baby Will Love -- Linda Acredolo and Susan Goodwyn

Bright Futures in Practice: Mental Health -- Michael Jellinek

The Developing Child (10th Edition) -- Helen Bee and Denise Roberts Boyd

Magic Trees of the Mind: How to Nurture Your Child's Intelligence, Creativity, and Healthy Emotions from Birth Through Adolescence -- Marian Diamond and Janet Hopson

Me, Myself and I: How Children Build Their Sense of Self: 18 to 36 Months -- Kyle D. Pruett

Play Time/Social Time: Organizing Your Classroom to Build Interaction Skills -- Samuel L. Odom

Right from Birth: Building Your Child's Foundation For Life -- Craig T. Ramey and Sharon L. Ramey

Tender Care and Early Learning: Supporting Infants and Toddlers in Child Care Settings -- Jacalyn Post and Mary Hohmann

Touchpoints -- T. Berry Brazelton

Books for Children

Animal Kisses -- Barney Saltzberg

Baby Faces -- Roberta Grobel Intrater

The Baby's Lap Book -- Kay Chorao

Be Gentle! -- Virginia Miller

The Chocolate-Covered-Cookie Tantrum -- Deborah Blumenthal

Counting Kisses -- Karen Katz

I Can -- Helen Oxenbury

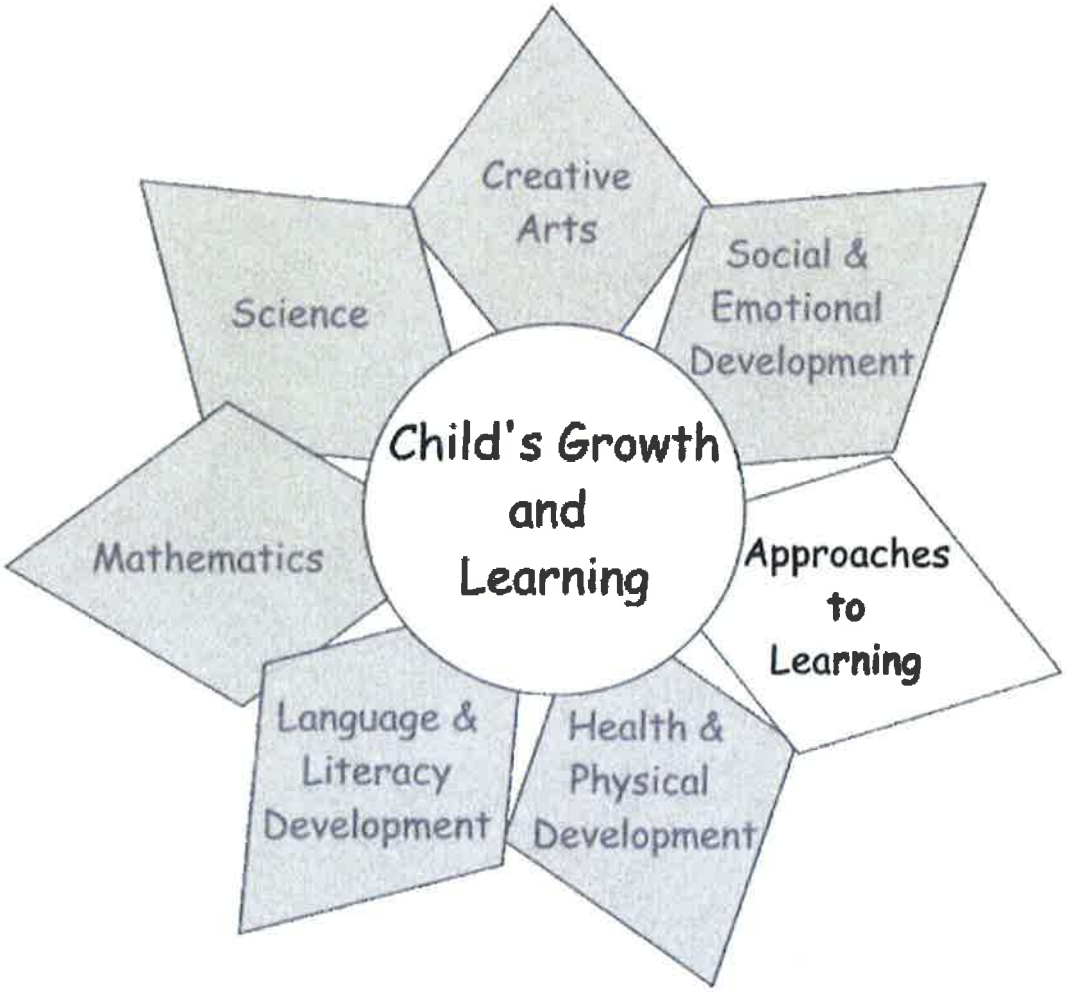
"More More More" Said the Baby -- Vera B. Williams

Pat the Bunny -- Dorothy Kunhardt

Peek-A-Boo! -- Janet Ahlberg and Allan Ahlberg

You're Just What I Need -- Ruth Krauss

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3



Approaches to Learning

- Initiative and Curiosity
- Sensory Exploration and Problem Solving

For young children, growing and learning begins with each child's personal experiences, and their openness and curiosity about new discoveries. With consistent environments and trusting, responsive adults, children have the emotional security necessary for exploring, growing and learning.

A child's learning style is nurtured in an environment of trusting exploration, and is reflected in the ability to use persistence, initiative and the motivation to learn new skills.

Infants and toddlers gain new knowledge by taste, touch, smell, sight, sound, feelings, and through their physical actions. They begin to develop an awareness of themselves and others through their social interactions.

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 that encourage the child to try new things and experience success.

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
- Whenever possible, use words and phrases in the child's native language when introducing new ideas/concepts
- Provide opportunities for interaction 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
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Approaches to Learning

Widely Held Expectations

- Child uses initiative, curiosity and persistence to learn about the world
  - Explores the environment through movement and the use of senses including mouthing toys, kicking legs, waving arms, etc.
  - Learns through discovery, imitation, and repetition
- Child communicates through sounds, gestures, and beginning oral language
- Child chooses from a variety of materials and methods of exploration

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Observes other children and adults
- Engages in a variety of methods of communication (cries, uses sounds, points to desired objects, begins to use one word statements or signs, etc.)
- Imitates the actions of adults and other children (sounds, facial expressions, gestures, self-help skills, etc.)
- Explores using movement, space, and materials (looks towards sound, mouths toys, kicks or swats at mobile, bangs on table or floor, etc.)
- Shows interest in stories, rhymes, songs, or simple games

The Adult

- Provides a reliable routine designed to meet each child's individual needs
- Describes to children what they are experiencing (feeling, hearing, touching, seeing, etc.)
- Asks questions and helps children find answers through active, hands-on exploration
- Provides a variety of materials and experiences that encourage exploration, movement and hands on discovery (rattles, activity boxes, soft books, etc.)
- Responds to children's exploration and discovery with enthusiasm and encouragement

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A safe, natural space for children to explore (minimal use of playpens, cribs, car seats and other confining spaces, etc.)
- A variety of sensory experiences (mirrors, rattles, bells, open containers to fill and empty, lightweight blocks, etc.)
- Safe materials of cloth, plastic, rubber in a variety of shapes, textures and sizes (large enough not to be a choking hazard)

Initiative and Curiosity
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child uses initiative, curiosity and persistence to learn about the world
  - Explores the environment through movement and the use of senses
  - Learns through discovery, imitation, and repetition
- Child learns through imaginative and interactive play
- Child uses oral language or other alternative methods of communication to ask questions or find solutions
- Child chooses from a variety of materials and methods of exploration

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Explores using movement, space, and materials (rolls or kicks a ball, manipulates shape sorters, builds creations with blocks, etc.)
- Engages in an activity alongside another child
- Imitates the actions of adults and other children (sounds, facial expressions, gestures, self-help skills, etc.)
- Makes choices about which stories, rhymes, songs, simple games, etc. to read, sing, play; which clothes to wear, etc.
- Asks questions repeatedly ("Why?", "How come?", "What's that?", etc.)
- Engages in pretend play around familiar events (arranges a row of chairs to become a bus, creates a tea party, talks on a toy phone, etc.)

The Adult

- Describes to children what they are experiencing (feeling, hearing, touching, seeing, etc.)
- Asks open-ended questions to engage children's imagination (require more than a one-word answer), including questions asking why, what, how, etc.
- Asks questions and helps children find answers through active, hands-on exploration
- Provides a variety of open-ended materials, opportunities and choices (water play, art materials, stacking and sorting materials, etc.)
- Responds to children's curiosity and questions with enthusiasm and encouragement

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A safe, natural space for children to explore with duplication of favorite toys and materials
- A variety of sensory experiences (boxes, large colored beads for stringing, water play materials, dress-up clothes, materials from nature, etc.)
- Safe materials of cloth, plastic, rubber in a variety of shapes, textures and sizes (large enough not to be a choking hazard)

Sensory Exploration & Problem Solving
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Approaches to Learning

Widely Held Expectations

- Child notices and shows interest in and excitement with familiar objects, people and events
- Child explores environment and persists when facing challenges
- Child Experiments with cause and effect

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Looks for and finds an object or person that disappears from sight
- Tries one or two ways to reach an object or person (pulls on a blanket to bring a toy closer, rolls over, moves around obstacles to reach a desired object, etc.)
- Explores using materials and movement spontaneously (puts fingers/toes in mouth, rolls toward a toy, plays peek-a-boo, presses key or button to make noises, etc.)
- Uses repetition to discover materials and new skills
- Looks to the adult for help when trying to accomplish a task (makes eye contact with adult when experiencing difficulty, hands a toy to an adult, etc.)

The Adult

- Watches closely and describes to children what they are experiencing (feeling, hearing, touching, seeing, etc.)
- Asks questions and helps children find answers through active, hands-on exploration
- Provides opportunities to increase the child's ability to make independent choices
- Gives children ample time to problem solve without intervening
- Responds to children's exploration and discovery with enthusiasm and encouragement
- Arranges the environment to encourage problem solving and minimize "No's"
- Understands that 'getting messy' is part of the child's learning experience
- Shows excitement when child attempts new activity

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials that encourage discovery, imitation, and repetition (mirrors, books, music, wind up toys, etc.)
- Stacking blocks, activity boxes, containers to fill and dump, squeaky toys, outdoor play time, etc.
- Musical toys, materials of various textures, things to push, roll, swing, etc.

Sensory Exploration & Problem Solving
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child tries multiple ways to solve a problem and is highly involved and persistent
  - Uses active exploration, trial and error, and words to solve problems
  - Demonstrates persistence in problem solving
  - Increases ability to find more than one solution
  - Uses previously successful methods to solve a problem
- Child Experiments with cause and effect
- Child shows increasing ability to identify similar objects from a variety of materials

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Demonstrates increasing control in manipulation of materials and movement
- Manipulates materials to cause an action (winds up a toy to make it go, hits the drum to make a sound, etc.)
- Attempts a task for a minute or two before asking for assistance
- Tries several methods to solve a problem (moves obstacles to reach a desired object, twists, pounds and pulls to take an object apart, etc.)
- Uses an object as a tool (a low chair to climb higher, a paintbrush to paint, etc.)
- Selects items that match (cars from a bucket of vehicles, blocks of the same color, etc.)

The Adult

- Asks questions and helps children find answers through active, hands-on exploration
- Helps children identify people, places, and things 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 (to touch, taste, listen to, observe, etc.)
- Gives children ample time to problem-solve without intervening
- Responds to children's curiosity and questions with enthusiasm and encouragement
- Arranges the environment to encourage problem solving and minimize "No's"
- Understands that 'getting messy' is part of the child's learning experience

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials that encourage discovery, imitation, and repetition (mirrors, books, musical instruments, wind up toys, etc.)
- Simple puzzles, sand and water play toys, nesting cups and containers, finger paint, wind chimes, etc.

Resources

125 Brain Games for Babies -- Jackie Silberg

125 Brain Games for Toddlers and Twos: Simple Games to Promote Early Brain Development -- Jackie Silberg

Baby Play and Learn -- Penny Warner

Childspace Infants and Toddlers: A Program Guide and Caregiver Workbook -- Jane Warren

Games to Play with Babies (3rd Edition) -- Jackie Silber

Higglety Pigglety Pop -- Jackie Weismann

Infant/Toddler: Introducing Your Child to the Joy of Learning -- Earladeen Badger

Learning Through Play: Blocks -- Ellen Booth Church

The Right Stuff for Children Birth to 8; Selecting Play Materials to Support Development (NAEYC) -- Martha Bronson

Thrifty Nifty Stuff for Little Kids -- Dee Blose

What's Going On In There?: How the Brain and Mind Develop in the First Five Years of Life -- Lise Eliot

Books for Children

Alphabet Under Construction -- Denise Fleming

The Boy Who Wouldn't Go to Bed -- Helen Cooper

Brown Bear, Brown Bear What Do You See? -- Bill Martin, Jr.

Color -- Ruth Heller

Corduroy -- Don Freeman

From Head to Toe -- Eric Carle

Goodnight Moon -- Margaret Wise Brown

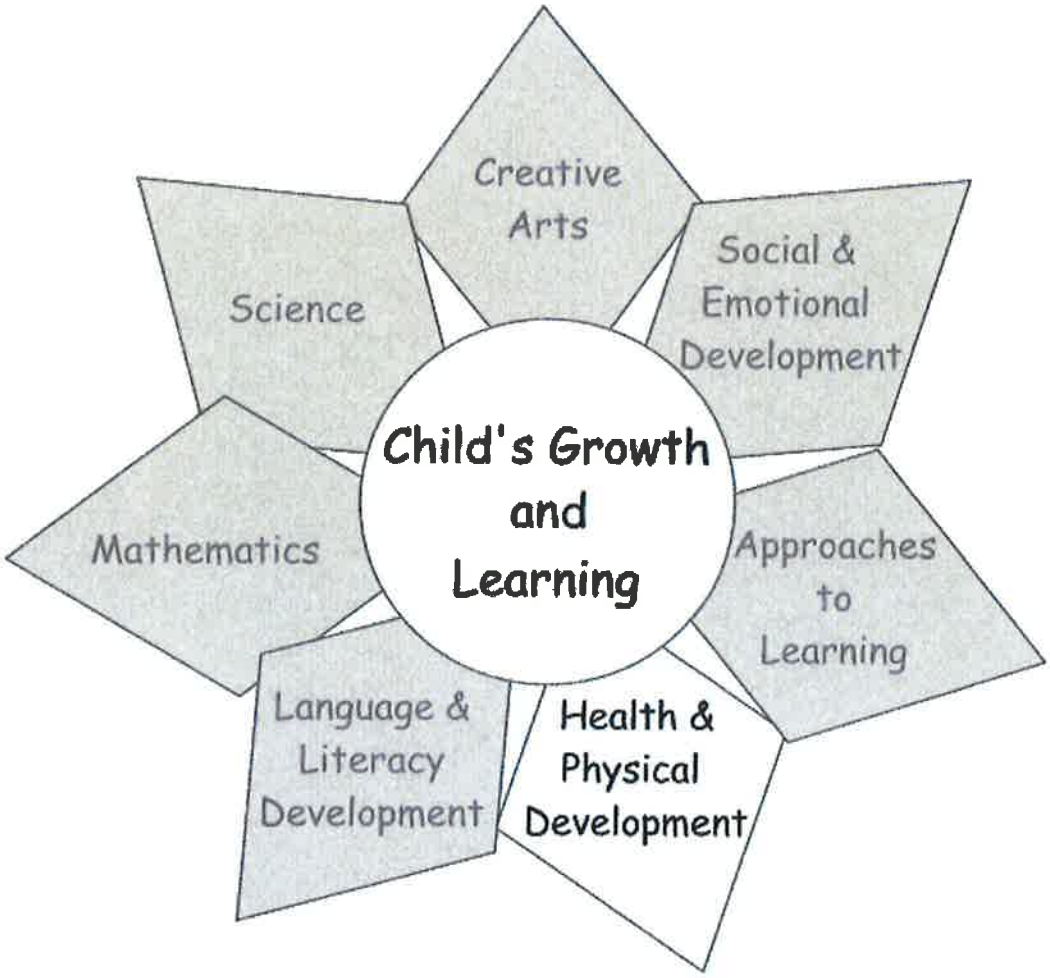
I Can -- Helen Oxenbury

Maisey Drives The Bus -- Lucy Cousins

Snow Play -- Kate Spohn

What Does Baby Say? -- Karen Katz

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3



Health and Physical Development

- Fine (Small) Motor Skills
- Gross (Large) Motor Skills
- Health Behaviors and Practices
- Nutrition
- Self Help Skills

All young children require consistent, caring adult supervision and support to make sure health needs are being met. These needs include good nutrition, primary and preventive health and dental care, and healthy, safe environments. Learning experiences are integrated into these basic activities, which should be structured to encourage infants and toddlers to explore their world, promote coordination and strength, enhance thinking skills, and develop an "I can do it" mentality. Young children should be introduced to indoor and outdoor space and facilities that allow them to experience a variety of developmentally appropriate physical activities and help them develop the foundation for a healthy lifestyle.

The development of fine (small) motor and gross (large) motor skills, as well as self-help skills, is a critical part of development for infants and toddlers. These skills are essential for the successful achievement of developmental milestones during the first three years. They also serve as a foundation for the development of future academic skills such as reading and writing.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- Ensure that materials in indoor and outdoor environments are safe and easily accessible (height, size, location)
- Use verbal, visual, and physical cues to help the child know what to do
- Provide encouragement and support for the child to maximize successful attempts to accomplish tasks
- Provide physical guidance and support, if needed, for children having difficulty with motor tasks
- Provide adaptive equipment and materials as needed to ensure child's successful 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.

Fine (Small) Motor Skills
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Health & Physical Development

Widely Held Expectations

- Child uses eyes, mouth and hands to explore large and small objects that are within reach, developing more purposeful actions over time
  - Increases eye-hand coordination to perform a variety of simple activities
  - Begins to develop fine (small) motor skills through playing with toys and materials
- Child actively explores the environment and manipulates objects
  - Discovers the properties of objects (texture, sound, taste, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Engages in activities which require eye-hand coordination and the use of small muscles (puts items in mouth, bats at objects, grasps toys, etc.)
- Explores textures in the environment (carpet, tile, rugs, grass, etc.)
- Handles objects with growing skill (rattles, simple toys, etc.) that are large enough not to be a choking hazard
- Begins to manipulate materials (kicks at mobile, puts objects into containers, dumps items, stacks blocks, etc.)
- Begins cause and effect play with toys (pushes button on toy to hear music or see lights flash)

The Adult

- Ensures that materials do not present choking or other safety hazards
- Plans meaningful and challenging activities with materials that support the development of fine (small) motor skills (plays with rattles, blocks, plastic keys, etc.)
- Allows opportunities for spontaneous exploration that encourage fine (small) motor skill development
- Provides daily opportunities for hands-on activities and manipulation of materials during indoor and outdoor play, including tummy time for non-mobile infants
- Protects children from toxic materials, such as those containing lead, and cleaning products

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Variety of age appropriate toys and materials and household items (rattles, musical toys, simple blocks, pots, pans, spoons, etc.)
- Various toys and materials placed at the child's level for independent access (soft animals, dolls, nesting cups, books, etc.)

Fine (Small) Motor Skills
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child uses hands and fingers to control objects to demonstrate increasing fine (small) motor coordination
  - Increases eye-hand coordination skills to perform a variety of tasks
  - Develops fine (small) motor skills through playing with toys and materials
  - Uses strength and control to perform simple tasks

- Child actively explores the environment and manipulates objects
  - Explores drawing and writing by scribbling and painting
  - Puts puzzles together, sets table with dishes and play food, etc.

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Explores textures in the environment (indoor and outdoor materials that are smooth, rough, soft, hard, squishy, etc.)
- Participates in activities which require the use of small muscles (cause and effect play, action activated toys, container play, etc.)
- Handles objects with growing skill (places shapes in corresponding opening in shape box, strings large beads, completes simple puzzles, etc.)
- Puts connecting blocks together and pulls them apart with relative ease
- Holds and uses large crayons and pencils, paint brushes, scissors, etc.

The Adult

- Ensures that materials do not present choking or other safety hazards
- Provides daily opportunities for outdoor play
- Provides meaningful and challenging activities to help children build more advanced fine (small) motor skills
- Protects children from toxic materials, such as those containing lead, and cleaning products

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- **Variety of age appropriate toys and materials and household items (puzzles, musical toys, simple blocks, pots, pans, spoons, etc.)**
- **Various toys and materials placed at the child's level for independent access (cars, dolls, puppets, pegs/peg boards, etc.)**

Gross (Large) Motor Skills
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Health & Physical Development

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to develop gross (large) motor skills
  - Waves arms, kicks legs, rolls over, sits up, etc.
- Child builds skills in coordination, balance, body awareness and coordination
- Child actively explores a safe and supportive environment, both indoors and outdoors
  - Crawls, cruises, walks with increasing ability

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Gains voluntary control of arm and leg movements
- Begins to use arms and legs purposefully (lifts head, claps hands, holds arms out for dressing, pulls to stand, throws objects, etc.)
- Engages in gross (large) motor activities (rolls over, sits, crawls, stands, walks, etc.)
- Imitates activities involving gross (large) motor movement (pat-a-cake, peek-a-boo, so-big, etc.)

The Adult

- Allows the child floor time to move freely and use gross (large) motor skills to explore the environment
- Encourages the child to use a variety of gross (large) muscle movements (roll, crawl, sit, stand, etc.) both indoors and outdoors, on a daily basis
- Plays imitation games with the child to encourage development of body awareness and gross (large) motor skills
- Provides a safe environment for exploration (outlets covered, toxic materials out of reach, sharp objects/corners removed or covered, etc.)
- Limits infant's time in confining equipment (swings, bouncers, exersaucers, cribs, car seats, etc.); walkers should not be used

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of equipment and materials to encourage gross (large) motor development (balls, push/pull toys, small climbing structures, etc.)
- Open space for movement and exploration, both indoors and outdoors (open floor space for crawling, pulling up to stand, cruising, walking, etc.)
- Soft surface materials of various heights for climbing over, on, around, etc.

Gross (Large) Motor Skills
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child develops gross (large) motor skills
  - Runs, jumps, hops, throws, etc.
  - Coordinates both hands to manipulate large objects
- Child demonstrates coordination, balance, and body awareness
- Child actively explores a safe and supportive environment, both indoors and outdoors
  - Walks, runs, climbs, hops, rolls, etc.
- Child shows growing skill in climbing up and down steps

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Plays actively in both indoor and outdoor settings daily
- Engages in increasingly complex gross (large) motor tasks (runs, climbs, walks up stairs holding someone's hand or a rail, rides a tricycle, etc.)
- Participates in a variety of gross (large) motor activities (dances, throws a ball, "Ring Around the Rosey", etc.)

The Adult

- Acknowledges and supports the child's need to move and be active throughout the day
- Provides adequate time for the child to practice, explore and expand motor skills and interests
- Provides space and supervision for both indoor and outdoor activities on a daily basis
- Provides a safe environment for exploration (outlets covered, toxic materials out of reach, sharp objects/corners removed or covered, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of equipment and materials to encourage gross (large) motor development (riding toys, climbing apparatus, steps, etc. and balls, push/pull toys, blocks, etc.)
- Open space for movement and exploration, both indoors and outdoors, that meet safety standards including cushioning material under climbing equipment
- A variety of surfaces to explore outdoors (grass, dirt, sand, cement, etc.)

Health Behaviors & Practices
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Health & Physical Development

Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows increasing awareness of health and safety practices through repetition, imitation and adult conversation about what is happening
- Child shows interest in physical activities that promote health
- Child begins to understand and initiate good hygiene practices (offers hands to be washed, mimics cleaning, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Participates in health and hygiene activities (diapering, washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- Responds to adult guidance related to health and safety practices ("Let's wash your hands", "Time for a diaper change", etc.)
- Participates in physical activities, both indoors and outdoors

The Adult

- Provides a safe physical environment; completes regular safety checks, both indoors and outdoors
- Models good health and safety practices, especially proper hand washing techniques
- Performs caregiving routines slowly and carefully, telling child what is coming next, and waiting for child readiness before taking each step
- Provides opportunities for children to be physically active
- Closely supervises children and monitors their physical health including procedures to follow regarding allergies, medications, etc.

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Safe physical space for children to explore without risks to health and safety, both indoors and outdoors
- Space and furnishings which allow for sound health and hygiene practices (separate diapering and food prep areas, sinks, refrigerators, etc.)
- Posted health and safety guidelines, including schedule for washing/sanitizing toys and materials
- Safe sleeping environment (crib or playpen with firm mattress, no thick blankets, toys, pillows, bumper pads, or other soft items)

Health Behaviors & Practices
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows increasing awareness of health and safety practices and guidelines
- Child shows interest in physical activities that promote health (wiping off tables, dressing for the weather, etc.)
  - Begins to understand the benefits of exercise
- Child begins to understand and initiate good hygiene practices (washes hands, offers to help with cleaning, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Participates in a variety of physical activities, both indoors and outdoors (runs, jumps, climbs, swings, hops, etc.)
- Cooperates with and participates in health and hygiene activities (washing hands, brushing teeth, etc.)
- Responds to adult guidance and reminders related to health and safety ("Feet on the floor", "Time to wash hands", etc.)

The Adult

- Provides a safe physical environment; completes regular safety checks, both indoors and outdoors
- Models good health and safety practices, especially proper hand washing techniques
- Provides encouragement and opportunities to learn health and safety practices
- Provides opportunities for children to be physically active
- Closely supervises children and monitors their physical health including procedures to follow regarding allergies, medications, etc.

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Safe physical space for children to explore without risks to health and safety, both indoors and outdoors
- Space and furnishings which allow for sound health and hygiene practices (separate diapering and food prep areas, child-sized toilets and sinks, refrigerators, etc.)
- Posted health and safety guidelines, including schedule for washing/sanitizing toys and materials

Health & Physical Development

Nutrition
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child gains weight within normal growth range
- Child begins to develop healthy eating and lifestyle habits
  - Successfully transitions from breast milk or formula to milk or milk substitute, such as soy
  - Begins eating solid food
- Child shows increasing independence in ability to feed self

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Shows increasing interest in food and meal times (from recognizing breast or bottle to holding bottle or cup; from opening mouth for food to finger feeding, etc.)
- Tries and eats a variety of foods
- Uses actions or words to indicate needs/preferences (turns head away, reaches toward food, etc.)

The Adult

- Is aware of allergies of individual child; serves foods that do not pose a choking hazard
- Responds to infants' individual feeding needs and schedules
- Holds infants while bottle feeding
- Follows health and safety guidelines related to child nutrition
- Works with parents and health care providers to coordinate the introduction of new foods
- Acknowledges families' cultural or religious food preferences
- Respects the child's food preferences and developing self-feeding abilities
- Encourages the child to establish healthy eating habits
- Provides accommodations for breast feeding, and/or use of expressed breast milk

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials and furnishings to support children's developing nutrition habits and independence in eating (child-sized furniture, dishes, utensils, cups, etc.)
- Good hygiene and sanitation practices related to food and nutrition; hand washing procedure signs are posted and followed
- Posted individual feeding schedules for infants including allergies and family food preferences

Nutrition
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to develop healthy eating and lifestyle habits
  - Eats a variety of table foods
- Child shows increasing independence in developing eating abilities
  - Eats own food at the table with other children and/or adults
- Child communicates nutrition-related information
  - Asks for more
  - Names foods that are served

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Tries a variety of foods (vegetables, meat, breads, dairy, fruits, etc.)
- Begins to serve self some foods with adult assistance
- Eats independently using child-sized dishes and utensils
- Exhibits food preferences; may have periods of picky eating or increased appetite
- Shows interest in dramatic play materials related to food and nutrition

The Adult

- Is aware of allergies of individual child; serves foods that do not pose a choking hazard
- Provides assistance to children in feeding themselves and helping with cleanup
- Encourages children's interest in and exploration of foods, both real and pretend
- Acknowledges families' cultural or religious food preferences
- Follows health and safety guidelines related to child nutrition
- Sets realistic expectations for children in developing manners and etiquette

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials and furnishings to support children's developing nutrition habits and independence in eating (child-sized tables, chairs, etc.)
- Visual (books, pictures, etc.) and dramatic play props (dishes, foods, etc.) that support children's growing interest in foods and nutrition
- Good hygiene and sanitation practices related to food and nutrition; hand washing procedure signs are posted and followed
- Posted information on individual child allergies and family food preferences

Health & Physical Development

Self-Help Skills
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child calms self with familiar, comforting items and adult support
- Child shows increasing awareness of the function of self-care materials
  - Puts tissue to nose, toothbrush to mouth
- Child cooperates with care routines
  - Dressing, bathing, feeding

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Uses different cries, words and gestures to indicate wants and needs (hunger, sickness, sleepy, joy, etc.)
- Shows body awareness related to basic care routines (quiets when placed on changing table, puts brush/comb to hair, etc.)
- Begins to participate in care routines (washes and dries hands with adult assistance, puts arms out when shirt is being put on, participates in picking up toys, etc.)
- Holds own spoon while being spoon fed

The Adult

- Understands and recognizes the meaning of different cries
- Meets the child's basic care needs in a consistent and timely manner
- Talks about care routines as they are occurring ("Now we're going to put on your socks.")
- Encourages the child's interest and participation in basic care routines (diapering, dressing, bathing, etc.)
- Makes care routines an enjoyable experience

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Equipment and furnishings that promote health and safety for both children and staff (hand rails, cabinet locks, outlet covers, fenced playground, etc.)
- Sinks, diapering areas, refrigerator, cubbies, cribs, etc., including low sinks or step stools to encourage self-help skills in older infants

Self-Help Skills
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows increasing awareness of the body and its functions
  - Uncomfortable when wet or soiled; may hide to have bowel movement
- Child shows increasing development of self-help skills and materials
  - Knows how various self-care items are used (toothbrush, towel, hairbrush/ comb, etc.)
- Child cooperates with care routines
  - Begins to dress self, brush teeth, etc., with assistance from adult

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Shows increasing independence in dressing, brushing teeth, bathing, toileting, eating, etc.
- Begins toilet training process
- Picks out clothes to wear; may have favorites
- Tries to do things independently (wipes nose with tissue, washes and dries hands independently

The Adult

- Encourages the child's independence in learning self-help skills
- Accepts messiness and accidents as part of the learning process
- Makes care routines an enjoyable experience
- Works with families to coordinate timing and process for toilet training
- Reinforces healthy practices such as brushing teeth or making healthy food choices

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Equipment and furnishings that promote health and safety for both children and staff (hand rails, cabinet locks, outlet covers, fenced playground, etc.)
- Appropriate furnishings to encourage development of self-help skills (steps to sink or toilet, coat hooks and cubbies at child's level, etc.)

Resources

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

Bright Futures in Practice: Nutrition -- Mary Story

Caring for our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs -- American Academy of Pediatrics

Creative Resources for Infants and Toddlers -- Judy Herr and Teri Swim

Outdoor Play Everyday: Innovative Play Concepts for Early Childhood -- Karyn Wellhousen

Stepping Stones to Using Caring for Our Children -- American Academy of Pediatrics

Books for Children

Busy Toes -- C.W. Bowie

Can't You Sleep, Little Bear? -- Martin Waddell

Each Peach Pear Plum -- Janet Alhberg and Allan Ahlberg

Baby Faces: Eat! -- Roberta Grobel Intrater

Fingers, Nose and Toes -- John Pinderhughes

The Foot Book -- Dr. Seuss

Jamberry -- Bruce Degen

Good Night, Baby -- Cheryl Willis Hudson

Growing -- Fiona Pragoff

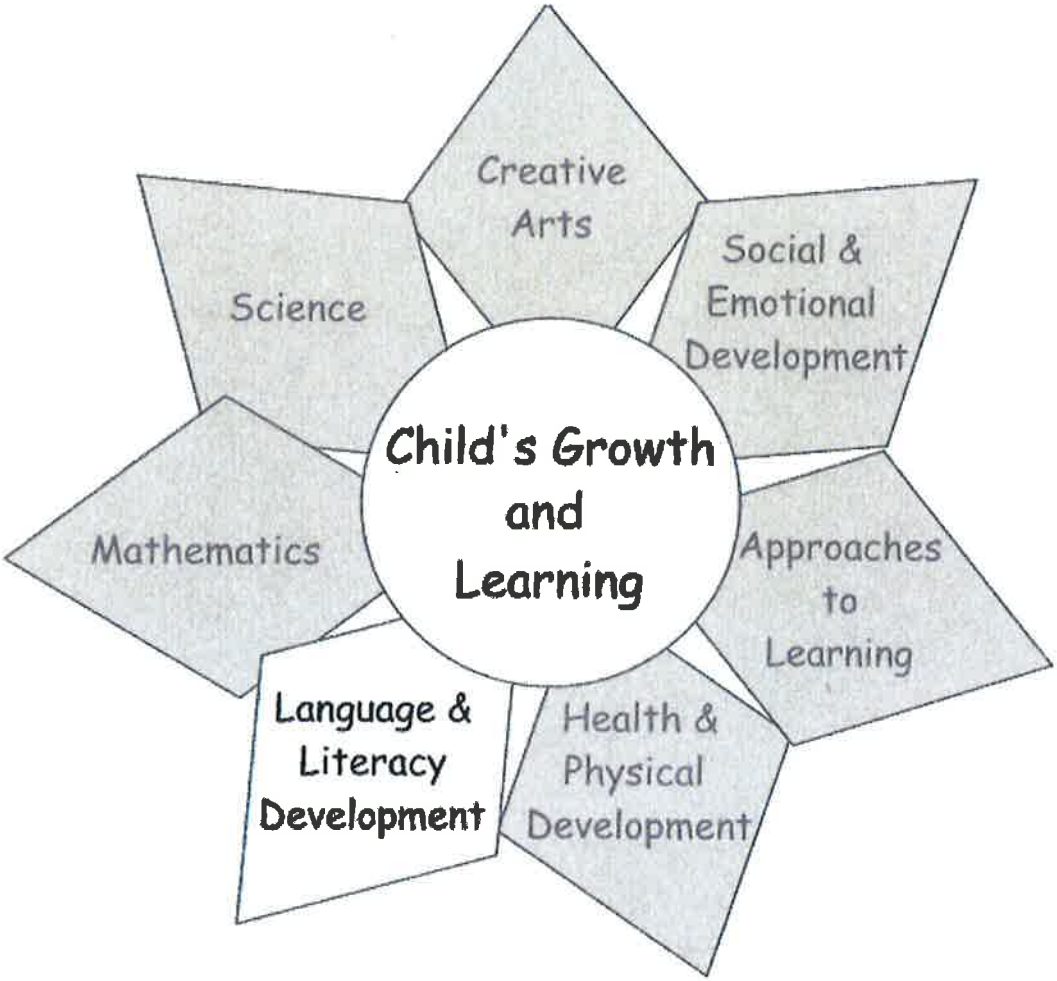
How a Baby Grows -- Nola Buck

Time for Bed -- Mem Fox

The Wheels On The Bus -- Raffi

Where Is Baby's Belly Button? -- Karen Katz

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3



Language and Literacy Development

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

Between birth and three years of age, children begin to learn that they can communicate with adults through crying, gestures, expressions, sounds, and later through words or other alternative methods.

These language skills develop through playing, listening, talking, reading, and learning the skills that adults use to communicate. Early nonverbal interactions (smiling, facial expressions, gestures, etc.) are followed by spoken language, sign language or other alternative communication methods to practice the rules of communication within their culture and family. These skills set the foundation for development in all areas, but especially literacy development.

The adult plays an important role in helping the very young child understand and communicate by being responsive to the infant's/toddler's attempts to communicate, and by providing a rich language environment. During the first three years young children are also beginning to learn about print and writing, and how oral language is reflected in written symbols (drawings). Literacy skills are promoted and supported through play, reading books, scribbling, back-and-forth communication, and interactions with adults. A solid foundation in oral language development in the early years before a child enters school will promote success in reading and writing in the future. Young children who have rich language and literacy experiences are more likely to be successful in learning to read independently.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- Acknowledge the child's current level of communication and build upon it
- Provide good models of communication, including sign language and native language if needed
- 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
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Language & Literacy

Widely Held Expectations

- Child responds to sounds in the environment
  - Turns in the directions of sounds
  - Begins to identify sounds with particular objects (phone, doorbell, car horn, etc.)
- Child begins to listen to words with understanding
- Child begins to follow simple directions
- Child demonstrates understanding of native and/or English language
  - Begins to attach meaning to the sounds, gestures, signs and words heard or seen

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Startles or turns to sounds in the environment (loud sounds, voices, car horn, etc.)
- Responds to familiar words or gestures (stops crying when caregiver says "bottle", smiles or laughs when told "Mommy/Daddy is here" etc.)
- Recognizes familiar social games and routines (smiles or pats hands together when the adult says "pat-a-cake", etc.)
- Responds to simple questions or requests (searches for a toy when asked, "Where's your ball?" etc.)
- Points to objects, pictures, and body parts (nose, eyes, ears, etc.) as part of interactions with adults

The Adult

- Engages children in social games and back and forth communicating
- Pairs words with actions and objects during play activities and daily routines
- Names and describes people, things, and actions during play activities and daily routines
- Follows the child's lead, commenting on the child's actions and sounds
- Encourages parents to develop and maintain their first language in the home

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Stories, songs, words, games and daily schedules in English and the languages of non-English speaking children
- Durable cloth, board or vinyl books, soft toys, and puppets, which are accessible throughout the day

Listening and Understanding
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child listens to simple directions and conversations with understanding
  - Demonstrates understanding of the meaning of stories, social games, songs and poems
- Child follows directions, responds to simple instructions/requests
  - Follows single- and two-step directions
- Child listens to others and responds to feelings and expressed ideas
  - Responds to simple, direct, conversational sentences, either verbally or by actions or gestures
- Child demonstrates understanding of many vocabulary words
  - Builds a growing vocabulary of everyday events, people, and things

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Attends to and gains information from short stories, rhymes, finger plays, songs, etc.
- Demonstrates understanding of native and/or English languages
- Responds with understanding to action words, such as "Let's put the baby in bed"
- Follows directions such as "Please go wash your hands, then sit down at the table"
- Answers simple questions using short sentences
- Imitates sounds and simple rhythms

The Adult

- Engages children in songs, rhymes, finger plays, and stories
- Uses short phrases to describe toddlers' actions in play activities and daily routines
- Names and describes people, things, and actions
- Expands on child's language and answers questions
- Encourages parents to develop and maintain their first language in the home

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Stories, songs, words, games and daily schedules in English and the languages of non-English speaking children and their families
- Sturdy board, vinyl, and cloth books, photo albums, magazines with pictures, catalogs, flannel boards, puppets, etc.
- Quiet location for listening to books on tape
- Opportunities to play listening games and listen to differnt types of sounds

Speaking and Communicating
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Language & Literacy

Widely Held Expectations

- Child communicates needs, wants, feelings, or thoughts through words, gestures, actions, or expressions
  - Cries to indicate different needs
  - Begins to use words and gestures to communicate (coos, babbles, makes sounds, uses sign language, etc.)
  - Begins to initiate interactions with adults and peers

- Child communicates for a variety of purposes
  - Signals for more
  - Greets adults and peers

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Communicates nonverbally with adults and other children (reaches for or turns away to end an interaction, waves, smiles, etc.)
- Communicates verbally with adults and other children (cries, babbles, uses simple words or signs, etc.)
- Engages in vocal play and back and forth communication games with responsive adults
- Communicates needs and interests to get responses from others for comfort, warmth, nourishment and satisfaction

The Adult

- Uses alternate ways to communicate when needed (sign language, gestures, etc.)
- Builds on children's interests to introduce new words and ideas during play activities and daily routines
- Engages children in back and forth communication
- Creates a climate of trust by responding to infants' cues and communications
- Understands that young infants do not intentionally cry or act out in order to "be naughty" or "make you angry", but that they are developing ways to communicate their wants and needs

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials that encourage face-to-face interactions (books, puppets, dolls, mirrors, etc.)
- Pictures of children and their families (books, photos, etc.)

Speaking and Communicating
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child communicates needs, wants, feelings, or thoughts through words, gestures, actions, or expressions
  - Uses words, phrases, short sentences and gestures to communicate

- Child communicates for a variety of purposes
  - Asks questions
  - Initiates social interactions with other children and adults
  - Communicates to show or share with adult

- Child uses new vocabulary words that have been learned

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Communicates nonverbally through expressions and gestures
- Communicates verbally ranging from single words to simple sentences
- Uses words or phrases to express wants, seek attention, protest, comment, or offer greetings
- Names objects or actions in picture books
- Asks questions to achieve more information ("What's that?" , "Why?" etc.)

The Adult

- Uses alternate ways to communicate when needed (sign language, gestures, etc.)
- Builds on children's interests to introduce new words and ideas during play activities and daily routines
- Provides opportunities for children to engage in conversation
- Responds to toddlers' cues and communications
- Engages children in back and forth communication

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials that encourage face-to-face interactions (books, puppets, dolls, mirrors, etc.)
- Pictures of children and their families (photos, books, etc.)

Book Knowledge & Appreciation
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Language & Literacy

Widely Held Expectations

- Child responds to language and shows enjoyment of the sounds and rhythms of language
- Child explores books with interest
  - Mouths, touches, shakes, throws
  - Points at pictures
- Child responds to pictures in book
  - Names pictures in books

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Explores physical features of books (chews, touches, handles, mouths, etc.)
- Explores books (looks at, pats pictures, turns pages, etc.)
- Vocalizes and attends to book as adult talks about the pictures
- Looks at and recognizes favorite books by the cover
- Points to pictures
- Babbles with growing consistency using speech-like words

The Adult

- Provides a variety of books and pictures that are accessible (those that can be manipulated, ones with textures, pop-ups, etc.)
- Looks at and names pictures in books with the child
- Provides books with simple, realistic pictures to build vocabulary, exploring and extending children's understanding of the meaning of new words
- Provides daily lap reading time
- Provides durable books that engage the senses (different textures, bright colors, sounds, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Many types of durable children's books (cloth, vinyl, board, etc.)
- Soft, cozy place for looking at books (pillows, rugs, stuffed animals, etc.)

Book Knowledge & Appreciation
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child demonstrates interest in and appreciation of reading-related activities
  - Explores books
  - Shows interest when stories are read
  - Relates events in story to own knowledge and experience
- Child increases knowledge about books and how they are typically read
  - Holds book right side up
  - Turns pages front to back
- Child responds to pictures in book
  - Describes pictures in books

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Points to and names pictures in book
- Chooses favorite book and looks through as though reading
- Requests favorite book to be read repeatedly
- Uses phrases to describe events in books
- Holds book right side up and turns pages from front to back

The Adult

- Places interesting books and signs/posters in all interest areas
- Reads books with rich, descriptive pictures and vocabulary
- Explores and extends children's understanding of the meaning of new words
- Reads to children daily, individually and/or with others
- Helps children to care for and respect books

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES
- Many types of durable children's books (cloth, board, big books, etc.)
- Soft, cozy place for looking at books (soft chairs, rugs, pillows, stuffed animals, etc.)

Print Awareness & Early Writing
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Language & Literacy

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to develop eye-hand coordination
- Child manipulates materials with increasing precision (reaches for toys, plays with toes, shakes keys to make sound, carries blanket, etc.)
- Child explores with writing materials

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Develops eye-hand coordination, (follows objects with eye, passes objects from one hand to another, waves bye-bye, etc.)
- Scribbles on paper using large crayons or pencils
- Uses thumb and forefinger to pick up items (pincer grasp)

The Adult

- Provides crayons and other art materials for infant to explore
- Respects scribbles as early forms of writing
- Writes child's name on artwork, cubby, and all personal supplies

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of writing tools (large sheets of paper, large crayons and pencils, large paint brushes, etc.)
- Displays of children's art around the room at child's eye level
- Pictures, posters, labels on cubbies and materials, toy shelves etc.

Print Awareness & Early Writing
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child manipulates materials with increasing precision
- Child shows an awareness of print as a form of meaningful communication
  - Environmental print (road signs, signs on stores, symbols, etc.)
- Child shows an interest in early writing
  - Uses scribbles, shapes or pictures to represent specific thoughts, ideas, stories
- Child begins to recognize own name on artwork or possessions

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Uses a variety of writing tools and art materials (easel, brushes, large crayons, pencils, markers, etc.)
- Scribbles spontaneously, often using circular motions
- Identifies familiar symbols or environmental print (names, logos, food signs, etc.)
- Tells adults about drawing and asks adults to write their stories

The Adult

- Displays children's names on artwork, cubbies and all personal supplies
- Models the use of writing and drawing in everyday activities
- Write child's dictation on artwork
- Promotes literacy related play activities (reads stories, play with magnet letters, etc.)
- Respects children's attempts at writing

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Durable books and a variety of writing tools accessible to children (variety of paper, large crayons and pencils, paint brushes, markers, etc.)
- Displays of children's art (including children's beginning attempts at writing) around the room at child's eye level
- Pictures, posters, labels on cubbies and materials, toy shelves, etc.

Resources

Language & Literacy

The Creative Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers -- Amy Laura Dombro, Laura J. Colker, and Diane Trister Dodge

Growing Up Reading: Learning To Read Through Creative Play -- Jill Frankel Hauser

Learning Language and Loving It: A Guide to Promoting Children's Social and Language Development -- Elaine Weitzman and Janice Greenber

Literacy: The Creative Curriculum Approach -- Cate Heroman and Candy Jones

Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever -- Mem Fox

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

The Scientist in the Crib: What Early Learning Tells Us About the Mind -- Alison Gopnick, Andrew N. Meltzoff, and Patricia K. Kuhl

Tender Care and Early Learning: Supporting Infants and Toddlers in Child Care Settings -- Jacalyn Post and Mary Hohmann

Young Children and Picture Books: Literature from Infancy to Six (NAEYC) -- Mary Renck Jalongo

Books for Children

I Love You, Sun I Love You, Moon -- Karen Pandell and Tomie dePaola

My First Animal Board Book -- Dorling Kindersley Publishing

My First Baby Games -- Jane Manning

My Very First Mother Goose -- Iona Archibald Opie

Time For Bed -- Mem Fox

Who's Peeking? -- Charles Reasoner

What Is That? -- Tana Hoban

In the Tall, Tall Grass -- Denise Fleming

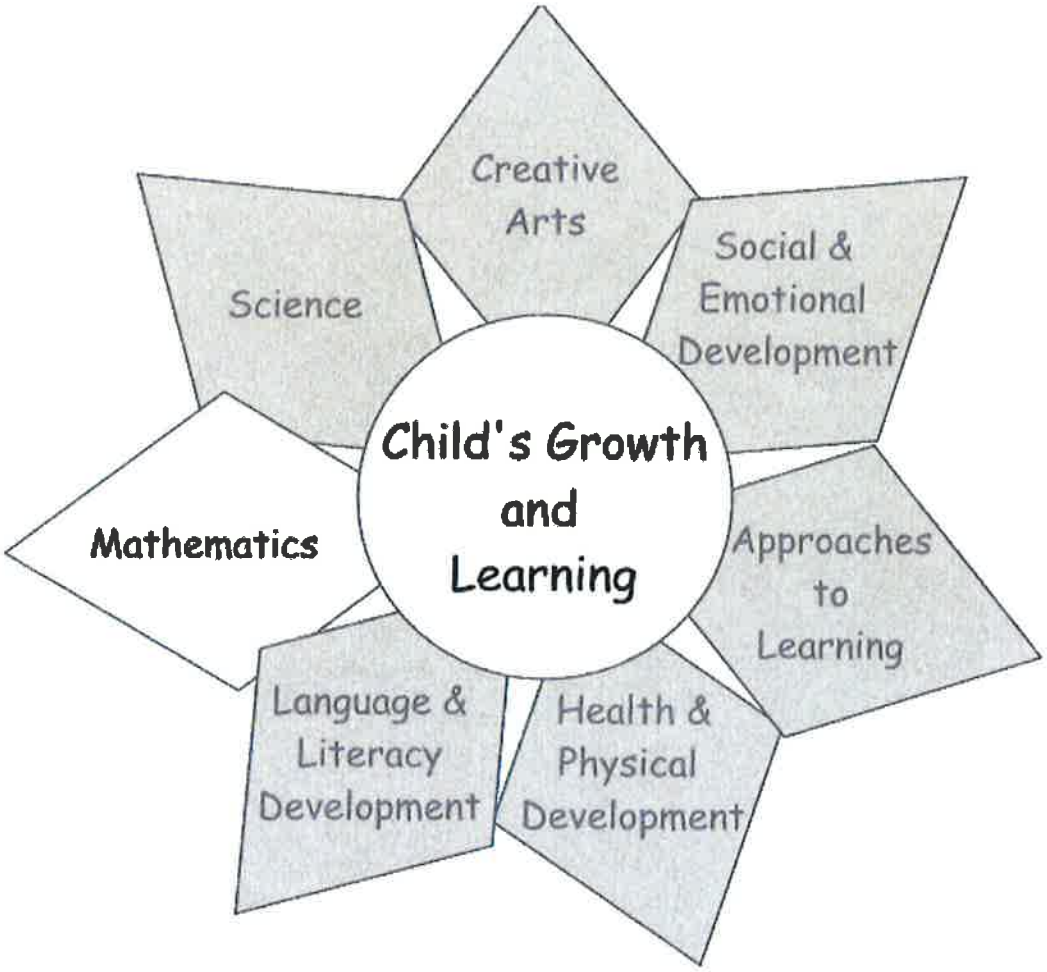
Jessie Bear, What Will You Wear? -- Nancy White Carlstrom

Mama Mama or *Papa Papa* -- Jean Marzollo

On Mother's Lap -- Ann Herbert Scott

Ten, Nine, Eight -- Molly Bang

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3



Mathematics

- Number and Operations
- Spatial Sense
- Patterns and Measurement

Very young children develop mathematical concepts through meaningful and active learning experiences that are broader in scope than numbers and counting.

In an inclusive, developmentally appropriate, play-based environment, infants and toddlers have opportunities to acquire and understand math-related skills and concepts using hands-on materials during play activities and in real-life situations.

These activities can help facilitate the concepts of quantity, time, and space. Adults must be flexible during daily routines and try to capture teachable moments to describe comparison concepts.

Adults must also facilitate 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
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Mathematics

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to develop awareness of quantity
  - Explores a variety of materials
  - Puts toys into containers of various sizes
- Child begins to show interest in real life mathematical concepts
  - Understands the concept of "more" in reference to food or play
- Child begins to imitate counting using some names of numbers

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Indicates preferences (more crackers, no more milk, more music, wants to get down, etc.)
- Experiments with quantities and space (stacks blocks, fills containers, dumps objects, etc.)
- Manipulates similar objects (blocks, large beads, etc.) that are large enough not to be a choking hazard

The Adult

- Describes child's activities using words related to quantity (one, more, another, etc.)
- Exposes child to numbers and number concepts in pictures, books and songs
- Provides materials to explore and manipulate that are large enough not to be a choking hazard
- Models counting objects in child's environment

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials available and accessible within the daily routine for manipulation and exploration (rattles, blocks, stacking rings, etc.)
- Materials that provide examples and encourage use of numbers (books, pictures, toys, etc.)

Number and Operations
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child develops awareness of numbers
  - Counts up to five
  - Uses one to one correspondence
  - Understands quantities up to 3

- Child develops an understanding of the counting process
  - Uses counting words
  - Imitates counting rhymes or songs

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Counts in nursery rhymes or songs ("Three Little Monkeys", "One Two Buckle My Shoe", etc.)
- Places object in 1 to 1 correspondence within play activities and routines (hands each child a cup, places a pretend cookie on each plate, etc.)
- Compares the quantities of small groups of objects, (all, some, none, more, less, etc.)
- Counts to five or higher from memory (recites one, two, three...)
- Identifies a single puzzle piece as "one"

The Adult

- 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 (before, after, later, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials available and accessible within the daily routine for sorting and counting (blocks, large beads, magnetic shapes, etc.)
- Objects that include numbers and number words (clocks, play cash register, measuring cups, etc.)

Mathematics

Spatial Sense
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to develop knowledge of where things are in the environment
  - Explores materials
  - Experiments with gravity and space

- Child develops sense of self in relation to the environment

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Visually follows movement of objects and people
- Gazes at own hands as they move about, waves arms to touch the dangling toy overhead, etc.
- Explores materials by using different actions with toys (shakes rattles, slides cars, rolls balls, etc.)
- Explores space by moving self over, under, through, in and around various objects and spaces
- Experiments with gravity (stacks 2-3 blocks, dangles objects on rings, drops objects off tray, etc.)
- Explores materials by pointing and poking

The Adult

- Provides experiences with toys with different properties (mobiles, squeaky toys, bells, toys with moving parts, cars, etc.)
- Provides blocks, empty boxes, tubes and containers for children to use in creating and constructing
- Uses descriptive words related to spatial concepts (over, under, more, less, etc.)
- Provides large boxes and climbing equipment for children to explore the physical space
- Takes children outside to explore nature and neighborhood

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- **A variety of materials to explore space (blocks, containers, rattles, activity boxes, etc.)**
- **Time and space to explore both indoors and outdoors**

Spatial Sense
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child develops knowledge of where things are in the environment
  - Begins to recognize buildings, stores, signs, parks, etc.

- Child develops geometry and spatial sense
  - Uses comparison words correctly (more, less, bigger, smaller, etc.)
  - Uses words that describe the relative position of things (close, far, up, down, etc.)
  - Learns about shapes (circle, square, triangle, etc.)

- Child groups objects together that are the same in some way

- Child uses language to demonstrate understanding of space and time (next to, on top of, in, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler
- Matches and sorts objects of different sizes and shapes
- Stacks objects and completes structures using a variety of different blocks
- Fills and dumps a variety of containers with different materials
- Moves through obstacle course (climbing over, under, through, around, in, out, etc.)

The Adult
- Provides a variety of puzzles to encourage children to problem-solve and to make comparisons (single and multiple piece puzzles, shape sorters, etc.)
- Provides experiences with different sizes and shapes of objects
- Provides blocks, empty boxes, tubes and containers for children to use in creating and constructing
- Uses descriptive words related to spatial concepts (over, under, more, less, etc.)
- Provides large boxes and climbing equipment for children to explore the physical space
- Takes children outside to explore nature and neighborhood

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES
- **A variety of materials to explore space (blocks, boxes, puzzles, containers etc.)**
- **Time and space to explore both indoors and outdoors**

Patterns and Measurement
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Mathematics

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to create own patterns of self-regulation for sleeping, eating and wakeful play
- Child begins to demonstrate awareness of patterns, first visually, then through manipulation
  - Plays with toys and objects of different sizes and shapes
  - Orders a few objects by size, with assistance
- Child begins to understand time words (after, before, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Shows visual interest in contrasting colors, patterns, textures
- Begins to recognize time sequences ("After we change your diaper, we will read a story," etc.)
- Manipulates objects in a variety of ways to learn about their properties
- Uses simple nesting or stacking toys (nests two to three cups, stacks three to four blocks of graduated size, etc.)

The Adult

- Provides interesting materials for child to look at and play with (posters, stuffed animals, books, mirrors, pictures, balls, etc.)
- Talks about the child's activities using descriptive language related to patterns, and size, etc.
- Provides toys that have incremental sizes (nesting cups, stackable rings, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials of various sizes, colors, textures, and shapes that can be manipulated in a variety of ways (blocks, snap beads, shape sorter, etc.)
- Mobiles, mirrors, visual patterns, etc.

Patterns and Measurement
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to develop knowledge of patterns
  - Begins to complete simple puzzles with varying sizes and shapes
- Child begins to demonstrate knowledge of measurement concepts
  - Understands concepts of big/little, short/tall, heavy/light
- Child shows some understanding of time sequence within the daily routine
- Child compares the size of various everyday objects (puts different people's shoes side by side to see which is longest, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Matches like objects, shapes and colors
- Completes puzzles with pieces of varying sizes and shapes
- Fills and empties containers (with sand or water, etc.)
- Recognizes times in daily routine (time to eat, time to go home, group time, nap time, etc.)
- Describes objects in play using size concepts, (talks about the tall tree on a walk to park, describes big dog, little kitty, etc.)
- Explores measuring tools (measuring cup, ruler, scale, etc.)

The Adult

- Engages in conversations with children about size comparisons as they interact with materials throughout the day
- Helps children see similarities and differences in objects
- Provides a variety of puzzles with different sizes and shapes
- Charts child's changes in height and weight
- Provides sand and water play, giving child opportunities to pour, fill, scoop, weigh, count, dump, etc.

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- **Materials of various sizes, colors, textures, and shapes (blocks, beads, peg boards, matching games, etc.)**
- **Opportunities for indoor/outdoor sand and water play**
- **Posted daily schedule done in both pictures and words**

Resources

Mathematics

Creative Resources for the Early Childhood Classroom (4th Edition) -- Judy Herr

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

Learning Through Play: Math-A Practical Guide -- Sandra Waite-Stupiansky and Nicholas G. Stupiansky

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

Showcasing Mathematics for the Young Child: Activities for Three, Four and Five Year Olds -- Juanita Copely (Editor)

Books for Children

Anno's Counting Book -- Mitsumasa Anno

Baby Minds: Brain-Building Games Your Baby Will Love -- Linda Acredolo and Susan Goodwyn

Baby Play and Learn -- Penny Warner

Catch Me & Kiss Me & Say It Again -- Wendy Watson and Clyde Watson

Five Little Monkeys Jumping On The Bed -- Eileen Christelow

Hand Rhymes -- Marc Tolon Brown

Read Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young -- Jack Prelutsky

Ten, Nine, Eight -- Molly Bang

Two Shoes, New Shoes -- Shirley Hughes

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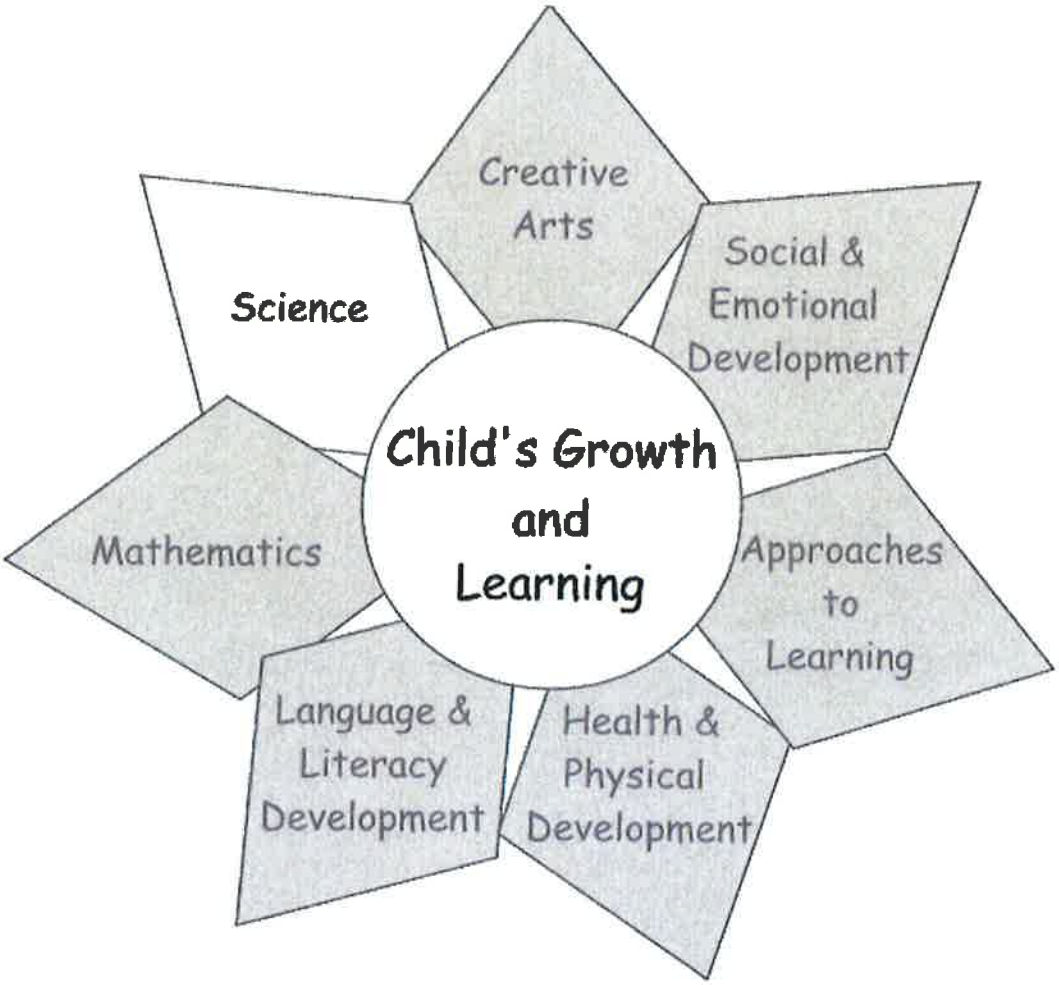


Science

- Scientific Skills and Methods
- Scientific Knowledge

Very young children are natural scientists and are easily fascinated by everyday happenings. During the infant and toddler years, they use their senses to learn about the world around them. Through varied and increasingly complex explorations, they observe, manipulate, listen, reflect, and respond to guidance and encouragement from the adults around them. As they enter their preschool years, they are prepared to make decisions and become higher-level thinkers.

In quality early childhood settings for infants and toddlers, science experiences require a balance of content and process, using a multi-sensory approach. Before age three, children can begin to acquire a foundation of science-related concepts and knowledge on which to build a clear understanding of their world.

Adults should look for opportunities to expose infants and toddlers to science-related concepts and experiences, especially those present in the natural world around them.

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
- Use physical guidance and support when needed to promote the child's full 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.

Scientific Skills & Methods
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Science

Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows interest in surroundings by focusing on faces and objects in close range
- Child gathers information through the senses (mouthing, grasping, reaching, etc.)
- Child repeats actions that have been successful in reaching a goal
  - Uses cause and effect strategies (drops toys over side of highchair, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Learns about the environment through movement and sensory exploration (seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, etc.)
- Shows initiative and curiosity (pursues interesting object – first visually, then by reaching, crawling, etc.)
- Manipulates new toy to discover what it will do
- Pats, pushes, squishes, and pounds play dough to experience how it feels

The Adult

- Provides toys and materials that encourage safe, active exploration based on the child's abilities (rattles, balls, water play, etc.)
- Describes the child's actions and the properties of objects as the child explores and manipulates them
- Supports the child's interest in and exploration of the environment, both indoors and outdoors

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials that are accessible throughout the day for observation, exploration and manipulation (rattles, blocks, activity boxes, etc.)
- Opportunities to experience natural objects and events (rain and snow, living creatures, plants, etc.)

Scientific Skills & Methods
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to develop scientific skills and methods
  - Makes observations, describes objects and actions in the environment
  - Begins to make comparisons between objects that have been observed
  - Demonstrates initiative and curiosity in exploring the environment
- Child uses descriptive words in speech
- Child uses senses, materials, events in nature, and the environment to investigate and expand knowledge

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Explores the environment and uses objects in a variety of ways to find out how they work, what they can do, etc.
- Describes objects and actions (big ball, run fast, lights off, etc.)
- Initiates activity and makes choices (toy to play with, clothing to wear, etc.)
- Uses water and sand toys to explore texture, weight, measurements, etc.

The Adult

- Provides materials that invite and encourage safe manipulation and exploration (blocks, puzzles, art materials, books, puppets, etc.)
- Promotes children's active exploration of the environment, both indoors and outdoors
- Talks with children about their activities (including open-ended questions)
- Encourages children's curiosity and answers questions

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials that are accessible throughout the day for observation, exploration and manipulation, including natural objects and events (plants, fish tank, scales, water and sand toys, etc.)
- Opportunities to experience and interact with sand and water, rain and snow, plants and animals

Scientific Knowledge
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Science

Widely Held Expectations

- Child uses all five senses to explore and understand surroundings
- Child begins forming a basic understanding of simple cause and effect relationships
- Child begins to name common objects in the environment

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Explores strategies to create a result (shakes rattle to see if it produces a sound, tries to activate musical toy, etc.)
- Gains knowledge about the environment through observation and physical manipulation (banging hard objects together produces a sound, stack of blocks falls when pushed, water splashes, etc.)
- Names some natural items (dog, tree, bird, snow, etc.)

The Adult

- Provides natural objects for children to explore, both indoors and out, as well as experiences related to science concepts (snow, wind chimes, animal sounds, various textures and scents, etc.)
- Names natural objects and describes comparisons between objects (big/little, soft/hard, wet/dry, etc.)
- Provides books, pictures, and toys that represent nature realistically (photos of animals rather than cartoon-type animals, etc.)
- Talks with children about everyday events as they occur in nature

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of materials, both indoors and outdoors, from the natural world (plants, animals, etc.)
- Time outdoors to observe natural objects and events

Scientific Knowledge
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child develops scientific knowledge through active exploration of the environment
  - Shows interest in the natural world
  - Interacts with materials to gain knowledge about them
- Child develops understanding of simple cause and effect relationships
- Child shows interest in scientific concepts related to space and time
- Child shows increased knowledge and memory for details and routines

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Gains knowledge about the environment through physical manipulation (puts shapes in shape box, engages in sand and water play, etc.)
- Recognizes and identifies properties of objects (big/little, hot/cold, in/out, etc.)
- Expands vocabulary related to scientific concepts: names animals, describes weather (rain, snow, sun, etc.)
- Goes to sink to wash hands when called for lunch or snack

The Adult

- Provides natural objects for children to observe and explore, both indoors and outdoors
- Provides books, pictures, and toys that represent nature (photos of animals rather than cartoon-type animals, etc.)
- Talks with children about natural objects and everyday events as they occur in nature
- Encourages children to make comparisons between objects (big/little, soft/hard, wet/dry, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES
- A variety of materials, both indoors and outdoors, from the natural world (plants, animals, etc.)
- Time outdoors to observe natural objects and events
- Field trips to farm, aquarium, zoo, nursery, garden, etc.

Science

Bugs to Bunnies -- Ken Goin, Eleanor Ripp, and Kathleen Nastasi Solomon

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

Hollyhocks and Honeybees: Garden Projects for Young Children -- Sara Starbuck, Marla Olthof, and Karen Midden

Kitchen Science -- Shar Levine and Leslie Johnstone

Learning Through Play: Blocks -- Ellen Booth Church

More Mudpies to Magnets: Science for Young Children -- Elizabeth A. Sherwood, Robert A. Williams, and Robert E. Rockwell

Nature in a Nutshell for Kids: Over 100 Activities You Can Do in Ten Minutes or Less -- Jean Potter

Pint-size Science: Finding-Out Fun for You and Your Young Child -- Linda Allison and Martha Weston

Your Child At Play: Birth to One Year: Discovering the Senses and Learning About the World (2nd Edition) -- Marilyn Segal

Books for Children

Farm Animals -- Phoebe Dunn

Growing -- Fiona Pragoff

I Love You, Sun I Love You, Moon -- Karen Pandell and Tomie dePaola

I Can, I See, I Hear, I Touch -- Helen Oxenbury (4 books)

Machines At Work -- Byron Barton

Mud! -- Charnan Simon

The Five Senses -- Keith Faulkner

Animal Sounds for Baby -- Cheryl Willis Hudson

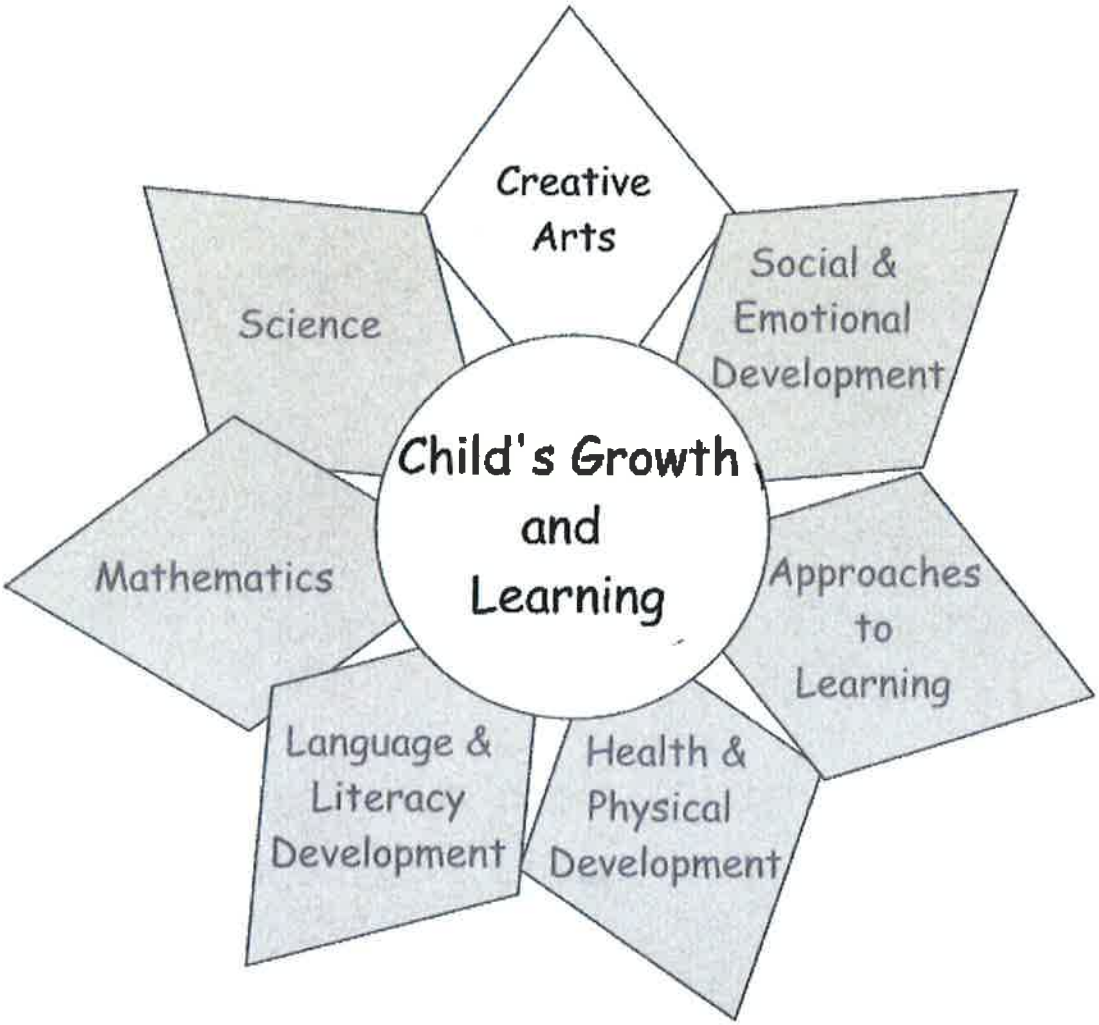
Ring! Bang! Boom! -- Little Golden Books

Touch and Feel Series -- Dorling Kindersley Publishing

Push, Pull, Empty, Full: A Book of Opposites -- Tana Hoban

The Very Hungry Caterpillar -- Eric Carle

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages Birth to 3



Creative Arts

- Music
- Art
- Movement
- Dramatic Play

Creative arts experiences open an avenue for the development and expression of individual ideas, feelings, and interests. Although these are more readily observed in older preschoolers, they have their beginnings in the infant and toddler years.

Music, movement, dramatic play, and tactile sensory activities - including but not limited to art - can all provide opportunities for creative exploration and individual expression in children younger than three years of age.

Creative arts promote the growth of individuality, self-confidence, self-esteem, and imagination. They encourage expression of the child's personal and cultural uniqueness. They also provide opportunities to enhance the child's physical, social, and cognitive development.

Materials and activities should be available to provide creative arts experiences. The child's experience should provide a process for self-expression rather than focusing on a specific product or outcome. Children should be encouraged but not forced to participate in creative arts activities, in keeping with their level of development and individual interests. Child safety should be a primary consideration in any activities that are offered. As with all activities involving infants and toddlers, they must be concrete and hands-on in order to provide a meaningful learning experience.

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.

Creative Arts

Music

Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child becomes calm when sung to, or talked with in a soothing voice
- Child shows interest in and responds to music
- Child enjoys producing music and other sounds with rattles, bells, music boxes, etc.
- Child delights in new ability to produce sounds (smacks lips, squeals on purpose, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Responds to music in the environment (calms to lullaby, looks for sound from musical toy, etc.)
- Enjoys listening to favorite songs and may participate through simple movements such as clapping or touching body parts
- Enjoys own music and noises (bangs spoon on tray, claps and giggles, mimics sounds, etc.)

The Adult

- Provides musical experiences for the child in a variety of ways, (singing, musical toys, recorded music, etc.)
- Encourages the child's interest and participation in musical activities
- Exposes the child to a variety of types of music (lullabies, classical, children's songs, etc.) from a variety of cultures/languages/backgrounds

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of types of music such as lullabies, classical, jazz, folk music, children's songs, and songs from other cultures and languages
- Simple instruments and toys that make sounds

Music

Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows interest and participates in music activities through gestures, movement and dancing
- Child expresses self creatively to variations in music in the environment (rhythm, volume, tempo, etc.)
- Child enjoys producing music with instruments and singing simple songs
- Child enjoys repetition of favorite songs and other musical experiences

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Claps, bounces, and begins to dance to music
- Uses instruments to produce rhythm and musical sounds
- Experiments with a variety of sound-making objects
- Participates in musical activities (singing, dancing, finger plays, etc.)
- Knows and asks for favorite songs
- Participates in group singing activities for short periods of time

The Adult

- Provides musical experiences for the child in a variety of ways (singing, musical instruments, recorded music, etc.)
- Plans for and encourages the child's participation in musical activities including learning through repetition
- Exposes the child to a variety of types of music (classical, ethnic, children's songs, etc.) from a variety of cultures/languages/backgrounds

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of types of music such as lullabies, classical, jazz, folk music, children's songs, and songs from other cultures and languages
- Simple instruments and toys that make sounds

Creative Arts

Art

Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child responds to visual elements present in the environment (light, color, patterns, etc.)
- Child participates in and enjoys a variety of tactile/sensory experiences such as water, textures, etc.
- Child begins to use art media such as large crayons, finger paint, etc.
- Child explores the shape of objects

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Looks at pictures and other types of displays in the environment
- Responds to sensory experiences such as water play, texture books or toys, etc.
- (Older infant) experiments with finger paint, large crayons, and other suitable art materials

The Adult

- Provides safe art materials and opportunities for children to use them in a variety of ways (avoids items that create a choking hazard, toxic or eye/skin-irritating materials)
- Provides a variety of visual displays in the environment (mobiles, pictures, etc.)
- Provides a variety of sensory experiences for children

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Colorful paper, markers, crayons, finger paint, smocks, etc.
- Opportunities for active exploration which is encouraged through access to materials and ease of clean-up
- Pictures and art displayed at the child's level

Art

Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child experiments with art media by painting, scribbling, using play dough, etc.
- Child shows pride in ability to use art materials
- Child uses a variety of materials creatively to represent other items (blocks, dramatic play materials, clay, etc.)
- Child shows preferences for colors or pictures
- Child uses various tools to make marks (fingers, crayons, big brushes, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Scribbles with a variety of art tools (large pencils, crayons, paint brushes, etc.)
- Experiments with new materials (clay, fingerpaint, markers, art paper, etc.)
- Uses a variety of materials to create art (play dough, popsicle sticks, yarn, paint, glue etc.)
- Enjoys showing his/her completed art to others

The Adult

- Provides safe art materials and opportunities for children to use them in a variety of ways (avoids items that create a choking hazard, toxic or eye/skin-irritating materials)
- Focuses on process rather than product in art activities, allowing children to use art as a form of self-expression
- Displays children's artwork; calls attention to and discusses displayed art with children

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Materials to experiment with (paint, easels, crayons, markers, various types of paper, soft clay, stamps, etc.)
- Opportunities for active exploration which is encouraged through access to materials and ease of clean-up
- Pictures and art displayed at the child's level
- Art equipment at child's level available and accessible throughout the day (low tables, crayons, paper, easels, paints, smocks, etc.)

Creative Arts

Movement
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child begins to discover own body
- Child demonstrates balance and body coordination in movement
  - Changes positions smoothly
- Child shows growing skill in physical activities
  - Progresses from rolling over to creeping, crawling, standing with help, cruising around furniture, to walking

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Shows increasing body control (rolls, sits, crawls, walks, etc.)
- Kicks and wiggles upon hearing familiar sounds
- Likes to engage in movement activity with adult (dances, finger plays, etc.)
- Begins to initiate or imitate simple body movements (claps hands, touches body parts, etc.)
- Uses body to make sounds (slaps tray, bangs blocks, splashes water in tub, etc.)

The Adult

- Allows many opportunities for children to move and explore their environment
- Provides movement experiences through toys, materials, activities, and equipment
- Engages in movement activities with children and encourages their participation

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Open space, both indoors and outdoors, for children to move freely according to their level of development and ability
- Open floor space and equipment to support safe active movement (crawling, cruising, walking, etc.)

Movement

Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child demonstrates balance and body coordination in movement
- Child represents experiences and concepts through movement
- Child runs with ease, stops and starts with precision

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Shows increasing body control (hops, jumps, marches, etc.)
- Enjoys creative movement ("hops like a rabbit", "flies like a bird", etc.)
- Enjoys silly songs ("Ring Around the Rosey", "Hokey Pokey", etc.)
- Plays "Follow the Leader" around a simple course
- Enjoys riding and action toys (pretends to be riding a truck, motorcycle, plane, etc.)
- Imitates the ways adults use tools/appliances around the house
- Dances to music and songs

The Adult

- Provides movement experiences through materials, equipment, and simple games, both indoors and outdoors
- Engages children in movement activities and encourages their participation as a means of self-expression

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Open space, both indoors and outdoors, for children to move freely according to their level of development and ability
- Materials that encourage movement (riding toys, boxes for pretend play, balls, scarves, streamers for dancing, etc.)

Dramatic Play
Infants (Birth to 18 Months)

Creative Arts

Widely Held Expectations

- Child responds to pretend play activities initiated by adult (facial expressions, animal and vehicle sounds, peek-a-boo, etc.)
- Child uses body to make sounds (slaps tray, bangs blocks, splashes water, etc.)
- Child plays with dramatic play materials (animals, vehicles, dolls, etc.)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Infant

- Focuses on and responds to adult facial expressions and voice tones
- Shows enjoyment in interaction with adults who provide dramatic play experiences (music and songs, facial expressions and gestures, animal sounds and actions, etc.)
- Imitates sounds, facial expressions, and gestures of another person
- Plays with toys that represent real objects (animals, vehicles, dolls, spoons, etc.)

The Adult

- Interacts with the child, using various facial expressions and voice tones
- Provides toys and materials that encourage the child to use representation for the real item (stuffed animals or puppets, dolls, spoons, cups, etc.)
- Shows enjoyment when the child initiates actions

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of toys and materials that encourage exploration and interaction (mirrors, phones, play food, etc.)
- Materials representing various cultures (pictures, food, dolls, books, clothes, music, toys, etc.)

Dramatic Play
Toddlers (18 Months to 3 Years)

Widely Held Expectations

- Child participates in a variety of dramatic play activities
  - Uses words and/or actions to portray a role, situation, or setting
  - Uses a variety of dramatic play materials (dishes, dolls, cars/trucks, telephone)
  - Uses an object to represent something else (block becomes a phone, ball becomes an apple, etc)

- Child begins to assume the role of someone or something else in dramatic play
  - Engages in role play independently or next to other children
  - Acts out simple games or stories with adult support

Learning in Action: Examples

The Toddler

- Engages in dramatic play activities alone or with others
- Relates or acts out scenes from home or other familiar setting
- Uses props that represent real objects (animals, vehicles, puppets, spoons, etc.)
- Enjoys pretending to be different things (elephant, monkey, tree in the wind, etc.)
- Babbles in a flow of words while pretending to "talk" to stuffed animals
- Plays actively in the dramatic play area sometimes watching and sometimes imitating actions

The Adult

- Plans for and provides opportunities for children to engage in dramatic play
- Provides materials to encourage dramatic play, including duplicates of popular toys to minimize conflict
- Interacts with children to encourage their involvement in dramatic play activities

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- A variety of toys, materials, and equipment that stimulate dramatic play (dolls, phones, dishes, dress-up clothes, shoes, play food, hats, etc.)
- Duplicates of favorite toys
- Materials representing various cultures (flags, pictures, food, dolls, books, clothes, music, toys, etc.)

Resources

Creative Arts

Beginning With Babies -- Mary Lou Kinney and Patricia Witt Ahrens

First Art: Art Experiences for Toddlers and Twos -- Mary Ann F. Kohl

Making Sounds, Making Music, and Many Other Activities for Infants: 7 to 12 Months -- Judy Herr and Terri Swim

Playtime Props for Toddlers -- Carol Gnojewski and Priscilla Burris

Poking, Pinching, and Pretending: Documenting Toddlers' Explorations with Clay -- Dee Smith and Jeannie Goldhaber

The Power of Play – Claire Lerner and Sharon Greenip

Rhyming Books, Marble Painting, and Many Other Activities for Toddlers: 25-36 Months -- Judy Herr and Terri Swim

Your Child at Play: One to Two Years: Exploring, Daily Living, Learning and Making Friends (2nd Edition) -- Marilyn Segal

Your Child at Play: Two to Three Years: Growing Up, Language, and the Imagination (2nd Edition) -- Marilyn Segal

Books for Children

1, 2, 3 Music! -- Sylvie Auzary-Luton

Baby Dance -- Ann Taylor

Clap Hands -- Helen Oxenbury

Color Zoo -- Lois Ehlert

From Head to Toe -- Eric Carle

In the Garden with Van Gogh -- Julie Merberg

The Lucy Cousins Book of Nursery Rhymes -- Lucy Cousins

Peek-A-Boo! -- Janet Alhberg and Allan Ahlberg

Rolie Polie Olie -- Bill Joyce

Many Colors of Mother Goose -- Cheryl Willis Hudson

A Picnic with Monet -- Julie Merberg

In My World -- Lois Ehlert

General Resources

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. Relevant research is also cited as foundational to all of the domains of learning. Additionally, references that are specific to each of the learning domains are presented within the various sections of the document.

These 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: 1-402-597-4826, or toll-free 1-800-89CHILD.

Nurturing Interactions and Relationships

The Baby Bond: How to Raise an Emotionally Healthy Child, Dianna Hine. Tuscon, AZ: Cocoon Books, 1998.

Bambini: The Italian Approach to Infant and Toddler Caregiving, Lella Gandini and Carolyn Pope-Edwards. New York, New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2003.

Character Development: Encouraging Self-Esteem and Self-Discipline in Infants, Toddlers, and Two-Year-Olds, Polly Greenberg. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1991.

Culture and Attachment: Perceptions of the Child in Context, Robin L. Harwood, Joan G. Miller, and Nydia L. Irizarry. New York, NY: Guilford Press, 1997.

The Emotional Life of the Toddler, Alicia F. Lieberman. New York, NY: The Free Press, 1993.

Enhancing Early Emotional Development: Guiding Parents of Young Children, Jean W. Gowen and Judith B. Nebrig. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 2001.

Holding Time, Martha G. Welch. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1988.

The Irreducible Needs of Children: What Every Child Must Have to Grow, Learn and Flourish, T. Berry Brazelton and Stanley I. Greenspan. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 2000.

Me, Myself and I: How Children Build Their Sense of Self: 18-36 months, Kyle D. Pruett. New York, NY: Goddard Press, 1999.

Right From Birth: Building Your Child's Foundation for Life: Birth to 18 months, Craig T. Ramey and Sharon L. Ramey. New York, NY: Goddard Press, 1999.

Simple Steps: Developmental Activities for Infants, Toddlers, and Two-Year-Olds, Karen Miller. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House. 1999

Tender Care and Early Learning: Supporting Infants and Toddlers in Child Care Settings, Jacalyn Post and Mary Hohmann. Ypsilanti, MI: High Scope Press, 2000.

Touchpoints: Your Child's Emotional and Behavioral Development - Birth-3: The Essential Reference for the Early Years, T. Berry Brazelton. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 1994.

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:

Attachment Disorganization, Judith Solomon and Carol C. George (Eds.), New York, NY: Guilford Press, 1999.

Building Healthy Minds: The Six Experiences That Create Intelligence and Emotional Growth in Babies and Young Children, Stanley Greenspan and Nancy Breslau Lewis. New York, NY: Perseus Publishing, 2000.

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

Getting In Tune: The Powerful Influence of Music on Young Children's Development, Claire Lerner and Lynette Ciervo. Washington, DC: Zero to Three Publications, 2002.

Handbook of Early Childhood Intervention, Jack P. Shonkoff and Samuel J. Meisels (Eds.). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Susan B. Neuman and David K. Dickinson. New York, N.Y.: The Guilford Press, 2001.

Handbook of Infant Mental Health, Second Edition, Charles Zeanah. New York, NY: Guilford Press, 2000.

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

Rethinking the Brain: New Insights Into Early Development, Revised Edition, Rima Shore. New York, NY: Families and Work Institute, 2003.

Sing a Song of Popcorn: Every Child's Book of Poems – selected by Mary White, Eva Moore, Beatrice De Regniers, Jan Carr and illustrated by nine Caldecott Medal artists

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

Where All Belong – Celebrating Our Diversity

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 made to insure that all children can actively and meaningfully participate in the early childhood setting.

DEC Recommended Practices: A Comprehensive Guide for Practical Application in Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education, Susan Sandall, Mary Louise Hemmeter, Barbara J. Smith, and Mary E. McLean. Longmont, CO: Soprist West, 2005.

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

Infant Development and Risk: An Introduction, Anne H. Widerstrom, Barbara A. Mowder, Susan R. Sandall, Robert E. Nickel, Helen Harrison, and Harriet Able-Boone. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 1996.

Promoting Learning Through Active Interaction: A Guide to Early Communication with Young Children Who Have Multiple Disabilities, M Diane Klein, Deborah Chen, and C. Michele Haney. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing Co., 2000.

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 present practical strategies that can engage children in a trusting and creative manner.

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

Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Performance Standards. Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs. 2nd edition, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Public Health Association, 2002.

Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children's Environments That Work, Jim Greenman. Edmond, WA: Exchange Press, 2005

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

Family Day Care Environment Rating Scale, Thelma Harms and Richard Clifford. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1989

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

Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, Thelma Harms, Debby Cryer, and Richard Clifford. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 2003.

Secure Relationships: Nurturing Infant-Toddler Attachment in Early Care Settings, Alice Honig. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2002.

Approaches to Young Children's Learning

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

Beautiful Beginnings: A Developmental Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers, Helen Raikes and Jane McCall Whitmer. Baltimore, MD: Brooks Publishing Co., 2005.

Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers, Revised Edition, Amy Laura Dombro, Laura Colker, and Diane Trister Dodge. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies, Inc., 1997.

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 (Eds.). Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1997.

The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach in Early Childhood Education, Carolyn Edwards, Lella Gandini, and George Forman. Greenwich, CT: Ablex, 1998.

Prime Times: A Handbook for Excellence in Infant and Toddler Care, Jim Greenman and Anne Stonehouse. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 1996.

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

The Power of Play: Learning through play from birth to three, Zero to Three. New York, NY: authors, 2004.

The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers, FarWest Laboratory for Educational Research and Development. Sacremento, CA: California Department of Education, 1993.

Together in Care: Meeting the Intimacy Needs of Infants and Toddlers in Groups. Sacramento, CA: Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (PITC) of WestED Center for Child and Family Studies and the California Department of Education Child Development Division, 1994.

Measuring Growth – Effective Assessment Practices

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

Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System for Infants and Children, Diane Bricker. Maryland: Brookes Publishing Co., 2002.

Basics of Assessment: A Primer for Early Childhood Professionals, Oralie McAfee, Deborah Leong, and Elena Bodrova. Washington, DC: NAEYC, 2004.

Child Observation Record for Infants and Toddlers, Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope, 2001.

Early Learning Standards: Creating the Conditions for Success, National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood specialists in State Departments of Education. Washington, DC: Author, 2001.

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

The Ounce Scale, Samuel Meisels, Dorothea Marsden, Amy Laura Dombro, Donna Weston, and Abigail Jewkes. Lebanon, IN: Pearson Early Learning, 2003.

What's Next: Planning Strategies and Activities Around Infant-Toddler COR Observations, Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Press, 2004.

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 early teacher, starting with their early relationships and interaction, they continue to influence their child's growth. Families and teachers/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.

Activities for Parent-Child Interaction, Ypsilanti, MI: High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 1982.

Circle of Love: Relationships Between Parents, Providers, and Children in Family Child Care, Amy Baker and Lynn Manfredi-Pettis. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 1998.

Continuity in Early Childhood: A Framework for Home, School, and Community Linkages, Regional Educational Laboratories' Early Childhood Collaboration Network. U.S. Department of Education, 1995.

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

A Guide to Creating Partnership with Parents, Mary Lane and Sheila Signer for Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education, 1990.

Parent Involvement Begins at Birth; Collaboration between Parents and Teachers of Children in the Early Years, Sally Goldberg. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon, 1997.

Parenting Skills Workshop Series: A Manual for Parent Educators, John Bailey, Sandra Wilkins, and Susan Perkins. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 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.

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

Trainer's Manual, Module IV: Culture, Family and Providers, WestEd in collaboration with the California Department of Education. Sacramento, CA: FarWest Laboratory, 1995.

Definitions

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

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 child's understanding and the ability to apply that understanding.

Attachment - The formation of significant and stable emotional connections between a child and the significant people in its life.

Biological Rhythm - A cyclical, repeated variation in a biological function.

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.

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.

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

Reflexive Abilities - Automatic responses.

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

Spatial Sense - An awareness of where one is in space.

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.

Supported in part by federal Child Care and Development Funds made available through Nebraska Health and Human Services System and Nebraska Department of Education.

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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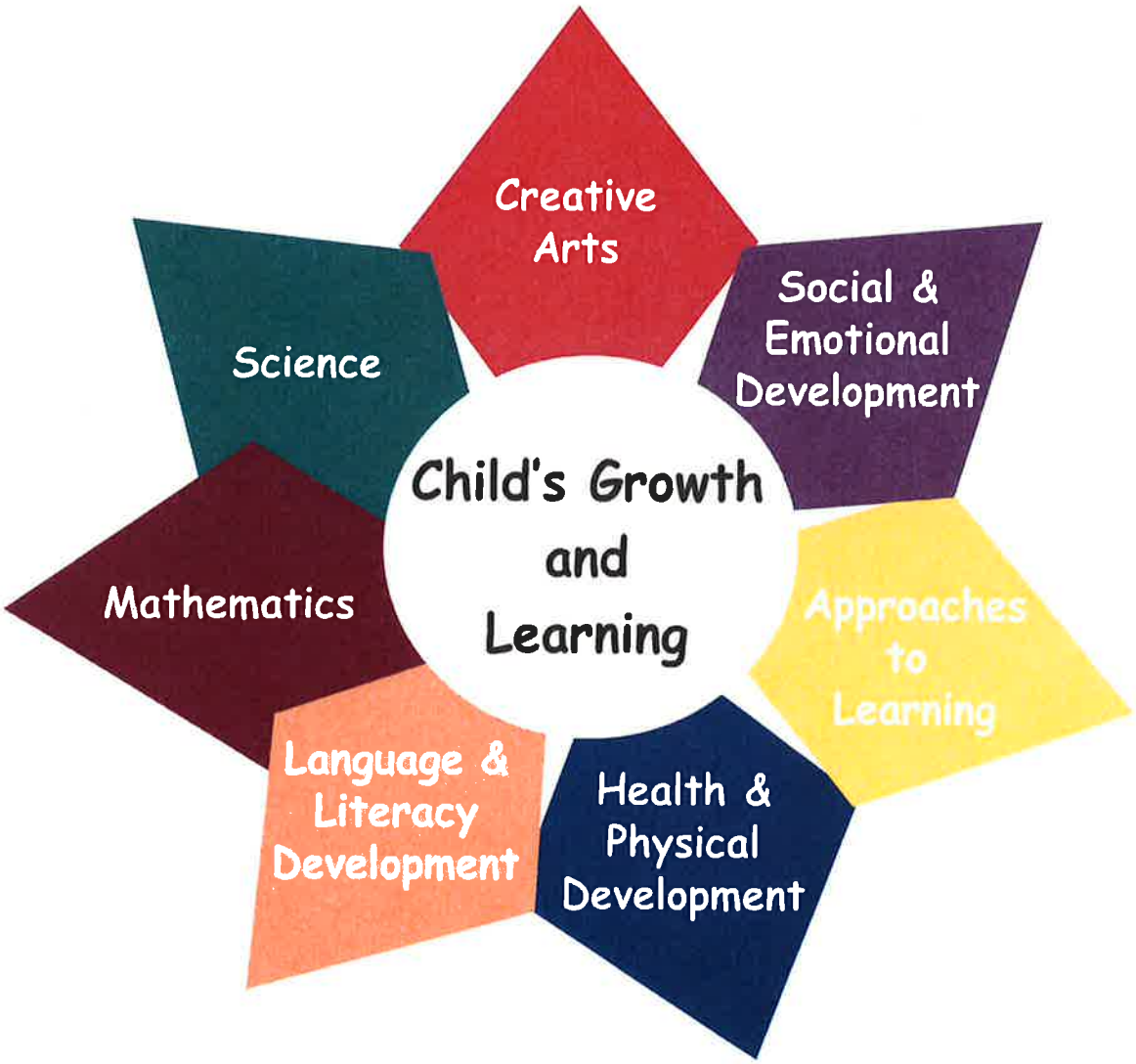
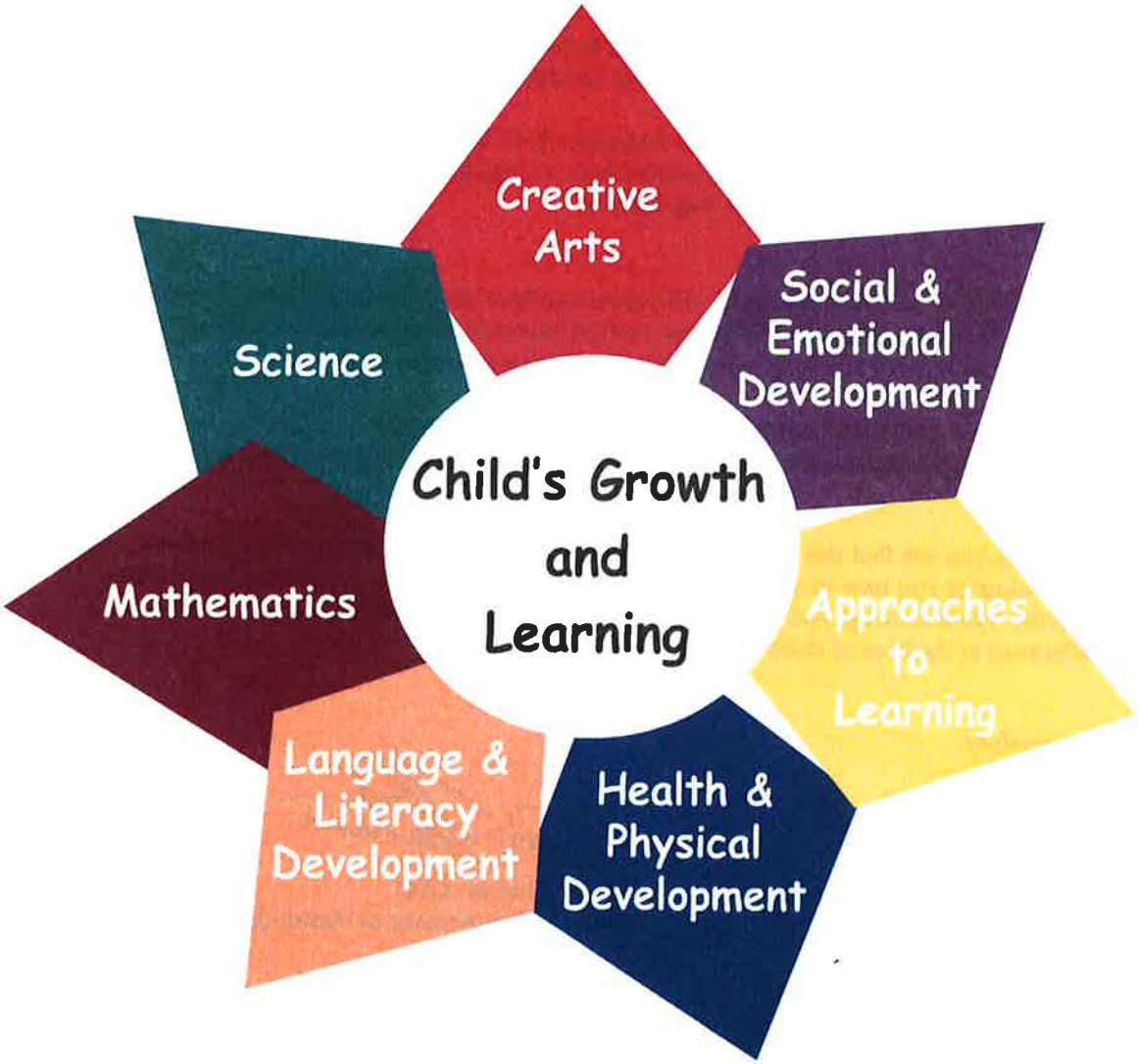
Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



A Resource to Support Young Children's Development and Learning

Revised 2013

Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3 to 5



A Resource to Support Young Children's Development and Learning

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

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

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

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

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

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

Respectfully,

Dr. Roger Breed, Commissioner
Nebraska Department of Education

Kerry Winterer, CEO
Nebraska Department of Health & Human Services

Melody Hobson, Administrator
Office of Early Childhood,
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Table of Contents

Welcome to the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines for Ages 3-5 1
Purpose and Development/Revision Process 1

Guiding Principles Supporting Children's Learning and Development 2

The Adult and the Learning Environment 3

The Child and the Learning Environment 4
Value of High Quality Programs and Play in Children's Learning 4
Use of Technology 4

Inclusive Learning Environments 5
Children with a Wide Range of Abilities 5
Children from a Variety of Cultures and English-Language Learners 7
Children with Challenging Behaviors 8

Preparing for Children's Success in Kindergarten and Beyond 10
Ready Children 10
Ready Schools 11
Ready Families 12
Transition to Kindergarten 12

Using the Early Learning Guidelines and Companion Documents 13

Social and Emotional Development 15
Self Concept (SE.01) 16
Self Control (SE.02) 18
Cooperation (SE.03) 20
Social Relationships (SE.04) 22
Knowledge of Families and Communities (SE.05) 24
Resources 26

Approaches to Learning 31
Initiative and Curiosity (AL.01) 32
Reasoning and Problem Solving (AL.02) 34
Resources 36

Health and Physical Development 39
Fine (Small) Motor Skills (HP.01) 40
Gross (Large) Motor Skills (HP.02) 42

Health Status and Practices (HP.03) 44
Nutrition (HP.04) 46
Resources 48

Language and Literacy Development 51
Listening and Understanding (LL.01) 52
Speaking and Communicating (LL.02) 54
Phonological Awareness (LL.03) 56
Book Knowledge and Appreciation (LL.04) 58
Print Awareness and Concepts (LL.05) 60
Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge (LL.06) 62
Resources 64

Mathematics 69
Number and Operations (M.01) 70
Geometry and Spatial Sense (M.02) 72
Patterns and Measurements (M.03) 74
Resources 76

Science 79
Scientific Skills (S.01) 80
Scientific Knowledge (S.02) 82
Resources 84

Creative Arts 87
Music (CA.01) 88
Art (CA.02) 90
Movement (CA.03) 92
Dramatic Play (CA.04) 94
Resources 96

Glossary: Early Learning Guidelines Definitions 99

Additional Resources to Support Early Learning 102
Early Childhood Programing: Children's Growth, Development and Learning 102
Inclusion: Supporting Diversity and Children with Special Needs 105
The Learning Environment 109
Curriculum Approaches to Young Children's Learning 110
Assessment Practices for Young Children and Programs 111
Partnering with Families 113

Writers, Reviewers, and Revisers Acknowledgement 114

Welcome to the Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5

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

The Guidelines provide information about:

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

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

The purpose of the Early Learning Guidelines

The Guidelines are not a curriculum. Rather, they are a framework to guide decisions about planning developmentally appropriate activities for young children and the early childhood setting. The expectations provide a map from which adults can understand the developmental "path" that children will follow on their way to kindergarten. It is important to remember that not all children will attain all of the expectations by age five. The individual needs of each child must be met on a daily basis. Use of the Guidelines promotes continuity and consistency across all settings, and provides a foundation for success in school and in life.

How were the Guidelines developed & revised?

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

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

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

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

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

Guiding Principles Supporting Children's Learning and Development

Children are learning every moment

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

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

Children are active learners

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

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

Children develop in predictable steps, but at their own pace

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

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

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

Development and learning are rooted in culture and supported by family

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

The Adult and the Learning Environment

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

The adult gets to know the child by:

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

The adult directs the child's learning by:

- Using a range of teaching methods to maximize each child's individual learning style.
- Structuring opportunities for children to learn throughout the day, in both group settings and individually.
- Making maximum use of space and integrating a variety of materials and equipment that stimulate active learning.
- Assuring that environments are predictable and promote consistent and nurturing relationships.
- Using intentional teaching strategies that embed learning into everyday activities and making connections to previous experiences.
- Drawing upon the cultural and linguistic skills and knowledge each child brings with them.

The adult guides the child's learning by:

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

The adult promotes the child's success by:

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

The Child and the Learning Environment

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

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

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

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

The value of high quality programs

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

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

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

The value of play in children's learning

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

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

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

Use of technology

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

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

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

Inclusive Learning Environments

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

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

Children with a wide range of abilities

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

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

- Ensure that all areas of the environment are accessible to all children, regardless of the need for equipment or physical support.
- Provide visual supports (pictures, drawings, labels, color coding, picture schedules) to give children additional information about activities and how to participate.
- Provide opportunities for children to initiate an action or communicate a desire, give adult assistance/support as needed, and reduce support as the child shows more independence.
- Make suggestions that give children clues or choices for next steps in an activity to promote problem solving.
- Provide opportunities for interaction with typically developing peers using appropriate supports.
- Reduce background noise, visual stimulation, and clutter as much as possible, and have quiet places available.
- Keep transitions to a minimum, providing advanced warning and flexibility to allow children to finish tasks, or offer an alternative activity.
- Add new or different activities only as needed to allow children with different abilities to participate at their level of development.

Resources that may be helpful include:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

High ability learners

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

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

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

Children from a variety of cultures and English-language learners

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

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

The learning environment should include:

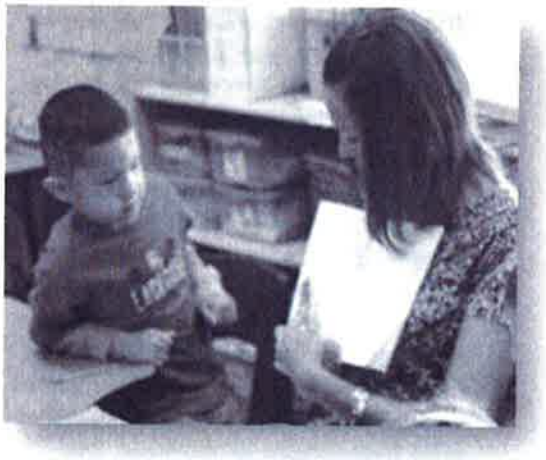
- Materials, curriculum, interactions and assessment that reflects value for children's home languages and culture in a respectful and authentic way.
- Books and images of people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and religions interacting with each other, including people of different ages, and of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

Adults should:

- Foster children's learning of other languages, including sign language.
- Be respectful and mindful of each child's culture and uniqueness.
- Support families to continuously share information about their children's interests and infuse the information into activities, curriculum, and assessment.
- Offer opportunities for children and families to experience their home language in written and spoken language whenever possible.
- Strive for bilingual staff to facilitate dual language instruction and family communication.
- Extend children's learning of their home language while extending their learning of English.
- Integrate linguistic and cultural diversity through stories, songs, dances, art, traditions, celebrations, food and health practices, etc.

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

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



Children with challenging behaviors

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

- **Build positive teacher-child relationships**. Help children understand expectations. Listen to children and encourage them to listen to others. Acknowledge children for their accomplishments and effort. Use a pleasant, calm voice and simple language while making eye contact.
- **Promote positive peer social interactions.** Group children, who exhibit pro-social skills, with children who are learning these skills. Provide cueing (remind them to play together, share with friends). Provide additional assistance to children to ensure that peer social interactions are successful by modeling, giving physical assistance, and giving specific verbal cues ("Ask if you can have a turn next"). Give positive attention and reinforcement to children who are playing together.
- **Help children learn to manage their own behavior.** Ask questions to help the child notice his or her own behavior ("Raise your hand if you are sitting on the rug. Put your thumbs up if you worked at the sand table and swept up the sand when you were finished"). Clearly describe what you want children to do. Visually display wanted behaviors using photographs or drawings. Use checklist and charts to assist children in assessing their performance of behaviors. Provide positive attention ("Patty, you are sitting on your space and have your hands in your lap. Thank you for sitting and waiting for your friends").
- **Adapt the environment to promote social interactions.** Limit the number of open centers to increase social interactions, but maintain enough space to avoid crowding. Keep materials interesting by rotating them.
- **Use classroom/group activities to support peer interaction.** Ask children to greet friends and invite a peer to do an activity with them. Take pictures of children demonstrating positive interactions. Label and post these pictures in the learning environment, ensuring that all children are represented. Offer toys and activities that require children to cooperate.
- **Help children make transitions between activities.** Provide cues before transitions, allowing children to finish projects ("We have 5 minutes before clean up," signal with lights or music). Individualize transition strategies using photos, directions in child's home language, individual warning to a child that soon it will be time to begin a new activity. Limit transitions between activities. Plan a gradual increase or decrease in the level of activity (start out with very short large group times and gradually lengthen them.)
- **Help children understand routines and schedules.** Follow a consistent routine. Children are less likely to engage in challenging behavior when they are aware and can anticipate changes in the routine. When planning activities, consider children's attention spans and the balance of activities (outside vs. inside, active vs. passive.) Include blocks of times where children have choices between different activities.

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

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

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

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

- **Nurturing and responsive relationships**

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

- **High quality environments**

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

- **Targeted social emotional supports**

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

- **Intensive intervention**

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

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

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

Nebraska

Pyramid Model

Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Nebraska's Young Children

Preparing for Children's Success in Kindergarten and Beyond

Ready children

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

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

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

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

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

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

Social skills that are essential for academic success:

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

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

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

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

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

Promote good healthy habits by making sure children:

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

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

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

Support language and learning by giving children chances to:

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

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

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

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

Ready schools

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

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

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

Ready families

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

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

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

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

Transition to kindergarten

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

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

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

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

Using the Early Learning Guidelines

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

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

Learning in Action:

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

Strategies to Support (the domain)

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

Resources: More information within each domain

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

Companion documents to these Early Learning Guidelines include:

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

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

Social & Emotional Development

Self Concept SE.01
Self Control SE.02
Cooperation SE.03
Social Relationships SE.04
Knowledge of Families & Communities SE.05

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

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

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

Social & Emotional Development

Self Concept
(SE.01)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Self Concept

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Social & Emotional Development

Self Control

(SE.02)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Self Control

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Cooperation
(SE.03)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Cooperation

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Social Relationships

(SE.04)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Social Relationships

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures

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

Knowledge of Families & Communities (SE.05)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Knowledge of Families & Communities

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Print Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Managing Everyday Challenges Through Positive Guidance DVD, Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2011).

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

Pathways to Competence: Encouraging Healthy Social and Emotional Development in Young Children, Sarah Landy (2009).

Roots and Wings: Affirming Culture in Early Childhood Programs, S. York (2005).

Second Step: Social-Emotional Skills for Early Learning: self-regulation and executive-function skills that help children learn and manage their feelings, make friends, and solve problems (2011) http://www.cfchildren.org/second-step/early-learning.aspx.

Seven Skills for School Success: Activities to Develop Social and Emotional Intelligence in Young Children, Pam Schiller (2009).

Socially Strong, Emotionally Secure: 50 Activities to Promote Resilience in Young Children, Bruce Nefertiti (2011).

Teaching Children to Care: An Empathy Curriculum for Preschoolers, Nancy Mullin-Rindler and Maureen Crowley (2002).

The Emotional Development of Young Children: Building an Emotion-Centered Curriculum, Marilou Hyson (2004).

The Kindness Curriculum: Stop Bullying Before it Starts (2nd ed.), Judith Ann Rice (2013).

The Power of Guidance: Teaching Social-Emotional Skills in Early Childhood Classrooms, Dan Gartrell (2003).

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

You Can't Come to My Birthday Party: Conflict Resolution with Young Children, Betsy Evans (2002).

You, Me, Us: Social-Emotional Learning in Preschool, Ann Epstein (2009).

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

Online Resources

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

Early Childhood Mental Health, updated on 10/4/11
Guidance of Young Children, updated on 3/5/12

Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior http://www.challengingbehavior.org.

Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning- Book Nook: guides created for teachers/caregivers and parents to provide hands-on ways to embed social emotional skill building activities into everyday routines http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#list.

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

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

Social and Emotional Development in Young Children: How parents and providers can support social skills http://www.michigan.gov/documents/Social_Emotional_Development_in_Young_Children_Guide_88553_7.pdf.

Developing Self-Regulation in Young Children:
http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/developing-self-regulation ;
http://www.education.com/reference/article/development-self-regulation ;
http://www.pbs.org/wholechild/parents/index.html.

Executive Function: Skills for Life & Learning (Video & info sheet):
http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/inbrief_series/inbrief_executive_function/.

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

Understanding Child Traumatic Stress, The National Child Traumatic Stress Network http://www.nctsn.org/resources/audiences/parents-caregivers/understanding-child-traumatic-stress.

UNL Extension: The Pyramid Model- Promoting Social/Emotional Competence: Resources for Early Childhood Professionals and for Families http://liferaydemo.unl.edu/web/child/teachingpyramidresources.

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

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	Social Emotional Development: Social Relationships (S.04)	Social Emotional 2c.6		LA 0.3.2a LA 0.3.3a LA 0.3.3b LA 0.3.3c SS 0.1.2a	004.05A2 004.05D 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Discipline Prohibited Language, Materials and Actions Child Development Program
		Social Emotional 2a.8	Social & Emotional Development: Social Relationships			
		Social Emotional 2b.6.				
		Social Emotional 2d.6.				
Cognition & General Knowledge	Social Emotional Development: Knowledge of Families & Communities (SE.05)	Social Studies 30.	Social Studies Knowledge & Skills: Self, Family & Community	SS 0.1.2b SS 0.3.1f SS 0.3.4a SS 0.3.4b SS 0.3.6a SS 0.4.1d	004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Not Applicable
		Social Studies 32.				

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

Approaches to Learning

Initiative and Curiosity AL.01

Reasoning and Problem Solving AL.02

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

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

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

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

Initiative and Curiosity (AL.01)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Initiative and Curiosity

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Approaches to Learning

Reasoning and Problem Solving (AL.02)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

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

Strategies to Support Reasoning and Problem Solving

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Print Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Online Resources

Executive Function: Skills for Life & Learning (Video and pdf) http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/inbrief_series/inbrief_executive_function/.

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

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

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

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Approaches to Learning	Approaches to Learning: Initiative & Curiosity (AL.01)	Language 10a.6.	Language Development: Expressive Language	LA 0.3.1a LA 0.2.1a	004.05C 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Child Development Program Toys, Equipment and Materials
		Cognitive 11b.6.	Approaches to Learning: Persistence & Attentiveness			
		Cognitive 11d.6.	Approaches to Learning: Initiative & Curiosity			
		Cognitive 11e.4.				
	Approaches to Learning: Reasoning & Problem Solving (AL.02)	Cognitive 11e.6.		SC 2.1.1f SC 2.1.1b	004.05D 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	
		Cognitive 11b.6.	Approaches to Learning: Persistence & Attentiveness			
		Cognitive 11c.6.	Logic & Reasoning: Reasoning & Problem Solving			
		Cognitive 12a.6.				
		Cognitive 12b.6.				
		Cognitive 13.6.				
		Cognitive 14a.6.				

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

Health & Physical Development

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

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

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

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

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

Health & Physical Development

Fine (Small) Motor Skills

(HP.01)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Small (Fine) Motor Skills

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Health & Physical Development

Gross (Large) Motor Skills (HP.02)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Gross (Large) Motor Skills

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

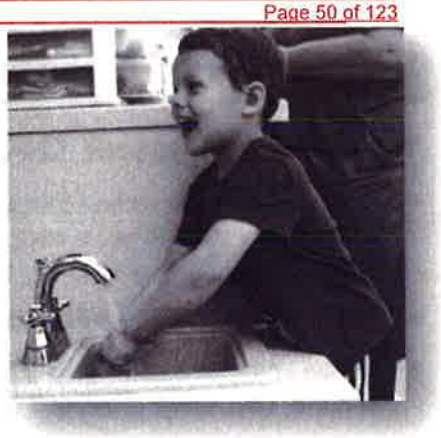
Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Health and Safety Practices (HP.03)



Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Health and Safety Practices

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Nutrition (HP.04)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Nutrition

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Print Resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

Healthy Young Children: A Manual for Programs (5th ed.), Susan Aronson (2012).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Online Resources

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

Health and Physical Development, created on 5/24/12

Nutrition, updated on 3/19/12

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Stand-ards	NE Rule 11 Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Standards
Physical Development & Health	Health & Physical Development: Fine (Small) Motor Skills (HP.01)	Physical 7a.8. Physical 7b.6.	Physical Development & Health: Fine Motor Skills	LA 0.2.1c SC 2.2.1c	004.05A7 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Child Development Program Toys, Equipment and Materials
	Health & Physical Development: Gross (Large) Motor Skills (HP.02)	Physical 4.8. Physical 5.8. Physical 6.8.	Physical Development & Health: Gross Motor Skills	LA 0.1.5b SS 0.3.1a	004.05A7 004.05A8 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Outdoor Play Area Fenced Outdoor Play Area
	Health & Physical Development: Health Status & Practices (HP.03)	Social Emotional 1c.8.	Physical Development & Health: Health Knowledge & Practice	LA 0.3.1a LA 0.1.5b LA 0.1.1b SS 0.1.2b	004.05A7 004.05A8 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Sanitation Inspection Safety Training CPR/First Aid Communicable Diseases Children Excluded Due to Illness Immunizations Napping and Rest Period Medications Environmental Safety Hand Washing
	Health & Physical Development: Nutrition (HP.04)	Social Studies 29. Social Studies 30. Language 10.b.6.	Physical Development & Health: Physical Health Status	LA 0.1.5b LA 0.3.1a	004.05A7 004.05A8 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Food Service Food Safety

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

Language & Literacy Development

Listening and Understanding LL.01
Speaking and Communicating LL.02
Phonological Awareness LL.03
Book Knowledge and Appreciation LL.04
Print Awareness and Concepts LL.05
Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge LL.06

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

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

Listening and Understanding (LL.01)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

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

Strategies to Support Listening and Understanding

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Language & Literacy

Speaking and Communicating (LL.02)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Speaking and Communicating

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

- Use advanced language with children by extending their language and using new or unfamiliar vocabulary:

  Teacher: "Tell me about your new coat."

  Child: "Pink. Blue. Purple."

  Teacher: "You have many different colors on your coat. It's a multicolored coat!"
- Use open-ended questions that require children to put together language to communicate complex ideas such as, "Tell me about…" or "Share your story with the group," or "What do you think?" and "How do you know…"

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

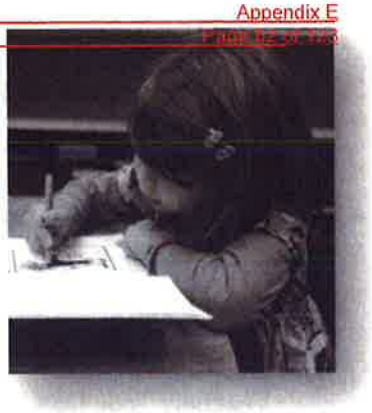
Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Phonological Awareness (LL.03)



Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Phonological Awareness

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Language & Literacy

Book Knowledge & Appreciation (LL.04)

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
  - Understands that the print describes what is happening in the picture
- Child learns to sequence, predict, and retell a story
  - Picture reads; tells about the story from the pictures on the cover or in the book

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Book Knowledge & Appreciation

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Print Awareness & Concepts (LL.05)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Print Awareness and Concepts

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Language & Literacy

Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge (LL.05)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Early Writing and Alphabet Knowledge

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Print Resources

Are You Listening? Fostering Conversations That Help Young Children Learn, Lisa Burman (2009).

Basics of Supporting Dual Language Learners: An Introduction for Educators of Children Birth Through Age Eight, Karen N. Nemeth (2012).

Beginning Literacy with Language: Young Children Learning at Home and School, David K. Dickinson and Patton O. Tabors (2001).

Building a Foundation for Preschool Literacy: Effective Instruction for Children's Reading and Writing Development, Carol Vukelich and James Christie (2004).

Children, Language, and Literacy: Diverse Learners in Diverse Times, Celia Genishi, NAEYC (2009).

Early Dual Language Learning, Fred Genesee (2008).

Early Childhood Calendar: Suggestions, ideas, and tips to help prepare children for kindergarten through literacy-based play and interaction. Nebraska Department of Education www.education.ne.gov/read.

English Language Learners in the Preschool Setting DVD, Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2011).

Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Susan B. Neuman and David K. Dickinson (2003).

Ladders to Literacy: A Preschool Activity Book, Angela Notari-Syverson, Rollanda E. O'Connor, and Patricia F. Vadasy (2007).

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

Learning To Read And Write : Developmentally Appropriate Practices For Young Children, Susan B. Neuman, Carol Copple, and Sue Bredekamp, NAEYC (2006).

Literacy Leadership in Early Childhood: The Essential Guide, Shannon Riley-Ayers (2007).

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

One Child, Two Languages: A Guide for Preschool Educators of Children Learning English As a Second Language (2nd ed.), Patton O. Tabors (2008).

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

Phonemic Awareness in Young Children: A Classroom Curriculum, Marilyn Jager Adams, Barbara R. Foorman, Ingvar Lundberg and Terri Beeler (2001).

The Read-Aloud Handbook (5th ed.), Jim Trelease (2006).

So Much More Than ABC's: The Early Phases of Reading and Writing, Judith Schickedanz (2012).

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

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

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

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

Online Resources

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

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

Early Language and Literacy, updated on 1/23/12

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

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

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

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

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

The National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/center.
Supporting Dual Language Learners and Their Families http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/Dual%20Language%20Learners.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mathematics

Number and Operations M.01

Geometry and Spatial Sense M.02

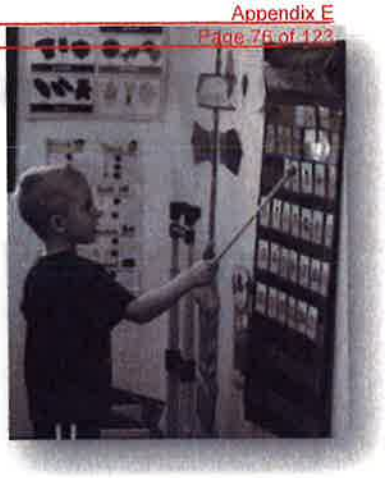
Patterns and Measurements M.03

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

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

Mathematics

Number and Operations (M.01)



Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Number and Operations

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Mathematics

Geometry and Spatial Sense (M.02)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

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

Strategies to Support Geometry and Spatial Sense

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Mathematics

Patterns and Measurement (M.03)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Patterns and Measurement

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Print Resources

Blocks and Beyond: Strengthening Early Math and Science Skills Through Spatial Learning, Mary Jo Pollman (2010).

Cowboys Count, Monkeys Measure, and Princesses Problem Solve: Building Early Math Skills Through Storybooks, Jane Wilburne (2011).

Engaging Young Children in Mathematics: Standards for Early Childhood Mathematics Education, Douglas H. Clements, Julie Sarama and Ann-Marie Dibiase (2003.)

"I'm Older Than You. I'm Five" Math in the Preschool Classroom, Ann Epstein and Suzanne Gainsley (2005).

Math at Their Own Pace: Child-Directed Activities for Developing Early Number Sense, Greg Nelson (2007).

Mathematical and Scientific Development in Early Childhood, National Research Council of the National Academies (2005).

Mathematics in Early Childhood Education Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices DVD, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2008).

Mathematical Thinking: Geometry, Patterning & Measurement in Early Childhood Education Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices DVD, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2010).

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

Showcasing Mathematics for the Young Child: Activities for Three-, Four-, and Five-Year-Olds, Juanita V. Copley (2004).

Spotlight on Young Children and Math, Derry G. Koralek, NAEYC (2004).

Teaching Mathematics in Early Childhood, Sally Moomaw (2011).

Teaching STEM in the Early Years: Activities for Integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Sally Moomaw (2013).

The Young Child and Mathematics (2nd Ed.), Juanita Copley. NAEYC (2010).

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

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Math, created on 5/2/12

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

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

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

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

Science

Scientific Skills and Methods S.01

Scientific Knowledge S.02

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

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

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

Science

Scientific Skills & Methods (S.01)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Scientific Skills and Methods

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Scientific Knowledge (S.02)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Scientific Knowledge

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Science

Print Resources

Bugs, Bugs, Bugs! 21 Songs and Over 250 Activities for Young Children, Pam Schiller (2006).

*Building Structures with Young Children (*DVD also available), Ingrid Chalufour and Karen Worth (2004).

Discovering Nature with Young Children, Ingrid Chalufour & Karen Worth (2003).

Exploring Water with Young Children (DVD also available), Ingrid Chalufour and Karen Worth (2005).

The Everything Kids' Science Experiments Book, Tom Robinson (2001).

Greening School Grounds: Creating Habitats for Learning, Tim Grand and Gail Littlejohn (2001).

Incredible Edible Science: Recipes for Developing Science and Literacy Skills, Liz Plaster and Rick Krustchinsky (2010).

Kitchen Science, Shar Levine and Leslie Johnstone (2003).

Learning with Nature Idea Book, National Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation (2007).

My Big World of Wonder, Sherri Griffin (2004).

Natural Playscapes: Creating Outdoor Play Environments for the Soul, Rusty Keeler (2008).

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

Picture Science: Using Digital Photography to Teach Young Children, Carla Newmann-Hinds (2007).

The Potential of a Puddle, Clair Warden (2005).

The Preschool Scientist: Using Learning Centers to Discover and Explore Science, Robert Williams (2010).

Preschool Pathways to Science: Facilitating Scientific Ways of Thinking, Talking, Doing, and Understanding, Rochel Gelman (2010).

Science Experiences for the Early Childhood Years: An Integrated Approach (10th ed.), Jean D. Harlan and Mary S. Rivkin (2011).

Science in Early Childhood Education DVD *Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices* DVD, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2008).

Spotlight on Young Children Exploring Nature, Amy Shillady (2013).

Teaching STEM in the Early Years: Activities for Integrating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Sally Moomaw (2013).

Worms, Shadows and Whirlpools: Science in the Early Childhood Classroom, Sharon Grollman and Karen Worth (2003).

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

Online Resources

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

Science, created on 5/2/12

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

Ladybug: a magazine for young children featuring seasonal articles and poems that include science concepts www.ladybugmagkids.com.

Science Kids Fun Science and Technology for Kids www.sciencekids.co.nz/experiments.html.

National Education Goals Panel, Essential Domains of School Readiness	Revised Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines Ages 3-5 Domains & Key Elements	Teaching Strategies GOLD® Objectives, Dimensions, and Indicators	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework Domains & Elements	NE K-12 Stand-ards	NE Rule 11 Regs.	NE Child Care Licensing Stand-ards
Cognition & General Knowledge	Science: Scientific Skills & Methods (S.01)	Science & Technology 24.	Science Knowledge & Skills: Conceptual Knowledge of the Natural & Physical World	SC 2 1.1a SC 2 1.1b SC 2 1.1c SC 2 1.1e	004.05A3 004.05A6 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	Not Applicable
		Science & Technology 25.				
		Science & Technology 26.				
		Science & Technology 27.				
		Science & Technology 28.				
	Science: Scientific Knowledge (S.02)	Science & Technology 24.		SC 2.1.1.f SC 2.2.1.a SC 2.2.1.b SC 2.3.1.a	004.05A3 004.05A6 004.06C 004.06D 004.06E	
		Science & Technology 28.	Science Knowledge & Skills: Scientific Skills & Method			
		Cognitive 13.6.				
		Mathematics 22.6.				

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

Creative Arts

Music CA.01

Art CA.02

Movement CA.03

Dramatic Play CA.04

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

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

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

Creative Arts

Music (CA.01)

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)
- Child uses music as a way of learning other concepts, (literacy, rhyme, math, weather)

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Music

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

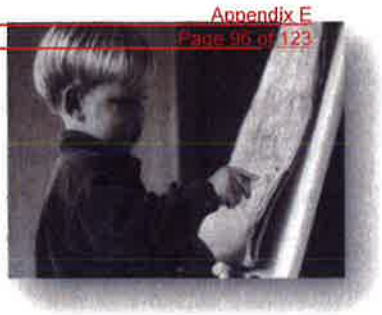
- Use multisensory adaptations, such as switch-adapted music and computer software, to support participation in music experiences including singing and listening to music.
- Modify musical instruments to allow children to grasp them and participate independently in making music.
- Communication boards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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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



Art (CA.02)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Art

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

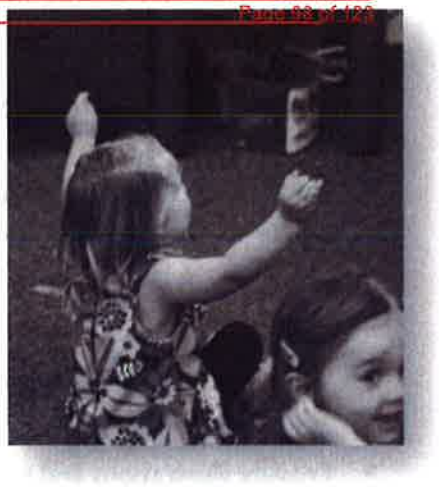
- Create interesting centers with creative materials (art supplies, musical instruments, etc.) which give children opportunities to practice their oral language skills and express themselves creatively.
- Use pictures and real world objects to teach basic words like "paintbrush," "marker" and "book."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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Creative Arts

Movement (CA.03)



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)
- Child demonstrates a sense of balance and body coordination
  - Demonstrates a wide variety of positions (stretching, bending, rocking, twisting, etc.)
- Child represents experiences through movement
  - Demonstrates movement concepts (feelings, directions, words, ideas, etc.)
- Child understands the value of movement to stay healthy

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Movement

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Creative Arts

Dramatic Play
(CA.04)

Widely Held Expectations

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

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child:

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

The Adult:

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

The Environment Includes:

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

Strategies to Support Dramatic Play

Teaching with Intent Throughout the Day:

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

Supporting Children with a Wide Range of Abilities:

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

Supporting English Language Learners:

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

Supporting Children from a Variety of Cultures:

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

Print Resources

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

Art in Universally Designed Preschool Environments DVD, Designing Curriculum to Meet Standards with Evidence-Based Practices, Arlitt Instructional Media, University of Cincinnati (2011).

The Big Messy Art Book: But Easy to Clean Up, Mary Ann F. Kohl (2000).

The Bilingual Book of Rhymes, Songs, Stories and Fingerplays, Pam Schiller, Rafael Lara-Alecio and Beverly J. Irby (2004).

Cha, Cha, Cha: Spanish Learning Songs (CD), Jorge Anaya (2010).

The Colors of Learning: Integrating the Visual Arts into the Early Childhood Curriculum, Rosemary Althouse, Margaret H. Johnson and Sharon T. Mitchell (2003).

Creativity and the Arts with Young Children, Rebeca T. Isbell and Shirley C. Raines (2012).

The Dancing Dialogue: Using Communicative Power of Movement with Young Children, Suzi Tortora (2006).

De Colores and Other Latin American Folk Songs (CD), Jose-Luis Orozco (2009).

Learning to Read Through the Arts, Bernadette O'Brien (2003).

Movement Plus Music: Activities for Children Ages 3-7, Phyllis S. Weikart (2004).

Mudworks: Creative Clay, Dough and Modeling Experiences/ Experiencias Creativas Con Arcilla, Masa y Modelado (Spanish/English Bilingual Edition), Mary Ann F. Kohl and Kathleen Kerr (2001).

The Power of Play: Learning What Comes Naturally, David Elkind (2007).

Sand and Water Play: Simple, Creative Activities for Young Children, Sherrie West and Amy Cox (2001).

Supporting Young Artists: The Development of the Visual Arts in Young Children, Ann S. Epstein and Eli Trimis (2002).

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

Online Resources

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

Connecting Children to Nature: Nebraska Early Learning Guidelines
http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pubs/ELG/naure_education.pdf

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Glossary: Early Learning Guidelines Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

Auditory: Relating to sense of hearing and listening.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Facilitate: To guide through the process.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Peer: Person of the same age.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Additional Resources to Support Early Learning (Listed by Topic)

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

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

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

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

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

Brain Development, updated on 11/1/11
Child Development, updated on 11/8/11
Preschoolers, updated on 3/15/12
Professional Development, updated on 1/3/12
Abuse, Neglect, Bullying, and Violence, updated on 11/3/11
Adult/Child Interaction for Responsive Caregiving, updated on 10/13/11
Nature Education for Young Children, updated on 11/3/11

Nebraska Publications

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Nebraska PreK-16 Initiative. A Nebraska Department of Education and University of Nebraska statewide initiative to promote a seamless educational path for Nebraska students in the areas of mathematics, language arts/English, and world languages across preschool through post-secondary programs (2003)
http://www.education.ne.gov/read/PreK16ArticulationDocument.pdf
http://www.education.ne.gov/math/PDFs/Nebraska_Mathematics_Articulation.pdf
http://www.education.ne.gov/forlg/P16/PreK16WLDocument.pdf.

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

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

Publications by Others

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Websites

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

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

Inclusion: Supporting Diversity and Children with Special Needs

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

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

Children with Special Needs, updated on 10/26/11
Cultural Diversity, updated on 11/22/11
Spanish Language Materials (English version), updated on 12/7/11
Spanish Language Materials (Spanish version), updated on 12/7/11

Nebraska Publications

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

Publications by Others

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Early Childhood Inclusion. A Joint Position Statement of the Division for Early Childhood (DEC) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The position statement outlines the importance for all children, regardless of abilities, to actively participate in natural and inclusive early childhood settings within their communities (2009) http://www.dec-sped.org/uploads/docs/about_dec/position_concept_papers/PositionStatement_Inclusion_Joint_updated_May2009.pdf.

Evaluating Young Children From Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds for Special Education Services, Rashida Banerjee and Mark Guiberson (2012) http://yec.sagepub.com/content/15/1/33.full.pdf+html?ijkey=grHZ1wOtPKLDc&keytype=ref&siteid=spyec.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Websites

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

American Society of Deaf Children www.deafchildren.org.

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

Beginnings: For parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing www.ncbegin.com.

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

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

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

Learn the Signs. Act Early: Information for families and providers on developmental milestones and fact sheets www.cdc.gov/actearly.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Partnering 4 Students: Nebraska's Tool Kit for Systems Involved in the Education of Students in Out-of-Home-Care http://www.partnering4students.org/part-six/tool-e1.html.

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

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

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

Young Dual Language Learners A Key Topic Resource List http://www.researchconnections.org/files/childcare/keytopics/Dual_Language_Learners.pdf.

The Learning 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.

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

Playground Safety, updated on 11/17/11

Nebraska Publications

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

Publications by Others

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

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

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

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

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

Curriculum Approaches to Young Children's Learning

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

Nebraska Publications

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

Publications by Others

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

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

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

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

Assessment Practices for Young Children and Programs

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

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

Assessment, updated on 1/24/12

Nebraska Publications

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

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

Publications by Others

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

http://yec.sagepub.com/content/15/1/33.full.pdf+html?ijkey=grHZ1wOtPKLDc&keytype=ref&siteid=spyec.

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

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

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

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

Partnering with Families

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

Nebraska Publications

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

Getting Ready for Kindergarten: What Early Care & Education Providers Need to Know to Support Nebraska's Children & Their Families (2012) http://www.education.ne.gov/oec/pdfs/Ready_for_Success/Getting_Ready_for_Kindergarten.pdf.

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