



UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS EARLY LEARNING GUIDELINES



APRIL 2010



THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
GOVERNMENT HOUSE

Charlotte Amalie, V.I. 00802
340-774-0001

MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR

It gives me great pleasure to introduce *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines*, a collaborative publication prepared by the V. I. Department of Education and the V. I. Department of Human Services, with input from a wide variety of resource groups dedicated to the well-being of young children. These *Guidelines* will provide guidance and practical suggestions for all child caregivers, whether they be parents, grandparents, adult family members, day care workers, teachers, Head Start professionals, or other members of the community who are responsible for young children. The shared aim is to properly nurture and prepare our youngest citizens for the challenges of kindergarten and beyond.

I believe that the following quotation from author Stacia Tauscher is a skillfully expressed summation of the vital role of early learning:

*"We worry about what a child will become tomorrow,
yet we forget that he is someone today."*

Too often, the developmental needs of young children are overlooked. It is widely acknowledged that the most important stage for learning is from birth to age eight. It is during this critical period that the foundation is established for a child's life-long success in comprehension, self-confidence, intellectual curiosity, and good habits. By using *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines*, those entrusted with the care of young children will be better prepared to assist children meet and exceed the standards for mental, psychological and emotional development.

An ancient African proverb states, "It takes a village to raise a child." Our village is the Virgin Islands and each member of this community must take responsibility for the care and education of our children. They are the future and we must serve them well.

On behalf of the people and Government of the Virgin Islands, I offer my appreciation to the numerous individuals and groups that assisted in the preparation of *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines*, and most especially to the V. I. Department of Education and the V. I. Department of Human Services. I urge the residents of the Territory to use this excellent resource to properly prepare our children for the challenges of life.


John P. de Jongh, Jr.



GOVERNMENT OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES
VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF
HUMAN SERVICES
3011 Golden Rock
Christiansted, VI 00820

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER OF
EDUCATION
1834 Kongens Gade
St. Thomas, VI 00802

Greetings!

We are pleased to announce the publication of *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines*. The *Guidelines* were created through interagency collaboration and in partnership with early childhood educators. They reflect our common commitment to quality early childhood experiences for young children in the Virgin Islands. Based on research in all domains of a child's early learning and development, *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* encompass guiding principles and developmental expectations and performance of young children as they prepare to enter kindergarten.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines clearly acknowledge that children's readiness and preparation for kindergarten does not rest with them alone, but depends on the input and experiences provided by the adults in their lives, the support from the community, and policies designed to promote their development. It is our hope and intention that the *Guidelines* be just that – guidelines that provide families, teachers, caregivers, community members, and policymakers with appropriate experiences for young children designed to promote optimal growth and development.

Thank you for your commitment to providing high quality early childhood experiences to our young Virgin Islands children. We are proud to work with you, family members and programs, and hope these *Guidelines* will help you prepare our youngest citizens for a bright future.

Christopher E. Finch
Commissioner
Department of Human Services

LaVerne Terry, Ed.D.
Commissioner
Department of Education

Acknowledgements

The Department of Human Services, Office of Child Care and Regulatory Services would like to recognize the dedicated work of the Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines Steering Committee. The work of these Committee members was instrumental in completing this document. Their expertise is greatly appreciated.

Antoinette I. Boissiere, Education Specialist, Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and Regulatory Services

Linda Brooks-Lawrence, University of the Virgin Islands, Division of Teacher Education, Instructor

Leitha E. Cummings, Assistant Administrator, Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and Regulatory Services

Ellie Hirsh, Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, The Family Connection and Head Start Training and Technical Assistance, Region II

Sarah F. Mahurt, Ph.D. Deputy Commissioner, Curriculum and Instruction, Virgin Islands Department of Education

Beth Marshall, Executive Director, Caribbean Literacy Exchange

Patricia Martinez, Executive Director, Do-Re-Mi Day Care Center

Maureen W. Moorehead, District Coordinator, Special Education, Department of Education, Office of Special Education

April Munroe –Phillips, Primary Grade Coordinator, Department of Education

Miguelina Neptune, Education Manager, Department of Human Services, Head Start Program

Nydia Ruiz, Education Supervisor, Department of Human Services, Head Start Program

Edina Smith, Executive Director, Mafalie's Day Care Center

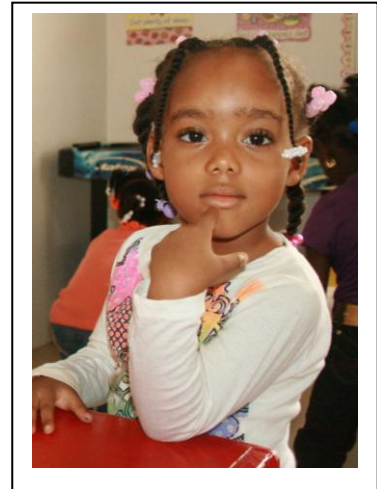
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Introduction¹

Thank you for picking up *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines*. By showing an interest in our children's early experiences, you join a dedicated group of caring individuals who understand the importance of quality early care and education for our youngest citizens. Together, with your commitment, we can ensure a good start for all the Virgin Islands' children. We hope you find this document useful, and we encourage you to pass along the knowledge you gained here to others who want to make a difference in our children's lives.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines reflect what children need to know, understand and be able to do by the time they reach kindergarten. They are written to address what adults can observe in children ages 3-5, and the ways they can support a child's individual development. The guidelines are meant to be inclusive of all children and all settings in which they spend time before elementary school, whether that is at home, in a childcare facility, in a Head Start, in a preschool, or in any other setting. *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* are a voluntary set of what some may call "child outcomes." They are meant to be used as a tool for early care and education practitioners, parents, elementary school teachers, or anyone else living and working with young children to recognize and support all children at the developmental level they exhibit. The *Guidelines* are not a diagnostic tool, an assessment tool, or mandatory set of regulations.



The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines are written with the concept of Developmentally Appropriate Practices as its base. Developmentally Appropriate Practice results from the process of adults making decisions about the well-being and education of children based on at least three important kinds of information of knowledge: what is known about child development and learning; what is known about the strengths, interests, and needs of each individual child; and knowledge of the social and cultural contexts in which children live to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant, and respectful.²

¹ From *Montana's Early Learning Guidelines* and adapted from *Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards*

² Copple & Bredekamp, 2009.

Knowing that development occurs at a unique pace for each individual child, the examples given to demonstrate what a child may know, understand, and be able to do are not meant to be exhaustive. While an adult may or may not observe some of these examples in an individual child, this does not suggest that the child is either advanced or delayed in his/her development. The examples are meant to clarify in the adult's mind what type of observable behaviors children may exhibit before reaching kindergarten. The purpose is to help the adult concentrate on ways to support optimal learning in children.

Although *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* specifically address the needs of children ages 3-5, this does not mean to imply that a child's earliest years are not crucial in his/her preparation for elementary school. In fact, brain research has established that experiences in the first three years of life set the foundation for a child's future social and academic success.³ The significance of a child's development leading up to age 3 cannot be stressed enough. In order for a child to exhibit the behaviors put forth by this document as demonstrative of healthy development, he/she must have access to good



health care, supportive social-emotional environments, and a safe, strong community.⁴ The Steering Committee which developed *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* has recommended that a companion document be developed in the near future to address the specific needs of children birth to three. There is an inherent understanding within this document that learning occurs from the moment a child is born and throughout his/her life, and that all stages of development are important and deserve respect.

What are *Early Learning Guidelines*?

Early learning guidelines specify developmental expectations for children and reflect what children need to know, understand and be able to do upon kindergarten entry. These expectations are supported by practice-based evidence and scientific research. Children, who meet the developmental expectations outlined in the *Guidelines*, will be prepared to meet the challenges of the Virgin Islands Department of Education Content Standards in kindergarten.

³ Shore, 2003; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000.

⁴ Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; Getting Ready, 2005.

Why are the *Early Learning Guidelines* necessary?

Early learning guidelines provide a shared framework for understanding and communicating expectations for young children's development. They are a guide for parents, professionals, and policy makers, all of whom share responsibility for the well-being of young children. Early learning guidelines promote beneficial connections between early childhood and kindergarten through twelfth grade educational experiences.



Why does the Virgin Islands need its own *Early Learning Guidelines*?

These *Guidelines* reflect the shared values and commitments of the citizens of the Virgin Islands to prepare young children for success in school. They reflect attention to all the domains of a child's early learning and development and recognize that these domains are interrelated and interdependent. These *Guidelines* also discuss the roles and responsibilities of families, teachers and caregivers, policy makers, and the community in supporting children's progress, achievement, and success.

How were *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* developed?

The process used to develop *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* reflects a dialogue among professionals from across the Territory about shared values and commitments on one hand, and the desire to develop challenging and meaningful guidelines that reflect best practices and new knowledge gleaned from research and evidence on the other. Members of the Steering Committee reviewed early learning guidelines from other states and reviewed research about best practices from the field. Members of the Steering Committee included representatives from:

- Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care and Regulatory Services
- Department of Human Services, Head Start Program
- Department of Education, Division of Instruction, Technology, and Assessment
- Department of Education, Division of Special Education Services
- University of the Virgin Islands, Division of Teacher Education
- Head Start Training and Technical Assistance, Region II
- Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands, The Family Connection
- Caribbean Literacy Network
- Directors of Private Child Care Centers

Once the *Guidelines* were drafted, they were distributed for public review and comment. Input was incorporated into the document.

Who wrote *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* and what resources were used?

The developmental expectations within each domain were drafted by members of the Steering Committee and reviewed by the Committee. They reflect a survey of scientific literature and practice-based evidence on child development, as well as, guidelines developed by other states. Specifically, information from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Head Start Child Outcomes, National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER), National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), High Scope Child Observation Record, and Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum. State guidelines that were consulted and used extensively include Montana, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Delaware, Washington, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Ohio. The Committee also used the Virgin Islands Kindergarten Standards to ensure alignment and continuity.

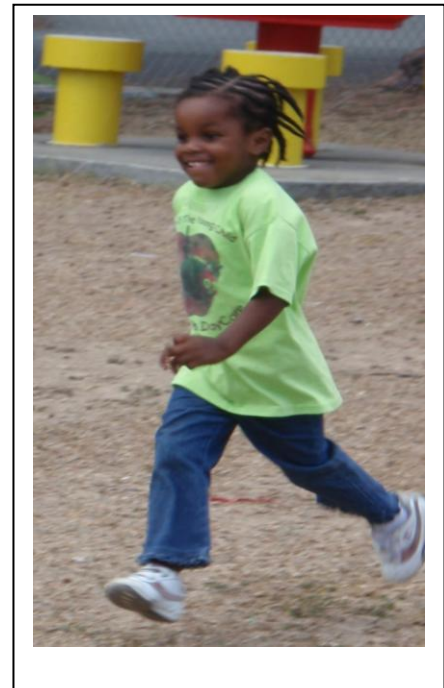
Purpose and Goals⁵

Mission of the Steering Committee:

To create a framework for learning opportunities that provides information to parents, educators, and the community to support each child's developmental growth.

Purpose of *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines*:

The primary purpose of this document is to provide a framework for understanding and communicating a common set of developmentally appropriate expectations for young children within a context of shared responsibility and accountability for helping children meet these expectations.



***The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* were developed with five goals in mind:**

1. To increase understanding of all areas of children's development and to recommend developmentally appropriate strategies for supporting optimal development;
2. To expand understanding of the multiple influences on the education and life success of young children;
3. To support families by providing examples of strategies that facilitate and enhance children's development;
4. To provide teachers, caregivers, and administrators in early childhood education and care programs and settings with a common conceptual framework and guidelines for planning developmentally appropriate curriculum, instruction, and assessment for young children; and
5. To provide a resource for community members and policymakers to use in assessing the impact of current policies and resources on the optimal developmental of young children.

⁵ From *Minnesota's Early Learning Standards*

Guiding Principles

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines Steering Committee believes that all children can become thinking, responsible, contributing citizens who continue to learn throughout their lives while meeting the challenges of the local and global societies. This occurs when families, early childhood teachers and caregivers, community members, and policy makers share in the collective commitment to foster healthy development of all children. The Steering Committee has established the following guiding principles to inform the development and application of the *Guidelines*. These guiding principles reflect the knowledge base in scientific research, our values, and our commitment to young children and families.



All children should have their basic needs met.

Children learn best when their physical and health needs are met and they feel psychologically safe and secure. Children rely on parents and early care and education practitioners to know what to do if their needs are not being met, or are being compromised.⁶

All children are capable and competent.

Development and learning begins at birth, for all children and in all settings. All children should be supported as life-long

learners and as capable individuals and competent learners. They must be allowed to develop a disposition and eagerness to learn in order to find success in their learning experiences. A positive approach to learning has been shown to be a critical determinant to mastering school skills.⁷

Early relationships matter.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines acknowledge that beginning at birth, children form relationships with adults who will guide their learning and development. Especially during the earliest years of a child's life from birth to age 5, a child's growth and

⁶ Getting Ready, 2005; Bowman & Moore (2006).

⁷ Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2002.

development is shaped within the context of those relationships. Positive relationships are essential for the development of personal responsibility, capacity for self-regulation, for constructive interactions with others, and for fostering academic functioning and mastery. Warm, sensitive, and responsive interactions help children develop a secure, positive sense of self and encourage them to respect and cooperate with others. Children who see themselves as highly valued are more likely to feel secure, thrive physically, get along with others, learn well, and feel part of a community.⁸

Parents are children's primary and most important caregivers and educators.

Families, communities and schools all have significant roles to play in terms of what opportunities are available to children, and how well a child is able to take advantage of those learning opportunities. Families are better able to care for, nurture, and help their children succeed when policy makers share in the collective commitment to foster healthy development of all young children. Because a child's first and most important learning occurs in the context of family, it is essential that families have the supports and resources needed to help their children develop in optimal ways. Families are better able to care for, nurture, and help their children succeed if early childhood teachers and caregivers, community members, and policy makers share in the collective commitment to foster the healthy development of all children. All children should expect their families to be involved in all aspects of their care and education. Both effective communication with and involvement of families consistently lead to positive effects for the early development of young children.⁹

All children should have their early experiences acknowledged as important to their further development.

Children come into the world ready to learn, actively engaged in making sense of their world from birth. *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* recognize that the first years of a child's life set the groundwork for a lifetime of brain development and relationships and must be taken into consideration when planning for further learning.¹⁰



⁸ Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; A Good Beginning, 2000.

⁹ Getting Ready, 2005; Lovejoy, 2006; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2002.

¹⁰ Shore, 2003; Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2002.

A child's early learning and development is multidimensional.

Developmental domains are highly interrelated. *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* reflect the interconnectedness of the domains of children's development: social, emotional, and development; approaches to learning; cognitive development (including language and literacy, mathematical reasoning and numeracy, science, and social studies); and physical development and health.¹¹

Expectations for children must be guided by knowledge of child growth and development.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines are based on research about the processes and sequences of young children's learning and development, and the conditions under which children develop to their fullest potential.¹²

Children are individuals who develop at various rates.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines recognize that there are individual rates of development and learning across all age ranges. These rates may be within typical developmental expectations or may indicate a need for specialized services. All children should receive the supports, resources, and services they need to participate actively and meaningfully in the early childhood setting. Early care and education must be prepared to work together with families, following parents' lead, to make referrals when children's development appears delayed, collaborate with children's IFSP/IEP teams, modify/adapt program activities and routines, and implement appropriate interventions within the context of the early childhood setting.¹³



Children are members of cultural groups that share developmental patterns.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines acknowledge that children's development and learning opportunities reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of children, families and environments. All children expect that their home, community and family lives will be respected in the early care and education setting. Children's home language must be respected as the basis for learning a second language. The *Guidelines* recognize that a child's learning is complex and is influenced by cultural and contextual factors.¹⁴

¹¹ Berk, 2008.

¹² Berk, 2008; Bredekamp & Copple, 2009.

¹³ Sandall, McLean, & Smith (2000); Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001.

¹⁴ NAEYC, 1995; Bredekamp & Copple, 2009; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2003.

All children should be cared for and educated in a developmentally appropriate manner.

All children should be treated as individuals with unique strengths, interests, and approaches to learning. Early care and education must address the “whole child” and be constantly working with each child on multiple levels. Childhood is a unique stage in human development, and must be appreciated as such. *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* support the development of optimal learning experiences that can be adapted for individual developmental patterns.¹⁵

Children learn through play, interaction with others, and active exploration of their environment.

All children should expect that their play is respected as a valuable learning tool. Play is how a child accesses the complexities of the world, and is the primary way they learn about the world around them. *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* reflect the belief that children should be provided with a rich learning environment in which to explore their world and should be exposed to a variety of experiences to help deepen their understanding through child-initiated and teacher-initiated activities, and through interactions with peers, adults and materials. Teachers and families can best guide learning by providing these opportunities in natural, authentic contexts. Positive relationships and engagement help children gain the benefits of instructional experiences and resources.¹⁶



Information gained from assessments of young children’s progress must be used to benefit children.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines are designed to be used to guide parents, practitioners, and policy makers to improve practices and services for young children and not to be used to rank, sort, or penalize young children. The responsibility for meeting the standards rests on the shoulders of those who should provide opportunities and supports for learning and not on children’s shoulders.¹⁷

¹⁵ Bredekamp & Copple, 2009; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2003.

¹⁶ Ginsburg, 2008; Berk, 2008; Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2001; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2003 .

¹⁷ NAEYC, 2003; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2003.

All children should expect that their early care and education provider has child development knowledge and expertise.

All children need to be assured that their early childhood caregivers and educators receive high quality professional training with a solid knowledge of child development and early childhood teaching practices with continuing educational opportunities on the latest developments in the field to improve his or her practice. Research shows that quality early care and education contributes to a child's readiness to learn, and that staff education and experience are determining factors in high quality programs.¹⁸

All children should be cared for and educated under the protection of a Code of Ethical Conduct.

Early care and education practitioners should understand and follow the profession's ethical guidelines at all times, in all situations. *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* support practices that promote development and protect young children from the harm that results from inappropriate expectations. In this, they are aligned with ethical principles of the early childhood profession.¹⁹

All children should be supported and protected by policy makers.

At the community, territory, and national levels, decision makers must always keep in mind the effects that their actions have on our youngest citizens.²⁰

All children should expect that the public school system, specifically kindergarten classrooms, will be prepared to meet their needs.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines support the policy that the responsibility for school readiness rests with the school, not the child, and that the kindergarten program must be responsive to children's needs and development.²¹

Responsibility for school readiness lies not with children, but with the adults who care for them and the systems that support them.

Public policies should seek to provide comprehensive information, resources, and support to all who are responsible for children's development. Schools need to be ready for children focusing on providing supports for children's transition to school, responding to children's individual needs, and holding positive expectations about children's abilities to learn and succeed.²²

¹⁸ Bowman & Burns, 2001; Phillips, 1987; NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2003.

¹⁹ NAEYC, 2005.

²⁰ Lovejoy, 2006; Children's Defense Fund, 2002

²¹ NAEYC, 1995.

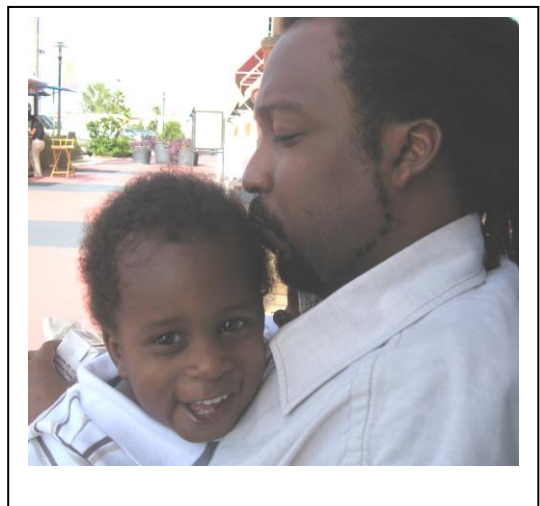
²² Lovejoy, 2005; NAEYC, 1995; Ackerman & Barnett, 2005

Potential Uses²³

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines are to be used as a resource for family members, teachers and caregivers, community members, and policy makers in ways that are supportive of young children's development.

For Family Members

- **To build awareness of child development:** The *Guidelines* can help parents and other family members understand what skills or behaviors are expected of young children and how they develop.
- **To involve families in learning:** Family members can learn from the *Guidelines* how they can support their child's learning in the various domains. A high level of family involvement is an indicator of a high quality program. Children benefit when family members are invited to participate in ongoing communication about what is happening in their child's early education and care through discussions with caregivers, parent-teacher conferences, open-houses, parent education, and other opportunities. Information about widely held developmental expectations can be shared with parents at these times. Families who are engaged in their child's education are better able to support their child's learning and development.²⁴
- **To build awareness of the systems needed to support the growth and development of children:** Parents are the best advocates for their children. This document can be used to help families make concrete connections between actions by people and the quality of life for children and families. This document can also provide guidance to parents about what to look for as they choose programs for their young children.



²³ Adapted from *Minnesota's Early Learning Standards*

²⁴ Crosser, 2005

For Teachers and Caregivers

- **To guide planning for curriculum content and teaching strategies:** *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* provide a common framework for developmentally appropriate expectations for children who are entering kindergarten. It is expected that most children will accomplish the majority of the indicators by the end of the pre-kindergarten year. In order to meet this expectation, the indicators can be used as a guide for planning curriculum content and teaching strategies for children in the preschool period of ages three to five years.



The indicators provide a common language for use across programs. A common language and framework facilitates discussion and collaboration among home visitors, family child care providers, school and center-based staff, and others. The domains are

consistent with the National Head Start Outcomes Framework, as well.²⁵ The use of the indicators can help programs align curriculum, instruction, and assessment with national outcome standards and guidelines.²⁶

Individual teachers and caregivers can develop curriculum with the indicators in mind and plan assessment appropriate to their setting and related to the indicators. Teachers and caregivers can focus their curriculum on significant learning experiences to support concepts, knowledge, and skills described by the indicators. In this way, teachers and caregivers are not locked into a set curriculum, but rather can design activities within particular domains that will give children opportunities to practice concepts, knowledge, and skills identified by the indicators.

²⁵ Head Start Bureau, 2003.

²⁶ NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2002.

Each child's culture and language, developmental levels, learning style, and personal interests must be taken into account as learning experiences are implemented.²⁷ This approach to curriculum supports exploration, innovation, and individualization within a setting as opposed to a prescribed curriculum.²⁸ The framework promotes diversity and equity in terms of what children do, how children show what they know, and what constitutes success.

- **To provide direction for authentic assessment of young children:**²⁹ The indicators can help teachers and caregivers define the kinds of things young children need to know and be able to do. Once these are articulated, teachers and caregivers need to consider how to collect evidence of children's learning through authentic assessment.

Authentic assessment practices are those that are based on everyday learning experiences, provide for actual child performance, and involve children in the evaluation process. Authentic assessment methods for children should meet these criteria:³⁰

- Are fair to all cultures, language groups, and developmental levels
- Reflect real-world classroom or family contexts
- Are tied to children's daily activities and assess children's actual performance
- Occur in natural settings and situations that are non-threatening to the child
- Are inclusive of families and responsive to cultural and linguistic variations
- Use multiple sources of information on multiple occasions
- Ensure continuity and consistency over time
- Are supported by ongoing professional development to ensure skilled observation and assessment

In addition, assessment should bring about benefits for children, be connected to specific purposes, and value parents as sources and audiences for assessment.³¹

²⁷ Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992; Copple, 2003; Copple & Bredekamp (2009).

²⁸ Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1995.

²⁹ Examples of authentic assessment include Work Sampling System of Child Assessment, the High Scope Child Observation Record, and the Creative Curriculum Assessment System.

³⁰ NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2003; Mueller, 2008; Shepard, Kagan, & Wurtz, (1998)

³¹ NAEYC & NAECS/SDE, 2003; Shepard, Kagan, & Wurtz, 1998.

Components of authentic assessment should include: observation, observation checklists, rating scales, portfolios, and summary reports. These may be used individually or in combination depending on the desired purposes of the assessment information. Observation includes the gathering and recording of information by noting facts or occurrences of children's skills, abilities, and behaviors. Observation checklists, when combined with observation notes and samples of children's work, provide reliable ways to understand growth and development of skills and behaviors over time.³²

One of the primary purposes of assessment is to inform instruction and help teachers and caregivers make decisions concerning children's subsequent learning experiences. In that way a continuous cycle of planning, implementing, and evaluating children's learning experiences helps ensure that children are challenged appropriately to develop the concepts, knowledge, and skills needed to reach their full potential.

- **To provide a framework for program standards and program evaluation:**³³ Staff within early childhood education and care programs and settings can use *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* to frame questions for meeting program standards and conducting program evaluation. High quality programming provides opportunities that support each child's developmental stage and need to engage in play, exploration, and active learning.

Program standards provide criteria for important program features such as adult-child ratios, group sizes, teacher or caregiver qualifications, and curriculum.³⁴ Four major variables which impact desired program outcomes are the learning environment, interpersonal relationships, daily schedules and routines, and materials and activities.³⁵ These



³² Jablon, Dombro, & Dichtelmiller, 2007.

³³ The Head Start Performance Standards, NAEYC Accreditation process, and meeting the new Virgin Islands Licensing Standards are mechanisms for providing a sound foundation for achieving high quality programs and positive child outcomes.

³⁴ Scott-Little, Kagan, & Frelow, 2003.

³⁵ Harms, Clifford, & Cryer, 1998.

components interact to support the desired learning opportunities and outcomes for children. The best programming considers all of these variables when planning, teaching, and evaluating effectiveness.

- **To provide ideas for staff training and development:** Teachers and caregivers can benefit not only from a concise framework of child development as provided in *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines*, but also from an understanding of how what they do in early childhood settings impacts child outcomes and school readiness. Teachers and caregivers can identify any number of areas where they may need further information and training.



For Community Members

- **To provide a framework for needs assessment within the community:** *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* can serve as a guide for identifying the sources of support within the community that encourage the healthy growth and development of young children. Community resources such as health facilities and services, early learning centers, family child care homes, playgrounds, libraries, recreational centers, and elementary schools, all work together to contribute to children's development.³⁶

Business leaders and employers are key players in helping communities focus on the importance of early childhood education and care for the future economic development of the community.³⁷ Community members can also use key indicators to assess how well their local community is doing in providing opportunities for the healthy development of young children.

- **To help organize advocacy efforts within the community:** *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* can be useful in helping various groups see the continuity of their efforts across home and program settings where there are young children. This document provides concrete connections between

³⁶ Getting Ready, 2005; Lovejoy, 2006;

³⁷ Committee for Economic Development, 2006; Rolnick & Grunewald, 2003.

healthy child development and access to resources within the community. Community members and policymakers can help assure the optimal learning and development of young children by making a commitment to support early childhood education and care efforts. Communities can support and strengthen the resources available to support families with young children and build stronger connections among the various programs and services that impact children's lives.

For Policymakers

- **To guide decision-making in promoting early learning and development:** Policymakers can use *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* when planning initiatives designed to benefit young children and families. Because the *Guidelines* are research-based and adapted to reflect typical and appropriate developmental experiences of young children in the Virgin Islands, policymakers can use them to guide policy and funding decisions.
- **To assess the impact of public policies on young children and their families:** Policymakers can use *The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* as a reference for assessing the impact of policy decisions on the lives of children and families. By providing consistent and reliable support and resources to families, a larger proportion of families with young children can participate in opportunities that enhance learning and development. Prevention and early intervention efforts to make sure that all children get a strong and healthy start help reduce the likelihood that children will need more intensive and costly help at a later age.³⁸ There are a number of ways to assess public policies and impacts, including the Annual Kids Count Data Book, which provides a profile of Virgin Islands' child well-being as compared to national indicators.³⁹



³⁸ Sandall, McLean, & Smith, 2000; Kilburn & Karoly, 2008; Rolnick & Grunewald, 2003.

³⁹ Prepared by the Community Foundation of the Virgin Islands and funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

***The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* SHOULD be used:⁴⁰**

- ✓ To help adults recognize the critical need to meet children's social and emotional needs, and the fact that meeting those needs serves as the basis for cognitive development
- ✓ To help adults meet children's developmental needs, including those of children with disabilities, at the level they require and in an individual capacity
- ✓ To improve quality early care and education and serve as a model for teaching
- ✓ To motivate adults to learn more about child development
- ✓ To emphasize the importance of early care and education to the community
- ✓ To help child care providers and teachers, and families recognize their own value and abilities
- ✓ To acknowledge the diverse value systems in which children learn and grow
- ✓ To help adults focus on what children CAN do and reinforce the idea that children are capable learners
- ✓ To increase the flow of information between families, early care and education providers, and elementary teachers
- ✓ To develop training and education programs for adults working and living with children
- ✓ To assist community members and policymakers in understanding their roles in support of the development of young children
- ✓ To provide a framework for community members and policymakers for informed decision making

***The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines* SHOULD NOT be used:⁴¹**

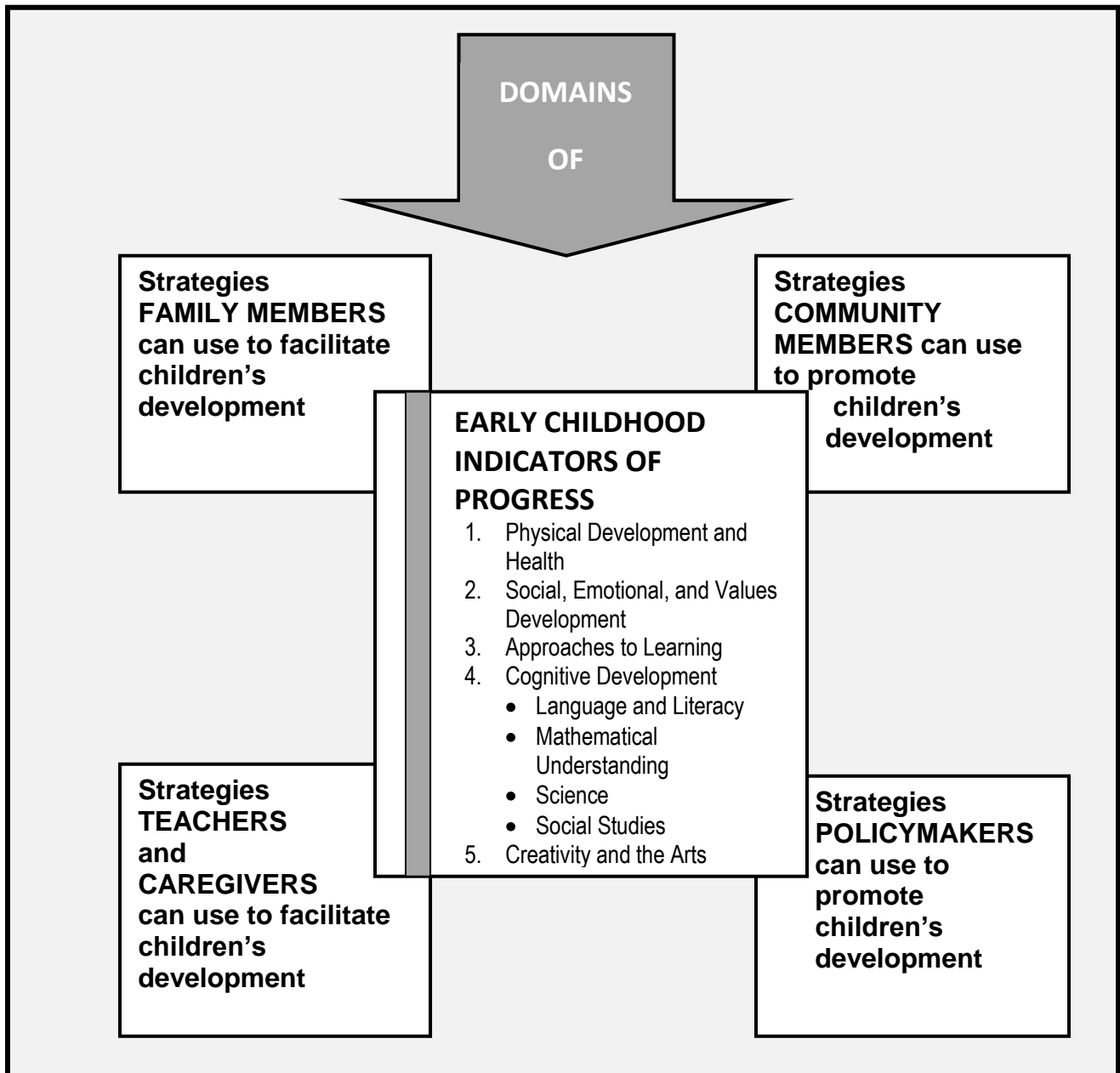
- ✗ As a diagnostic tool to assess a child's development to "push down" curriculum meant for older children to young children
- ✗ As a screening tool to determine school readiness and limit access to programs
- ✗ To increase pressure on children and adults who care for and educate them
- ✗ To justify inappropriate assessment packages
- ✗ To place increased importance on academics and move adults away from the power of play
- ✗ To suggest that preschool is more valuable than good home experiences
- ✗ To evaluate early care and education programs or parenting skills
- ✗ To mandate specific curriculum or serve as rules and regulations for programs
- ✗ To make decisions about funding programs

⁴⁰ Adapted from *Montana's Early Learning Guidelines*.

⁴¹ Ibid.

Organization and Structure⁴²

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines are intended to provide a framework for understanding and communicating a common set of developmentally appropriate expectations for young children within a context of shared responsibility and accountability for helping children meet these expectations. It is divided into 5 domains that reflect the full range of child development as listed in the center box below:



⁴² This format is based on that used by the *Minnesota Early Learning Standards*.

Each domain is further divided into components that describe indicators of children's progress. These are presented in an order from simple to complex, or behaviors/skills that may be expected from children at younger ages to those that would be demonstrated by older children. Strategies family members and teachers and caregivers in early childhood education and care programs can use to facilitate children's development are listed for each component. The lists of strategies for family members and teachers and caregivers are not intended to be all inclusive, but rather provide suggested learning activities for enhancing children's development. Strategies community members and policymakers can use to promote children's development are also included for each domain.

The Virgin Islands Early Learning Guidelines are intended to be used as a guide for children in the preschool period of ages 3 to kindergarten entry. It is expected that most children will meet the majority of these expectations by the end of the pre-kindergarten year. Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.





Domain 1:

Physical Health and Development



Physical well-being, health, and motor development are essential in the development of young children's brains and are crucial to the learning process. Good physical health allows for active participation in a variety of experiences which provide a positive impact on the development of the whole child: language development; cognition; and social, emotional, and values development. Included in the physical development and health domain are indicators that focus on:

- Gross motor skills (characterized by movements of large muscles and the entire body)
- Fine motor skills (characterized by movements to coordinate small muscles in the arms, hands and fingers)
- Health and safety practices

Physical Health and Development

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's GROSS MOTOR SKILLS:

- Provide opportunities for your child to engage in a variety of gross motor activities indoors and outdoors (ex. dancing to music, swimming).
- Model participation in gross motor activities (ex. jumping rope, balling play).
- Celebrate your child's attempts and accomplishments (ex. learning to ride a trike or bike, climbing, swimming).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's GROSS MOTOR SKILLS:

- Provide space and opportunities for children to walk, run, and climb every day.
- Encourage both boys and girls to participate in active play.
- Include toys and equipment that encourage active play.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in gross motor activities indoors and outdoors.
- Model participation in gross motor activities.
- Introduce motor games and songs.
- Include large motor activities during transitional times.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in their **GROSS MOTOR SKILLS** when they:

- Demonstrate control of large body movements (ex. dancing, hopping, jumping)
- Exhibit developing balance, flexibility, strength, and stamina (ex. marching, running, skipping)
- Demonstrate spatial awareness (ex. climbing stairs using alternating feet)
- Demonstrate coordination of body movements (ex. pedaling a tricycle)
- Combine large motor movements with the use of equipment (ex. using swings, climbers, and tunnels safely and appropriately)
- Combine a sequence of large motor skills (ex. bouncing, kicking, throwing, catching, and rolling a ball)
- Perform a variety of movement skills with a partner by playing group games (ex. "Simon Says", "Brown Girl in the Ring")
- Engage in physical activity by joining in movement games (ex. "Hokey Pokey", "Skip to My Lou" and "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes", or using props such as scarves to dance to music)

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Provide community health and safety programs appropriate for families with young children.
- Develop and support community programs for families and young children which promote positive developmentally appropriate physical activities.
- Provide a variety of environments and activities appropriate for families with young children.
- Provide safe community environments and activities that allow children to explore and learn.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Establish policies to provide families with young children access and availability to community health and safety programs.
- Encourage cooperation and collaboration across systems that impact environments and activities for families with young children.
- Ensure that environments and activities for families with young children are accessible and affordable.
- Support the development of children and base decision making on what is developmentally appropriate for young children.

Physical Health and Development

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's FINE MOTOR SKILLS:

- Celebrate your child's accomplishments.
- Provide a variety of art and writing materials and experiences that offer manipulative practice (ex. crayons, chalk, markers, pencils and paper, paint with brushes, collage materials).
- Provide sensory experiences (water and sand play) where your child can pour, fill and empty using a variety of sand and water toys.
- Provide manipulatives (ex. stringing beads, magnetic boards, Legos, small blocks).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's FINE MOTOR SKILLS:

- Provide sensory experiences where children can pour, fill, and empty.
- Provide a variety of art and writing materials and experiences that offer manipulative practice.
- Establish a manipulative learning area where children can engage in play that includes stringing beads, magnetic boards, Legos, small blocks, and puzzles of varying difficulty.
- Support children's attempts to fasten clothing.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **FINE MOTOR SKILLS** when they:

- Demonstrate control, strength, and dexterity to manipulate objects (ex. manipulating dough and clay by squeezing, pounding, and rolling)
- Demonstrate spatial awareness (ex. using tongs to pick up objects, putting puzzles together)
- Demonstrate eye-hand coordination (ex. using scissors to cut, stringing beads onto laces, completing self-help skills such as buttoning, snapping, zipping)
- Demonstrate increasing control with writing and drawing implements (ex. drawing and painting pictures with crayons, chalk, markers, pencils, paint)

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Provide community health and safety programs appropriate for families with young children.
- Develop and support community programs for families and young children which promote positive developmentally appropriate physical activities.
- Provide a variety of environments and activities appropriate for families with young children.
- Provide safe community environments and activities that allow children to explore and learn.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Establish policies to provide families with young children access and availability to community health and safety programs.
- Encourage cooperation and collaboration across systems that impact environments and activities for families with young children.
- Ensure that environments and activities for families with young children are accessible and affordable.
- Support the development of children and base decision making on what is developmentally appropriate for young children.

Physical Health and Development

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES:

- Model and assist your child with self-help skills.
- Model healthy eating habits.
- Serve a variety of nutritional foods and discuss their value.
- Involve your child in planning and preparing family meals (ex. visiting the grocery store, cooking experiences).
- Talk with your child about harmful objects, substances, and behaviors.
- Discuss roles of health care and safety providers and visit their job sites.
- Develop a safety plan for home emergencies (ex. fire, earthquake, hurricane).
- Develop home safety rules.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES:

- Routinely check the environment to ensure healthy and safe practices are followed.
- Survey the classroom to ensure a child-friendly and engaging environment.
- Build time into daily routines for children to practice self-help skills.
- Establish routines for smooth transitions.
- Label shelves and toy baskets to promote independence during clean up.
- Review safety rules (ex. before taking walks, playing on the playground, or transitioning inside).
- Model healthy eating habits.
- Serve and talk about a variety of nutritional foods.
- Provide cooking experiences, including ethnic foods.
- Discuss roles of health care and safety providers and visit their job sites.
- Talk with children about harmful objects and substances.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **HEALTH AND SAFETY PRACTICES** when they:

- Demonstrate positive body awareness (ex. identifying basic body parts and feelings)
- Demonstrate good hygiene (ex. tooth-brushing, hand-washing)
- Demonstrate basic disease prevention skills (ex. covering nose and/or mouth when coughing or sneezing, using tissue to wipe nose, washing hands after toileting)
- Demonstrate an awareness of healthy lifestyle practices (ex. importance of exercise, active play, and good nutrition) .
- Understand the roles of health care and safety providers (ex. explains the roles of doctors, nurses, dentists, fire fighters, police, and engages in role playing)
- Demonstrate increasing responsibility for self-help tasks (ex. toileting, hand-washing, putting away toys, dressing).
- Identify and avoid harmful objects, substances, or behaviors (ex. running in the street, talking to strangers)
- Recognize and follow basic safety rules
- Demonstrate awareness of good nutritional practices (ex. identifying healthy and non-healthy foods, trying new foods)

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Provide community health and safety programs appropriate for families with young children.
- Develop and support community programs for families and young children which promote positive developmentally appropriate physical activities.
- Provide a variety of environments and activities appropriate for families with young children.
- Provide safe community environments and activities that allow children to explore and learn.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT:

- Establish policies to provide families with young children access and availability to community health and safety programs.
- Encourage cooperation and collaboration across systems that impact environments and activities for families with young children.
- Ensure that environments and activities for families with young children are accessible and affordable.
- Support the development of children and base decision making on what is developmentally appropriate for young children.



Domain 2:

Social, Emotional and Values Development



A child who is socially and emotionally competent and healthy is essentially one who can make friends, get along with his or her peers, and communicate well with adults. Research indicates that children are more likely to experience success in school when they have a sense of personal well-being, grounded in stable caring relationships. A solid base of emotional security and social competence enables children to participate and benefit fully in learning experiences and form positive relationships with peers and teachers.*

Values should be respectful of family culture and beliefs. Development of values is concerned about providing an environment in which children learn social lessons that support learning goals, such as caring for others, being part of a community, and working on positive attitudes.

Included in the social, emotional, and values domain are indicators which focus on:

- Relationships with adults
- Relationships with peers
- Sense of self and self-control

*Peth-Pierce, R. (2000).

Social, Emotional, and Values Development

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS:

- Provide your child with warm, loving relationships.
- Establish one-on-one time when your child can have your undivided attention on a daily basis (ex. at bedtime, after dinner).
- Use positive behavior and loving words when separating from your child.
- Model, explain, and provide opportunities for your child to interact appropriately and be respectful of adults.
- Reinforce and acknowledge your child's positive behavior with adults.
- Only make promises to your child that you can keep.
- Engage in meaningful conversations with your child, following your child's cues and ideas.
- Communicate guidelines and expectations clearly.
- When your child makes mistakes, talk with your child about how he/she can learn from them.
- Model and teach respect for others.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS:

- Provide a consistent predictable classroom routine and explain any changes in routine ahead of time.
- Greet children individually and warmly by name.
- Communicate guidelines and expectations clearly.
- Engage in meaningful conversations with children, following their cues and ideas.
- Acknowledge and show appreciation for children's accomplishments.
- Show respect for children's choices and attempts at solving problems.
- Offer suggestions to children for overcoming challenges when they ask for assistance.
- When children make mistakes, talk with them about how they can learn from their mistakes.
- Demonstrate openness and offer comfort to children when they approach you for emotional support, physical assistance, social interactions, and approval.
- Model and teach respect for others.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in their **RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS** when they:

- Demonstrate appropriate trust in adults by showing a preference for interacting with familiar adults
- Express affection for significant adults
- Separate with assistance from significant adults without demonstrating a great deal of anxiety
- Approach adults for assistance including emotional support, physical assistance, social interactions, and approval
- Demonstrate increasing comfort in talking with and accepting guidance and directions from a range of familiar adults
- Offer assistance to adults (ex. ask to help with tasks)
- Show confidence and positive feelings about relationships with significant adults in addition to primary caregivers (ex. teachers)
- Interact easily and comfortably with familiar adults
- Interact with familiar adults in the community (ex. neighbor, doctor, etc.)

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND VALUES DEVELOPMENT:

- Create safe, welcoming community opportunities for children and families that encourage positive interaction.
- Support community initiatives that promote children's healthy development.
- Acknowledge the importance of personal and cultural identity and social development as the foundation for learning, recognizing and honoring the heritage of all cultural groups.
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn strategies for supporting healthy social, emotional, and values development of children.
- Provide service opportunities for families and children to contribute to the community in meaningful ways.
- Model respect for others.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND VALUES DEVELOPMENT:

- Acknowledge the importance of social, emotional, and values development and its relationship to overall learning.
- Design strategies for the VI to be a model for family-friendly policy development.
- Promote high quality, developmentally and culturally appropriate early childhood education and care.
- Ensure availability of services and linkages among early childhood education, health, mental health, and social services for young children and families.
- Support high standards for early childhood educators and caregivers.
- Promote educational opportunities to help parents understand the importance of parenting skills related to healthy social, emotional, and values development.

Social, Emotional, and Values Development

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS:

- Engage in conversations with your child, listening and talking in turn.
- Provide opportunities for your child to play with other children.
- Model respect and positive ways to interact with others.
- Acknowledge cooperation when your child plays with other children.
- Provide opportunities for your child to help others at home and in the community. (ex. sorting laundry, participating in beach clean-ups).
- Give suggestions for helping your child solve interpersonal problems. (ex. "If we take turns, everyone gets to play.")
- Provide your child with opportunities to know and understand his/her culture and the culture of others.
- Demonstrate and explain how your child's behavior affects others.
- Help your child understand the feelings, ideas, and actions of others.
- Help your child learn honesty and compassion and love for others.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS:

- Provide opportunities for children to engage in a variety of cooperative play activities (ex. dramatic play, art projects).
- Support children's play with peers by staying nearby, encouraging cooperation, and assisting with conflict resolution.
- Encourage children to rely on and help each other.
- Promote a sense of community and interdependence (ex. clean-up time, food preparation, sharing circles).
- Provide opportunities for children to contribute to group discussions.
- Actively intervene and address bullying behavior.
- Demonstrate and provide opportunities for children to take another's perspective (ex. "How do you think Maria feels?").
- Guide children in resolving conflicts by modeling and providing support (ex. "What should we do to solve this problem?").
- Read stories or invent puppet plays in which characters share, take turns, cooperate, and solve conflicts.
- Demonstrate and explain how to include others in play.
- Balance opportunities for culturally consistent and cross-cultural understanding.
- Help children learn honesty and compassion and love for others.
- Model respect and positive ways to interact with others.
- Support English language learners by providing key words in English.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in their **RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS** when they:

- Show enjoyment playing with other children
- Initiate an activity with another child
- Make and maintain a friendship with at least one other child
- Give social support to others (ex. offer to help, share a toy with another child)
- Comfort others when they are hurt or upset
- Follow suggestions given by another child in play (ex. "Let's build a road.")
- Identify self as a member of a group (ex. refer to my family, my class)
- Join in group activities
- Follow simple rules in group activities
- Share materials and toys with other children
- Sustain interaction with other children by cooperating, helping, sharing, and suggesting new ideas for play
- Complete simple projects with others
- Use different turn-taking strategies (ex. trading, bartering, sharing)
- Use multiple strategies to solve problems, negotiate, and resolve conflicts (ex. use words to express themselves, seek adult help, say things like "You can have it when I'm done.")
- Use play to explore, practice, and understand social roles and relationships

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND VALUES DEVELOPMENT:

- Create safe, welcoming community opportunities for children and families that encourage positive interaction.
- Support community initiatives that promote children's healthy development.
- Acknowledge the importance of personal and cultural identity and social development as the foundation for learning, recognizing and honoring the heritage of all cultural groups.
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn strategies for supporting healthy social emotional, and values development of children.
- Provide service opportunities for families and children to contribute to the community in meaningful ways.
- Model respect for others.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND VALUES DEVELOPMENT:

- Acknowledge the importance of social, emotional and values development and its relationship to overall learning.
- Design strategies for the VI to be a model for family-friendly policy development.
- Promote high quality, developmentally and culturally appropriate early childhood education and care.
- Ensure availability of services and linkages among early childhood education, health, mental health, and social services for young children and families.
- Support high standards for early childhood educators and caregivers.
- Promote educational opportunities to help parents understand the importance of parenting skills related to healthy social, emotional, and values development.

Social, Emotional, and Values Development

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's SENSE OF SELF AND SELF-CONTROL:

- Provide your child with warm, loving relationships.
- Engage your child in doable and challenging opportunities that stimulate interests and build on abilities.
- Acknowledge your child's accomplishments.
- Watch for your child's interests and suggest activities to support them.
- Encourage your child to try new things by sharing and learning together.
- Support your child's awareness of and pride in his/her cultural heritage.
- Respond to your child's emotional and physical needs with warmth and reassurance.
- Establish predictable family routines while being flexible to meet your child's needs (ex. establish a bedtime and morning routine).
- Prepare your child for changes in routines or schedules by providing advance warning and discussion.
- Encourage your child to talk about own feelings and feelings of others.
- Model appropriate expressions of emotion and ways to resolve conflicts.
- Guide your child in appropriate expressions of emotions, conflict resolution, and problem solving.
- Provide your child with practice in solving simple problems.
- Model and teach respect for others

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's SENSE OF SELF AND SELF-CONTROL:

- Establish a warm, caring, and engaged relationship with each child.
- Provide opportunities for children to share information about themselves in multiple ways (ex. story-telling, photos, drama, drawing, writing).
- Provide opportunities for children to play, explore, and accomplish tasks.
- Allow children to experiment with their growing competence and independence by providing opportunities for children to make choices and decisions.
- Engage children in conversations about their interests and abilities.
- Respond predictably and appropriately to children's physical, emotional, social, and cognitive needs.
- Provide physical environments, schedules, and routines that promote self-control and self-regulation.
- Prepare children for changes in routines or schedules by providing advance warning and discussion, talking with, and listening to the children.
- Model appropriate expressions of emotions and ways to resolve conflicts.
- Provide opportunities for children to understand and discuss their feelings and those of others (ex. through discussions and reading stories).
- Discuss how different behaviors are appropriate in different situations.
- Guide children in appropriate expressions of emotions, conflict resolution, and problem solving.
- Model and teach respect for others.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in their **SENSE OF SELF AND SELF-CONTROL** when they:

- Know and share important personal information (ex. name, age, birthday)
- Experiment with own potential by trying new activities and showing confidence
- Develop an awareness of self as having certain abilities, characteristics, and preferences (ex. "I like to paint." "I can reach it!")
- Work independently and interdependently
- Accept responsibility and follow through on tasks (ex. help with simple chores)
- Express own ideas and opinions
- Express pride in accomplishments (ex. "Look what I made!" "I figured it out!")
- Engage and participate in simple routines
- Make smooth transitions, with guidance, from one activity or setting to the next
- Demonstrate increasing capacity to follow rules and routines
- Adjust behavior appropriately to different settings (ex. playground, grocery store)
- Demonstrate increasing competence in describing, and handling own emotions
- Use pretend play to understand and handle emotions
- Respond to praise, limits, directions, and corrections appropriately
- Develop a growing understanding of how own actions affect others

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND VALUES DEVELOPMENT:

- Create safe, welcoming community opportunities for children and families that encourage positive interaction.
- Support community initiatives that promote children's healthy development.
- Acknowledge the importance of personal and cultural identity and social development as the foundation for learning, recognizing and honoring the heritage of all cultural groups.
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn strategies for supporting healthy social, emotional, and values development of children.
- Provide service opportunities for families and children to contribute to the community in meaningful ways.
- Model respect for others.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL, AND VALUES DEVELOPMENT:

- Acknowledge the importance of social, emotional, and values development and its relationship to overall learning.
- Design strategies for the VI to be a model for family-friendly policy development.
- Promote high quality, developmentally and culturally appropriate early childhood education and care.
- Ensure availability of services and linkages among early childhood education, health, mental health, and social services for young children and families.
- Support high standards for early childhood educators and caregivers.
- Promote educational opportunities to help parents understand the importance of parenting skills related to healthy social, emotional, and values development.



Domain 3:

Approaches to Learning



The approaches to learning domain focuses on attitudes, behaviors, habits, and styles that reflect the different ways children become involved in learning. This domain is not concerned with the skills or knowledge children acquire, but how they approach or orient themselves to learning. A narrow focus on skills and knowledge as the end product of education may undermine children's capacity to apply their skills to new situations and solve problems. Included in the approaches to learning domain are indicators that focus on:

- Curiosity and initiative
- Engagement and persistence
- Imagination and invention
- Reasoning, reflecting, and problem solving

Approaches to Learning

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's CURIOSITY AND INITIATIVE:

- Encourage your child's interest and excitement in discovery and learning.
- Share activities and experiences in which you and your child can learn new things together.
- Plan family outings to interesting places.
- Provide a variety of materials and activities, including everyday household items, that can be used in more than one way.
- Talk about and reflect on experiences to revisit what happened and what was learned.
- Assist your child in finding answers to questions by exploring together.
- Build on your child's interests and provide ways for your child to discover answers to questions by borrowing books from the library, talking to people, or visiting places in the community.
- Encourage your child to try new things and solve problems creatively.
- Respond to mistakes and errors in positive ways that preserve your child's self-esteem.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's CURIOSITY AND INITIATIVE:

- Share children's excitement in discoveries and explorations in the environment.
- Provide opportunities and time for children to explore and try a variety of activities and materials.
- Build upon children's individual interests and ideas.
- Provide a variety of instructional approaches, strategies, and materials that appeal to the full range of learning styles, cultures, and ability levels of the children.
- Model curiosity and information-seeking.
- Build on children's interests by providing books, videos, field trips, and other experiences.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **CURIOSITY AND INITIATIVE** when they:

- Choose to participate in a variety of tasks and activities
- Are eager to participate in unfamiliar activities
- Develop an ability to make independent choices
- Are interested in discovering and learning new things
- Ask others for information (ex. “What is that?”)
- Are interested in discussing a growing range of topics and ideas
- Ask “Why” questions to understand more about how the world works
- Use a variety of strategies to solve problems
- Approach tasks and activities with flexibility, imagination, and inventiveness

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children’s APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Provide a variety of environments and activities appropriate for families with young children, including parks, libraries, playgrounds, festivals, and celebrations.
- Provide safe community environments and activities that allow for children to explore and learn.
- Provide opportunities for families to participate in solving community problems or giving input on issues.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children’s APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Encourage cooperation and collaboration across systems that impact environments and activities for families with young children.
- Ensure that environments and activities for families with young children are safe, accessible, and affordable.
- Support the development of children by basing decision-making on what is developmentally appropriate for and in the best interests of young children.

Approaches to Learning

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's ENGAGEMENT AND PERSISTENCE:

- Help your child focus attention (ex. "Look at this.").
- Provide space and time in which your child can play and work without interruptions.
- Provide developmentally appropriate materials and activities.
- Respond to your child's requests when help is needed without being intrusive.
- Support your child when experiencing frustrations (ex. "That looks hard. Let's see if we can do it another way.").
- Encourage and reinforce your child's attention and persistence at tasks and activities.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's ENGAGEMENT AND PERSISTENCE:

- Provide sufficient time and space for children to engage in sustained activities.
- Support children's efforts to complete activities and projects.
- Arrange the classroom in interest areas to encourage participation and focus on activities.
- Provide developmentally appropriate materials and activities.
- Respond to children when they encounter problems without being intrusive.
- Pose questions which encourage children to find alternative ways to solve problems.
- Follow the children's lead when suggestions are made for solving problems.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **ENGAGEMENT AND PERSISTENCE** when they:

- Focus on tasks of interest
- Complete favorite tasks over and over again
- Demonstrate a growing capacity to maintain concentration over time on a task or activity despite distractions and interruptions
- Complete a task or remain engaged in a variety of experiences, activities, or projects
- Set goals and follow through on plans
- Extend learning by attempting, repeating, experimenting, refining, and elaborating on an activity
- Persist in trying to complete a task after previous attempts have failed
- Work on a task over a period of time, leaving and returning to it
- Shift attention back to an activity after being distracted

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Provide a variety of environments and activities appropriate for families with young children, including parks, libraries, playgrounds, festivals, and celebrations.
- Provide safe community environments and activities that allow for children to explore and learn.
- Provide opportunities for families to participate in solving community problems or giving input on issues.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Encourage cooperation and collaboration across systems that impact environments and activities for families with young children.
- Ensure that environments and activities for families with young children are safe, accessible, and affordable.
- Support the development of children by basing decision-making on what is developmentally appropriate for and in the best interests of young children.

Approaches to Learning

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's IMAGINATION AND INVENTION:

- Provide opportunities for your child to experiment with new materials and activities without fear of making mistakes.
- Provide a variety of familiar and new materials and activities for your child to explore.
- Encourage your child to try new approaches to solving problems.
- Encourage pretend and make believe play.
- Engage in make-believe play with your child following their lead.
- Ask open-ended questions to encourage creative thinking (ex. "What do you think about...?").

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's IMAGINATION AND INVENTION:

- Provide an environment of psychological safety in which children are encouraged to experiment with new materials, activities, and ideas without fear of making mistakes.
- Provide materials and activities in which the goal is to try different strategies or solutions rather than right or wrong answers.
- Pose questions which encourage children to find alternative ways to solve problems.
- Model exploration and use of a wide variety of familiar and new learning materials, activities, and experiences.
- Encourage children to be flexible, creative, and inventive in play and in solving problems.
- Encourage pretend and make-believe play.
- Ask open-ended questions to encourage creative thinking.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **IMAGINATION AND INVENTION** when they:

- Invent new activities or games
- Approach tasks and experiences with flexibility, imagination, and inventiveness
- Combine activities, materials, and equipment in new ways
- Use a variety of strategies and novel ways to solve problems or explore objects
- Try out various pretend roles in play or with make-believe objects
- Create complex scenarios in pretend play
- Explore music, movement, and a variety of art media

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Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Provide a variety of environments and activities appropriate for families with young children, including parks, libraries, playgrounds, festivals, and celebrations.
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Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Encourage cooperation and collaboration across systems that impact environments and activities for families with young children.
- Ensure that environments and activities for families with young children are safe, accessible, and affordable.
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Approaches to Learning

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's REASONING, REFLECTING, AND PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Talk with your child about what was seen, heard, or done.
- Help your child remember experiences with photographs, mementos, and souvenirs.
- Encourage your child to share thoughts and ideas about the world.
- Ask questions that encourage your child to think, find alternative ways to solve problems, and reflect (ex. "What if...?" "How could you do this?").
- Model thinking out loud to solve problems and talk about ideas with your child.
- Involve your child in planning family activities, such as vacations, family outings, or family celebrations.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's REASONING, REFLECTING, AND PROBLEM SOLVING:

- Provide opportunities for children to recall experiences and express their thoughts and feelings about them through a variety of methods (ex. discussion, journaling, experience charts, dramatic play, art activities, music).
- Provide children time to process experiences and information.
- Provide opportunities for children to think and talk about what and how they are learning.
- Discuss sequencing and timing of experiences (past, present, future) and relationships among them.
- Ask questions that encourage children to think, find alternative ways to solve problems, and reflect (ex. "What if...?" "How else could you do this?").



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **REASONING, REFLECTING, AND PROBLEM SOLVING** when they:

- Tell others about events that happened
- Describe or act out a memory of a situation or experience
- Represent things in the environment with available materials (ex. make a picture of a house, or build a road with blocks)
- Think about events and experiences and apply new knowledge to new situations
- Generate ideas and suggestions and make predictions
- Ask questions about events and experiences using progressively more complex thinking and language
- Find more than one solution to a task, question, or problem
- Modify actions based on new information and experiences (ex. change block structure when the tower continues to fall)
- Recognize and solve problems through active exploration, including trial and error, and interactions and discussions with peers and adults

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Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Provide a variety of environments and activities appropriate for families with young children, including parks, libraries, playgrounds, festivals, and celebrations.
- Provide safe community environments and activities that allow for children to explore and learn.
- Provide opportunities for families to participate in solving community problems or giving input on issues.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's APPROACHES TO LEARNING:

- Encourage cooperation and collaboration across systems that impact environments and activities for families with young children.
- Ensure that environments and activities for families with young children are safe, accessible, and affordable.
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Domain 4:

Cognitive: Language and Literacy



Language, communication, and literacy have been recognized as essential for all individuals in our society. The acquisition of language and literacy skills is a complex process during which, over the course of only a few years, children make great strides in learning the meaning and structure of words, how to use words to convey meaning, and how to understand and use printed materials. In acquiring language, children gain the ability to articulate ideas, share them with others, and respond to the ideas and actions of other people. Included in the language and literacy domain are indicators that focus on:

- Listening
- Speaking
- Emergent reading
 - ◊ Book and story knowledge
 - ◊ Print awareness
 - ◊ Phonological awareness
 - ◊ Alphabetic knowledge
- Emergent writing

Cognitive: Language and Literacy

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's LISTENING:

- Talk with your child using language appropriate to your child's level of understanding and extending language offering new words.
- Engage your child in conversation about what your child is doing, listening to, and seeing.
- Use mealtimes and other daily routines as opportunities for conversation.
- Use rhymes and songs with your child to increase interest in language sounds and words.
- Engage your child in simple tasks that require an action or verbal response (ex. "Bring me the green towel." "What is your brother doing?").
- Read with your child and talk about what is happening in the story.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's LISTENING:

- Provide clear instructions that help children move from a simple direction to more complex sequences of directions.
- Model language for children using questions and facial expressions to communicate information.
- Provide time and opportunities for children to have individual conversations with adults and other children.
- Converse naturally with children about what they are doing, listening to, and seeing.
- Play games and sing and listen to songs with children that require listening and understanding (ex. "Simon Says"; "Red Light, Green Light"; "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes").
- Read with individual and small groups of children each day and discuss the story.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **LISTENING** when they:

- Understand non-verbal and verbal cues
- Hear and discriminate the sounds of language
- Listen with understanding to stories, directions, and conversations
- Follow directions that involve a simple and multi-step sequence of actions
- Listen to and recognize different sounds in rhymes and familiar words
- Understand an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary
- Have a receptive vocabulary of several thousand words in their home language
- Progress in listening to and understanding academic English

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Provide opportunities for parents and young children to participate in activities together.
- Develop community awareness about the importance of talking and reading with young children.
- Support volunteer programs that increase the amount of quality time adults interact with young children.
- Provide libraries that are well-supplied with appropriate books for young children.
- Sponsor community events such as book fairs, plays, and story hours that encourage children and families to read together.
- Organize book donation drives for early childhood programs.

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Support efforts to encourage adults to spend more time with children, listening, speaking, and engaging children in conversation and interaction.
- Support small group sizes and low teacher/child ratios in early childhood settings to provide opportunities for children to have more individualized attention.
- Provide support for projects that facilitate early literacy development (ex. libraries and book mobiles, book give-a-ways, early childhood programs, parent-child programs, volunteer programs).
- Support adult and family literacy programs.

Cognitive: Language and Literacy

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's SPEAKING:

- Respond to your child's attempts to communicate when your child uses gestures, actions, or words.
- Talk with your child in your home language and/or academic English.
- When reading with your child, encourage your child to discuss the story and contribute own ideas (ex. relate it to personal experiences, make predictions).
- Use language in everyday activities with your child and encourage your child to talk about actions, thoughts, and ideas.
- Provide opportunities for your child to talk and interact with other children and adults.
- Build and expand on what your child says and model examples (ex. add new vocabulary words, lengthen sentences, add descriptive words).
- Use increasingly complex words, in conversation, and explain their meaning when talking with your child.
- Play "placing games" with your child to demonstrate use of prepositions or positional words (ex. "Put the ball under/on top of /beside the table.").

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's SPEAKING:

- Value children's home language and attempts to communicate, while modeling academic English.
- Listen and respond to attempts to communicate verbally and non-verbally.
- Facilitate language development by expanding, extending, and elaborating on children's language.
- Talk about a variety of topics and model appropriate ways to use language to ask questions, give answers, make statements, share ideas, describe objects and events, or use pretend, fantasy, or word play.
- Intentionally introduce, model, and explain new vocabulary words (ex. when interacting, building on children's interests, reading stories).
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in turn-taking in conversation.
- Ask open-ended questions that can have varied answers, eliminating right or wrong answers (ex. "Who was your favorite character and why?" "What will happen if...?")
- Take time to sit down for leisurely conversations of interest to children.
- When possible, communicate with non-English speakers using their home language.
- Support English language acquisition by using props, gestures, and role plays.
- Identify and explain patterns in errors of spoken English to help children acquire language competency without correcting but by guiding children by example.
- Sing songs that incorporate words from two languages.
- Model positive vocabulary learning strategies (ex. reading cues from the context).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **SPEAKING** when they:

- Communicate needs, wants, or thoughts through non-verbal gestures, actions, expressions, and/or words
- Communicate information using home language and/or academic English
- Speak clearly enough to be understood in home language and/or academic English
- Use language for a variety of purposes (ex. express wants and describe events and experiences)
- Ask the meaning of unfamiliar words and then experiment using them
- Use increasingly complex and varied vocabulary and language
- Use adjectives and adverbs to further describe words (ex. running fast, beautiful butterfly, big red ball, jumping high)
- Use multiple words to explain the same idea (ex. bunny/rabbit, sunglasses/shades)
- Talk in sentences with five or more words to describe objects and events
- Initiate, ask questions, and respond in conversation with others
- Progress in clarity of speech, sentences of increasing length, and grammatical complexity

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Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's LANGUAGE AND LITERACY:

- Provide opportunities for parents and young children to participate in activities together.
- Develop community awareness about the importance of talking and reading with young children.
- Support volunteer programs that increase the amount of quality time adults interact with young children.
- Provide libraries that are well-supplied with appropriate books for young children.
- Sponsor community events such as book fairs, plays, and story hours that encourage children and families to read together.
- Organize book donation drives for early childhood programs.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's LANGUAGE AND LITERACY:

- Support efforts to encourage adults to spend more time with children, listening, speaking, and engaging children in conversation and interaction.
- Support small group sizes and low teacher/child ratios in early childhood settings to provide opportunities for children to have more individualized attention.
- Provide support for projects that facilitate early literacy development (ex. libraries and book mobiles, book give-a-ways, early childhood programs, parent-child programs, volunteer programs).
- Support adult and family literacy programs.

Cognitive: Language and Literacy

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT READING—BOOK AND STORY KNOWLEDGE:

- Read to your child often for pleasure and information, making book-reading time special for you and your child.
- Call attention to books, newspapers, and magazines in your home.
- Visit a library or bookmobile often and check out books to read.
- Ask your child questions about the stories you read together.
- Encourage your child to talk about and predict what will happen next in a story.
- Demonstrate that books provide information (ex. look for names and numbers in the phone book before making calls).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT READING—BOOK AND STORY KNOWLEDGE:

- Provide and share books with children, re-read favorite stories, and model reading behaviors.
- Provide materials such as flannel board sets, puppets, and other props to act out and retell stories.
- Provide many types of children's books, references, pictures, and posters in the environment.
- Help children learn about sequences in books such as beginning, middle, and end.
- Model using a variety of books for more complex activities (ex. cookbook while cooking).
- Use books to enhance other activities (ex. if child is making a castle, find books about castles).
- Provide children with "quiet time" daily to spend with books.
- Make books available that represent children's life experiences, cultural backgrounds, and home languages.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **EMERGENT READING—BOOK AND STORY KNOWLEDGE** when they:

- Enjoy and value reading
- Enjoy a variety of genres (ex. poetry, folk and fairy tales, informational books, magazines)
- Initiate stories and respond to stories told or read aloud
- Comprehend and interpret meaning from books and other texts
- Connect information and events to real life experiences when being read a story
- Represent stories told or read aloud through various media or during play
- Predict what will happen next in a story using pictures as a guide
- Engage in pretend reading
- Retell information from a story using details (ex. characters, story line)
- Know first and last page of a book

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Provide opportunities for parents and young children to participate in activities together.
- Develop community awareness about the importance of talking and reading with young children.
- Support volunteer programs that increase the amount of quality time adults interact with young children.
- Provide libraries that are well-supplied with appropriate books for young children.
- Sponsor community events such as book fairs, plays, and story hours that encourage children and families to read together.
- Organize book donation drives for early childhood programs.

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Support efforts to encourage adults to spend more time with children, listening, speaking, and engaging children in conversation and interaction.
- Support small group sizes and low teacher/child ratios in early childhood settings to provide opportunities for children to have more individualized attention.
- Provide support for projects that facilitate early literacy development (ex. libraries and book mobiles, book give-a-ways, early childhood programs, parent-child programs, volunteer programs).
- Support adult and family literacy programs.

Cognitive: Language and Literacy

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT READING—PRINT AWARENESS :

- Point out examples of print in your home, neighborhood, and stores (ex. labels on cans and cereal boxes, signs on buildings, posters, advertisements).
- Point out words in books while reading to your child and letting your child turn the pages.
- When writing, read to your child what you are writing pointing to the words (ex. names, lists, invitations, notes).
- Go on excursions in the community with your child and point out and read the words you see (ex. when eating out and looking at the menu, when riding in the car, advertisements, posters, signs).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT READING—PRINT AWARENESS :

- Provide opportunities for children to help put something together based on printed directions (ex. recipes for cooking, Lego structures, games).
- Create word games using familiar objects (ex. BINGO).
- Provide opportunities for children to create books and other printed materials.
- When reading with children, use punctuation to create natural breaks (ex. "Let me finish this sentence before I answer your question." When a sentence is completed, point to the period to indicate the end of the sentence.).
- Label objects and areas of the classroom using pictures, English, and the languages of the children.
- Create posters and charts using pictures, English, and languages of the children (ex. schedule, helpers, attendance).
- Record children's dictated stories and language, demonstrating concepts about print.
- Use shared reading and have children point out examples of print concepts in big books.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **EMERGENT READING—PRINT AWARENESS** when they:

- Identify labels and signs in the environment (ex. stop signs, McDonald's, classroom helper's chart)
- Show increasing awareness of print in classroom, home, and community settings
- Develop growing understanding of the different functions and forms of print (ex. signs, letters, newspapers, lists, menus)
- Demonstrate increasing awareness of concepts of print (ex. reading in English moves from top to bottom and from left to right, speech can be written down, print conveys a message)
- Show progress in recognizing the association between spoken and written words by following print as it is read aloud
- Recognize a word as a unit of print and are aware that letters are grouped to form words and words are separated by spaces

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Provide opportunities for parents and young children to participate in activities together.
- Develop community awareness about the importance of talking and reading with young children.
- Support volunteer programs that increase the amount of quality time adults interact with young children.
- Provide libraries that are well-supplied with appropriate books for young children.
- Sponsor community events such as book fairs, plays, and story hours that encourage children and families to read together.
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Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Support efforts to encourage adults to spend more time with children, listening, speaking, and engaging children in conversation and interaction.
- Support small group sizes and low teacher/child ratios in early childhood settings to provide opportunities for children to have more individualized attention.
- Provide support for projects that facilitate early literacy development (ex. libraries and book mobiles, book give-a-ways, early childhood programs, parent-child programs, volunteer programs).
- Support adult and family literacy programs.

Cognitive: Language and Literacy

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT READING—PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS :

- Repeat nursery rhymes and play word games.
- Practice the sounds of language by teaching your child rhymes, short poems, and songs.
- Play simple word games (ex. How many words can you make up that sound like the word "bat"?).
- Help your child separate the sounds in words, listen for beginning and ending sounds, and put separate sounds together.
- Point out the letter-sound relationships your child is learning on labels, boxes, newspapers, magazines, and signs.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT READING—PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS :

- Provide opportunities for children to repeat familiar rhymes and experiment with beginning word sounds.
- While listening to rhyming songs, point out the rhyming words.
- Make up silly songs and chants.
- Sing word songs, leaving out parts as you sing (ex. song: "BINGO was his Name," and in each consecutive paragraph leave out a letter marking the spot with silence or clap)
- While singing songs, chanting rhymes, reading books aloud, and playing games, orally match, isolate, blend, and substitute sounds and segment words into sounds.
- Teach phonemic awareness in the context of authentic reading and writing activities.
- For English language learners, begin with sounds that children can pronounce easily and that don't conflict with those in their home language.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **EMERGENT READING—PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS** when they:

- Participate in rhyming activities
- Distinguish individual spoken words in sentences
- Show increasing ability to discriminate and identify sounds spoken in language
- Show growing awareness of beginning and ending sounds in words
- Progress in recognizing matching sounds and rhymes in familiar words, games, songs, stories, and poems
- Generate simple rhymes
- Associate sounds with written words (ex. awareness that different words begin with the same sound)
- Make three or more letter-sound correspondences (ex. identify that “David,” “day,” and “dog” begin with the same sound)
- Find objects in a picture with the same beginning sound, with assistance
- Differentiate between similar-sounding words (ex. cat and chat)
- Begin to create and invent words by substituting one sound for the other

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children’s **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Provide opportunities for parents and young children to participate in activities together.
- Develop community awareness about the importance of talking and reading with young children.
- Support volunteer programs that increase the amount of quality time adults interact with young children.
- Provide libraries that are well-supplied with appropriate books for young children.
- Sponsor community events such as book fairs, plays, and story hours that encourage children and families to read together.
- Organize book donation drives for early childhood programs.

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children’s **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Support efforts to encourage adults to spend more time with children, listening, speaking, and engaging children in conversation and interaction.
- Support small group sizes and low teacher/child ratios in early childhood settings to provide opportunities for children to have more individualized attention.
- Provide support for projects that facilitate early literacy development (ex. libraries and book mobiles, book give-a-ways, early childhood programs, parent-child programs, volunteer programs).
- Support adult and family literacy programs.

Cognitive: Language and Literacy

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT READING—ALPHABETIC KNOWLEDGE :

- Help your child learn to recognize own name in print (ex. as your child watches, print the letters of your child's name, saying each letter as you write it; display your child's name in special places in your home; encourage your child to spell and write his/her name).
- Point out words and letters in the environment (ex. read street signs, traffic signs, store signs; point out letters in these signs; ask your child to begin to name common signs and find some letters).
- Teach your child the alphabet song.
- Put magnetic letters on your refrigerator or other metal surface; ask your child to name the letters while playing with them.
- Share alphabet books with your child.
- Play games using the alphabet (ex. ask your child to find letters in books, magazines, newspapers, and other print).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT READING—ALPHABETIC KNOWLEDGE :

- Play letter games with children (ex. encourage children to point to objects that begin with the same letter).
- Read alphabet books with children.
- As you write children's names on their art work, say the letters out loud.
- Use the letters of the alphabet as they come up in real life situations.
- Call attention to names of children that begin with the same letter.
- Play games with children that encourage them to match and sort upper and lower case letters.
- Use alphabet charts to identify letters.
- Compile ABC books with children.
- Play matching games with children.
- Identify letters in children's names and environmental print.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **EMERGENT READING—ALPHABETIC KNOWLEDGE** when they:

- Recognize and name some letters of the alphabet, especially those in their own name
- Begin to associate sounds with words or letters
- Associate at least 10 letters with their shapes or sounds
- Recite or sing all letters of the alphabet
- Show progress in associating the names of letters with their shapes and sounds
- Increase in ability to notice the beginning letters in familiar words
- Knows that letters of the alphabet are a special category of visual graphics that can be individually named
- Identifies familiar letters out of alphabetic sequence

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Provide opportunities for parents and young children to participate in activities together.
- Develop community awareness about the importance of talking and reading with young children.
- Support volunteer programs that increase the amount of quality time adults interact with young children.
- Provide libraries that are well-supplied with appropriate books for young children.
- Sponsor community events such as book fairs, plays, and story hours that encourage children and families to read together.
- Organize book donation drives for early childhood programs.

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Support efforts to encourage adults to spend more time with children, listening, speaking, and engaging children in conversation and interaction.
- Support small group sizes and low teacher/child ratios in early childhood settings to provide opportunities for children to have more individualized attention.
- Provide support for projects that facilitate early literacy development (ex. libraries and book mobiles, book give-a-ways, early childhood programs, parent-child programs, volunteer programs).
- Support adult and family literacy programs.

Cognitive: Language and Literacy

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT WRITING:

- Provide writing materials in the home (ex. paper, pencils, crayons, markers).
- Support your child's interest in scribbles and pretend writing.
- Encourage your child to participate in activities that involve reading and writing (ex. making a grocery list).
- Support your child in using writing to communicate with others (ex. creating and sending a thank you note).
- Help your child recognize own name and support your child in attempts to practice writing letters.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's EMERGENT WRITING:

- Provide opportunities for children to draw and print using markers, crayons, paint, and pencils.
- Provide writing materials in many areas of the classroom.
- Promote literacy-related play activities and respect children's attempts at writing (ex. note pad for writing restaurant orders, doctor's prescriptions, directions for going to the store, grocery lists in play).
- Display models of adult and child writing in the classroom environment.
- Encourage children's interests and attempts to copy or write letters and their own names.
- Positively acknowledge children's attempts to write.
- Ask children to "sign" artwork, cards, and letters.
- Write down children's dictations and read back exactly what children say.
- Provide opportunities to talk about what children notice about different writing systems (especially appropriate for English language learners).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **EMERGENT WRITING** when they:

- Understand that writing is a way of communicating
- Use scribbles, shapes, pictures, or dictation to represent thoughts or ideas
- Engage in writing using letter-like symbols to make letters or words
- Begin to copy or write own name
- Experiment with a growing variety of writing tools and materials (ex. pencils, crayons, and computers)
- Dictate stories and experiences
- Draw basic geometric shapes (ex. circle and triangle)

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Provide opportunities for parents and young children to participate in activities together.
- Develop community awareness about the importance of talking and reading with young children.
- Support volunteer programs that increase the amount of quality time adults interact with young children.
- Provide libraries that are well-supplied with appropriate books for young children.
- Sponsor community events such as book fairs, plays, and story hours that encourage children and families to read together.
- Organize book donation drives for early childhood programs.

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**:

- Support efforts to encourage adults to spend more time with children, listening, speaking, and engaging children in conversation and interaction.
- Support small group sizes and low teacher/child ratios in early childhood settings to provide opportunities for children to have more individualized attention.
- Provide support for projects that facilitate early literacy development (ex. libraries and book mobiles, book give-a-ways, early childhood programs, parent-child programs, volunteer programs).
- Support adult and family literacy programs.



Domain 4:

Cognitive: Mathematics



“Mathematics for the young child is more than the old standbys – arithmetic, counting, and learning to identify a square, rectangle, circle, and triangle. The content for young children should be rich and varied and have a conceptually oriented, meaningful, and focused purpose.”* Mathematics curriculum must include opportunities for children to solve problems, reason and think, manipulate objects, make comparisons, and connect with their world through meaningful hands-on experiences. Included in the mathematical understanding domain are indicators that focus on:

- Number and operations
- Geometry and spatial sense
- Patterns and algebra
- Measurement,
- Data analysis and probability

*Copley, J. (2000).

Cognitive: Mathematics

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF NUMBER AND OPERATIONS :

- Talk aloud while doing simple math computations (ex. the number of plates to set at the dinner table).
- Play card or board games that use counting.
- Share counting books with your child.
- Provide opportunities for your child to count objects during daily routines (ex. counting socks while doing laundry).
- Demonstrate to your child that numbers have meaning (ex. clock, TV, mail boxes, shopping).
- Provide a variety of objects for your child to handle, manipulate, sort, and count (ex. buttons, shells, toy cars).
- Pose math questions to your child that apply to daily life (ex. "How many days until your birthday? Let's count.").

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF NUMBER AND OPERATIONS :

- Establish a mathematically rich environment that provides many opportunities for children to count, sort, and group objects such as collections of objects (ex. buttons, shells, blocks, dominoes, number lines).
- Provide opportunities for children to use numbers and counting in play (ex. setting up a grocery store, pizza parlor, post office).
- Read and discuss books that involve numbers.
- Talk aloud while doing simple math computations (ex. the number of children in school).
- Play card or board games that use counting.
- Demonstrate that numbers have meaning (ex. clocks, number of children in each classroom center, toy telephones).
- Pose math questions to children that apply to daily life (ex. the number of cups to set at snack time).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **NUMBER AND OPERATIONS** when they:

- Demonstrate increasing interest and awareness of numbers and counting as a means for solving problems and determining quantity
- Demonstrate understanding and use one-to-one correspondence in counting objects and in matching groups of objects (ex. the child says one number for each object being counted)
- Demonstrate ability to count in sequence to 10 and beyond
- Demonstrate an understanding that the last word stated in counting tells “how many”
- Use language to compare quantities and numbers of objects (ex. “more than”, “less than”, “greater than”, “fewer”, “equal to”, and “same”)
- Use counting strategies to add or subtract low numbers (ex. counting the number of blue beads and counting the number of red beads and then by counting the blue and red beads together)

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children’s MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING:

- Provide toy lending libraries with manipulative materials that families can use to enhance their young children’s mathematical understanding.
- Provide make-and-take events for parents and young children to make learning games.
- Provide accessible, natural spaces and community activities for parents and young children to visit and explore.
- Encourage community leaders and members to become involved with early childhood programs and recognize the importance of appropriate early learning opportunities to success in school.

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children’s MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING:

- Support high standards for early childhood educators and caregivers.
- Promote parent education opportunities to help parents understand the importance of promoting their child’s early learning.
- Promote high quality early childhood education and care programs to support children’s cognitive development and readiness for school.
- Provide resources for safe, natural spaces and community activities for young children and families to visit and explore.

Cognitive: Mathematics

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF GEOMETRY AND SPATIAL SENSE:

- Talk about and provide opportunities for your child to recognize shapes in the environment and in books (ex. traffic lights are circles).
- Encourage your child to ask questions and find answers through exploration of shapes and space.
- Provide materials that can be connected and combined to create new shapes and representations in play (ex. using blocks, play dough, a doll house).
- Use words to describe locations of objects or movement in space (ex. on, in, under).
- Take your child to visit and observe murals, museums, or other community artwork, exploring together the variety of shapes the artists used.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF GEOMETRY AND SPATIAL SENSE:

- Talk about and provide opportunities for children to recognize shapes in the environment and in books (ex. shapes of blocks, puzzles, wheels of vehicles are circles).
- Use words to describe locations of objects or movement in space (ex. on, in, behind, next to, under).
- Provide materials that can be connected and combined to create new shapes and representations in play.
- Provide opportunities and challenges to create art projects that use shapes (ex. what shapes can you use to make a house?).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **GEOMETRY AND SPATIAL SENSE** when they:

- Identify and name common shapes (ex. circle, triangle, rectangle, square)
- Describe basic features of shapes (ex. number of sides or angles)
- Progress in ability to put together and take apart shapes (ex. deciding which piece will fit into a space in a puzzle)
- Put together and take apart shapes to make other shapes (ex. use two triangles to make a rectangle)
- Recognize and identify geometric shapes and structures in the environment (ex. a tire is a circle, a stop sign is an octagon)
- Use art materials to represent objects in the environment (ex. house, flowers, etc.)
- Create representations of locations and space in play (ex. build with blocks, make tunnels and hills in sand)
- Show growth in matching, sorting, putting objects in a series, and regrouping objects according to one or two attributes (ex. color, shape)
- Describe and name relative positions in space (ex. over, under, in, out, next to, top, bottom, in front, behind)

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING**:

- Provide toy lending libraries with manipulative materials that families can use to enhance their young children's mathematical understanding.
- Provide make-and-take events for parents and young children to make learning games.
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Cognitive: Mathematics

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF ALGEBRA and PATTERNS:

- Provide opportunities for your child to look for patterns in the house, nature, and neighborhood (ex. patterns in leaves, seashells, flowers, grocery carts).
- Provide opportunities for your child to sort objects and find patterns in everyday activities (ex. sorting spoons/forks/knives, sorting laundry, clapping in time to music, looking at patterns in clothing – stripes, polka dots).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF ALGEBRA PATTERNS:

- Play classification games (ex. gather objects and find different ways to group them or gather items that are pairs of objects that go together – shoe/sock, comb/brush).
- Provide opportunities for children to arrange collections into groupings using different rules (ex. buttons, shells, bottle lids).
- Provide opportunities for children to create their own patterns (ex. with blocks, art materials, and assorted objects).

EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **PATTERNS and ALGEBRA** when they:

- Arrange several objects one after the other in a simple series or pattern and describe the relationship (ex. blue-green-blue-green)
- Identify patterns in a variety of ways (designs, music, movement)
- Add additional objects to extend a repeated or graduating series
- Sort objects into groups by one or two characteristics and explain why they are grouped (ex. color, shape, size, everyday objects – animal, vehicle, furniture)
- Classify everyday objects that go together (ex. shoe/sock, crayon/paper, flower/vase)

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING**:

- Provide toy lending libraries with manipulative materials that families can use to enhance their young children's mathematical understanding.
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Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING**:

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Cognitive: Mathematics

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF MEASUREMENT:

- Engage your child in measuring activities and tasks in everyday life (ex. cooking, weighing a pet, weighing fruits and vegetables at the grocery store, measuring your child's height on a growth chart).
- Model use of conventional measuring tools and methods in everyday situations (cups and teaspoons in cooking, measuring tapes and rulers in sewing, measuring tapes and rulers in carpentry, tire gauges).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF MEASUREMENT:

- Engage children in measuring tasks and activities using standard and non-standard measurement (handfuls to measure beads, cups/teaspoons in cooking, long blocks and rulers to measure distance).
- Provide a variety of opportunities and materials for children to compare objects by size, weight, height, and length (ex. matching nuts to bolts by size, comparing length of blocks—two short blocks make a long block).
- Use time concepts and vocabulary in conversation (ex. "Tomorrow we are going to the library." "Your mommy comes at 3:00, after your nap.").
- Provide opportunities for children to estimate number, size, and distance and investigate their responses (ex. "How many buttons do you think are in the jar?")



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **MEASUREMENT** when they:

- Recognize and label objects that can be measured by height, length, weight and time (ex. “I’m taller than you.” “The box is heavy.” “We went to the beach yesterday.”)
- Make comparisons between objects based on attributes (more/less, longer/shorter, heavier/lighter)
- Use measuring tools in play and structured activities (ex. cups, rulers, timers, string, blocks, in water play, cooking, transitions, block play)
- Match objects by size (ex. bolts to nuts, jars to lids, pots to covers, cards to envelopes)
- Measure ingredients for a cooking project, with help

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- Provide toy lending libraries with manipulative materials that families can use to enhance their young children’s mathematical understanding.
- Provide make-and-take events for parents and young children to make learning games.
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Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children’s **MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING**:

- Support high standards for early childhood educators and caregivers.
- Promote parent education opportunities to help parents understand the importance of promoting their child’s early learning.
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Cognitive: Mathematics

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's DISPLAYING AND ANALYZING DATA:

- Point out and help your child observe similarities and differences in books and in objects in the environment.
- Use charts, calendars, lists for everyday activities (ex. when a favorite TV show is on, how many days until a holiday, "to do" lists or grocery lists to check off).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's DISPLAYING AND ANALYZING DATA:

- Use and talk about charts with words and pictures to display schedules, recipes, attendance, helpers, and turn-taking.
- Provide opportunities for children to use materials and manipulatives to make displays, analyze data, and document their work (ex. using their drawings to represent their buildings, drawing pictures of items that sink and items that float).
- Provide opportunities to create simple graphs with the children to represent observations in the environment (ex. how many children take the bus vs. how many come in a car, how many boys are in school vs. how many girls, how many children have pets vs. how many do not).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **DISPLAYING AND ANALYZING DATA** when they:

- Discuss and help to make simple graphs, charts, and lists by identifying more/less, same/different, what's next
- Collect, sort, compare, and classify objects according to attributes and organize data about the objects (ex. shells with holes or without holes, smooth and rough stones, button shapes and sizes)
- Pose questions and gather data and information about themselves and their surroundings (ex. animals that live in the sea, animals that fly, animals that live on land)

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING**:

- Provide toy lending libraries with manipulative materials that families can use to enhance their young children's mathematical understanding.
- Provide make-and-take events for parents and young children to make learning games.
- Provide accessible, natural spaces and community activities for parents and young children to visit and explore.
- Encourage community leaders and members to become involved with early childhood programs and recognize the importance of appropriate early learning opportunities to success in school.

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **MATHEMATICAL UNDERSTANDING**:

- Support high standards for early childhood educators and caregivers.
- Promote parent education opportunities to help parents understand the importance of promoting their child's early learning.
- Promote high quality early childhood education and care programs to support children's cognitive development and readiness for school.
- Provide resources for safe, natural spaces and community activities for young children and families to visit and explore.



Domain 4:

Cognitive: Science



Young children are naturally curious about the world around them. They are eager and active explorers seeking opportunities to observe and investigate using their senses. These experiences form the foundation for abstract and scientific thinking. Scientific learning is supported by asking questions, conducting experiments, and helping children gather data through discovery, observation, making predictions, and drawing conclusions.

Quality programming encompasses scientific concepts throughout the key areas of early learning; for example, creative arts to express their ideas, pretend play to explore and manipulate materials, and language arts to research answers to their questions.

Included in the science domain are indicators that focus on:

- Scientific inquiry
- Scientific knowledge:
 - ◇ Characteristics of living things
 - ◇ Physical properties of objects
 - ◇ Earth and space

Cognitive: Science

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY:

- Take your child on outings to the park, the beach, and a variety of locations.
- Ask questions and have discussions about what you are experiencing using all your senses (ex. "Don't the cookies smell good?" "How does the lime taste?").
- Encourage your child to help you measure, mix, and cook and talk about how the mixture changes (ex. from dry to liquid to solid when mixing pancake batter).
- At the grocery store or market, point out and discuss the differences and similarities in produce (ex. apples, mangoes, and papaya).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY:

- Provide tools for exploration (ex. magnifying glass, tweezers, tongs, magnets, scale, etc.).
- Display collections of objects for comparison and exploration (ex. rocks, shells, seeds, etc.).
- Change materials routinely to encourage children to experience new things.
- Support children's active exploration by encouraging them to use their senses.
- Collect, describe, and record information through various means (ex. discussion, charts, drawings, home-made books).
- Ask questions about discoveries made while children are playing.
- Provide opportunities for children to experiment and discover (ex. classroom pets, plants, field trips, water play, sand play).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY** when they:

- Show curiosity by asking questions and seeking information
- Collect, describe, and record information (ex. collect rocks, shells, etc. during a walk)
- Use standard (magnifying glass) and non-standard (paper tube) tools and equipment to explore the environment
- Make and verify predictions (ex. “What will happen if I mix the blue and the yellow paint?”)
- Compare, contrast, and classify objects and data
- Use language that shows an understanding of scientific principles and understanding (ex. related to observations, cause and effect, or how things work)
- Participate in scientific investigation by taking part in experiments and exploration

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children’s **SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING**:

- Provide lending libraries with materials families can use to enhance their child’s scientific understanding.
- Provide educational opportunities for families to discover science in everyday life.
- Become involved with early childhood programs and promote the importance of appropriate early learning opportunities.
- Provide accessible natural spaces for parents and children to visit and explore (ex. public beaches, parks, gardens).
- Volunteer time and expertise demonstrating to children the use of the tools and simple machines of your trade (ex. cooking, fixing bicycles, bee-keeping).
- Provide opportunities for children and families to work on community projects (ex. recycling, beach clean-ups).

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children’s **SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING**:

- Provide and support safe venues and facilities that offer families and their young children the opportunity to explore and experiment with science (ex. public beaches, gardens, zoological parks, fairs, outdoor learning environments, museums, etc.).
- Support initiatives that promote careers in science.
- Support the development of children by basing decision-making on what is developmentally appropriate for and in the best interests of young children.
- Support policies that protect the natural environment.

Cognitive: Science

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LIVING THINGS:

- Encourage your child to help care for family pets.
- Teach respect for all living things.
- Provide opportunities for your child to see animals or plants in various settings (ex. agriculture fairs, beaches, gardens, farms, pet shops).
- Encourage your child to help care for family gardens or plants.
- Provide opportunities and discuss with your child observations and questions about the life-cycle of animals and plants.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LIVING THINGS:

- Read stories to children about growth and change of living things.
- Teach respect for all living things.
- Assist children in caring for classroom pets and plants and recording their observations.
- Take nature walks encouraging children to observe plants and animals.
- Provide pictures and models of plants and animals in the classroom (ex. stuffed, wooden, or plastic animals, dinosaurs, insects).
- Display ant hills, butterfly gardens, bird feeders, or worm farms for observation and documentation.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LIVING THINGS** when they:

- Notice differences between living and non-living things
- Recognize changes in living things over time (ex. beans sprouting, plants growing, children growing, etc.)
- Understand that plants and animals have life-cycles
- Notice and describe similarities, differences, and categories of plants and animals
- Recognize that animals live in different habitats according to their characteristics
- Describe basic needs for all living things
- Understand the care needed for pets

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Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING:

- Provide lending libraries with materials families can use to enhance their child's scientific understanding.
- Provide educational opportunities for families to discover science in everyday life.
- Become involved with early childhood programs and promote the importance of appropriate early learning opportunities.
- Provide accessible natural spaces for parents and children to visit and explore (ex. public beaches, parks, gardens).
- Volunteer time and expertise demonstrating to children the use of the tools and simple machines of your trade (ex. cooking, fixing bicycles, bee-keeping)
- Provide opportunities for children and families to work on community projects (ex. recycling, beach clean-ups).

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING:

- Provide and support safe venues and facilities that offer families and their young children the opportunity to explore and experiment with science (ex. public beaches, gardens, zoological parks, fairs, outdoor learning environments, museums, etc.).
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Cognitive: Science

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF OBJECTS :

- Encourage your child to ask questions and discover the answers through observation and exploration of home objects and materials (ex. kitchen utensils, water hoses, simple tools).
- Encourage children to sort and classify objects by physical properties (ex. sorting laundry, putting groceries away by type, organizing shoes in the closet by size, etc.).
- Engage your child in simple and nutritious cooking projects from your culture, discussing simple scientific principles observed as food changes in the cooking process (ex. freezing, melting, heating).
- Talk about simple and complex tools that children see in their everyday environment (ex. scale at the grocery store, jack for the car tire, construction vehicles, etc.).

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF OBJECTS :

- Provide objects for sensory experiences (ex. sand, feathers, soil, water).
- Take children on field trips to observe and talk about the nature of objects and tools in the community (airport, fire house, marina, post office).
- Provide a variety of materials for children to discover the scientific principles of objects and their relationships to one another (ex. balance, speed, time, distance using a variety of blocks, sand, and water).
- Provide a variety of objects for sorting or classifying (ex. shells, rocks, buttons, plastic lids).
- Encourage the use of simple tools and machines in children's play and explorations (ex. magnifying glass, scale, scissors, telephones, hammers, pulleys).
- Demonstrate and encourage children to participate in simple experiments (ex. sink and float, dissolving substances in water, mixing paints, making play dough).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF THE PHYSICAL PROPERTIES OF OBJECTS** when they:

- Describe, compare, and categorize objects based on their properties of size, shape, color, or state of matter
- Explore simple machines and discuss how they work (ex. pulleys, mixers, computer, telephone, etc.)
- Explore, identify, and describe changes that occur over time
- Use their five senses to explore the world
- Experiment with the effects of their own actions on objects
- Explore a variety of tools and understand that they perform specific functions (ex. magnets, pulleys, prisms, pencils, scissors, tape recorders)
- Use standard measures (ex. yardstick, ruler) and non-standard measure (ex. block, feet) to compare objects

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING**:

- Provide lending libraries with materials families can use to enhance their child's scientific understanding.
- Provide educational opportunities for families to discover science in everyday life.
- Become involved with early childhood programs and promote the importance of appropriate early learning opportunities.
- Provide accessible natural spaces for parents and children to visit and explore (ex. public beaches, parks, gardens).
- Volunteer time and expertise demonstrating to children the use of the tools and simple machines of your trade (ex. cooking, fixing bicycles, bee-keeping)
- Provide opportunities for children and families to work on community projects (ex. recycling, beach clean-ups).

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING**:

- Provide and support safe venues and facilities that offer families and their young children the opportunity to explore and experiment with science (ex. public beaches, gardens, zoological parks, fairs, outdoor learning environments, museums, etc.).
- Support initiatives that promote careers in science.
- Support the development of children by basing decision-making on what is developmentally appropriate for and in the best interests of young children.
- Support policies that protect the natural environment.

Cognitive: Science

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF EARTH AND SPACE:

- Help your child develop a nature collection to explore and talk about (ex. shells, rocks, leaves).
- Visit museums or events that focus on the natural world (ex. earth day events, aquariums, nature trails, agriculture fair).
- Discuss the weather, the wind, the night sky, and the seasons with your child.
- Encourage your child to participate in family recycling, reusing, and reducing around the home.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF EARTH AND SPACE:

- Take children on nature walks pointing out the changes in how weather affects the environment.
- Display natural materials and objects for children to explore and sort by shape and color (ex. shells, rocks, sticks, leaves).
- Observe the movement of the sun throughout the day (ex. trace shadows on the sidewalk at different times of the day).
- Provide opportunities to experiment with objects that move in the wind (ex. streamers, pinwheels, flags, kites).
- Create opportunities for children to recycle, reuse, and reduce.
- Assist children in using tools to measure and chart changes in weather and the environment (ex. temperature, rainfall, wind, erosion, etc.).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE OF EARTH AND SPACE** when they:

- Understand changes in weather and seasons and how these affect the environment (ex. lack of rain causing water shortages, dry vegetation, etc.)
- Investigate the properties of rocks, soil, sand, and water
- Understand the importance of preserving natural resources and how human activities affect the environment (ex. recycling, reusing, reducing)
- Use vocabulary that describes features and land forms of the earth (ex. rocks, soil, sand, hills, mountains, reef, sea)
- Discuss characteristics of things that can be found in the day or night sky (ex. sun, moon, stars and clouds)

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Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING:

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- Become involved with early childhood programs and promote the importance of appropriate early learning opportunities.
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Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING:

- Provide and support safe venues and facilities that offer families and their young children the opportunity to explore and experiment with science (ex. public beaches, gardens, zoological parks, fairs, outdoor learning environments, museums, etc.).
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Domain 4:

Cognitive: Social Studies



A children's foundation for social studies begins with personal experiences and an understanding of themselves in relation to home and family. Gradually, children expand their understanding to include their schools, neighborhoods, community and eventually the larger world. As their perceptions grow, they expand their understanding to include how social systems work. Adults can facilitate children's social studies development and understanding by helping them engage in active investigations and experiences individually and in groups within the context of familiar experiences. Included in the social studies domain are indicators that focus on:

- Community awareness
- Understanding past, present, and future
- Role of consumers

Cognitive: Social Studies

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's COMMUNITY AWARENESS:

- Help your child identify and appreciate his/her own personal characteristics as well as those of others in the family and neighborhood.
- Share information about family customs and practices encouraging your child to take part in them.
- Give your child jobs and responsibilities around the home (ex. dumping wastebaskets, putting away their folded clothes, setting the table).
- Take your child on walks and short trips pointing out landmarks, signs, and discussing directions.
- Use directional terms that indicate position (ex. left, right, under, behind).
- Provide opportunities for your child to play with other children to encourage cooperation.
- Model recycling, reducing, and reusing materials to improve our environment.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's COMMUNITY AWARENESS:

- Give children classroom jobs and responsibilities.
- Include multicultural materials throughout the classroom (ex. books, dolls, music, art materials).
- Invite parents and community members to share information about their culture.
- Use positional words when giving directions.
- Take children on walks outside or in the neighborhood pointing out signs and landmarks.
- Provide activities that encourage cooperative play.
- Display books and posters that depict pictures of different places and a variety of housing styles.
- Display maps or a globe in the classroom for examination.
- Start a recycling program for the classroom or the center.
- Reuse materials by making homemade toys, musical instruments.
- Provide opportunities for children to participate in decision making.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **COMMUNITY AWARENESS** when they:

- Demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of self and others from diverse backgrounds
- Identify similarities and differences of personal characteristics
- Demonstrate an awareness of their role as a member of a group (ex. in the class or family)
- Show an understanding of how individuals work towards achieving a goal
- Describe the characteristics of where they live and visit
- Develop an understanding of maps as representations of actual places
- Develop an awareness of the relationship between humans and the environment

Tremendous variation exists in the growth and development of young children. Adapting and individualizing the Guidelines can provide for optimal development for all children.

Strategies COMMUNITY MEMBERS can use to promote children's KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL STUDIES:

- Provide opportunities for families with young children to experience cultural diversity (ex. cultural fairs, art exhibitions).
- Provide venues for gatherings of several generations to share experiences from the past and what may be possible in the future.
- Develop ongoing events for families with young children.
- Provide opportunities for families to participate in solving community problems or giving input on issues (ex. involvement in parent-teacher associations, community work days, neighborhood achievement celebrations).

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL STUDIES:

- Provide support for activities for families with young children that are safe, accessible, and affordable.
- Provide support for initiatives that encourage seniors to work with children (ex. foster grandparents program).
- Provide community programs that meet the needs of families with young children.
- Provide the infrastructure for transportation and facilities that offer families the opportunity to come together (ex. public transportation, community centers).
- Create public venues for cultural diversity and enlightenment for families and their young children.

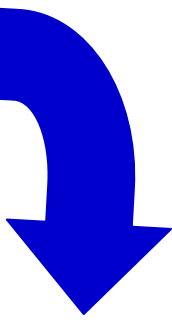
Cognitive: Social Studies

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE :

- Use words to describe time (ex. yesterday, today, and tomorrow).
- Describe, discuss, and follow daily routines consistently with your child.
- Ask your child questions about what happened yesterday, today, or what will happen tomorrow.
- Discuss what your child likes to do and what he/she may like to do in the future.
- Discuss your family history and how living in the past is different from the present.
- Have discussions about how your child will grow, change, and take on new roles.
- Make a scrapbook or photo album of your child's life or of family experiences.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE :

- Talk about what is happening during the day and the week.
- Use calendars to talk about what happened in the past and what will happen in the future.
- Count down to events with concrete materials (ex. paper links in a chain).
- Display and refer to clocks, timers, and watches.
- Discuss what happens in the beginning, middle, and end of stories.
- Label events and routines (ex. next, later, today).
- Include materials from the past and future for play and discussion (ex. dinosaurs and robots).
- Invite grandparents and seniors to come to talk about their experiences.
- Display books or pictures that show children in different stages of development.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in their **UNDERSTANDING OF PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE** when they:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the sequence of events
- Use words to describe time (ex. yesterday, today, tomorrow)
- Demonstrate an understanding how people, places, and things change over time
- Demonstrate the ability to connect new ideas to past experiences
- Predict how events today or in the recent past can affect the future (ex. if it rains today, I can't play outside)
- Begin to name the days of the week and the months of the year

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- Provide opportunities for families with young children to experience cultural diversity (ex. cultural fairs, art exhibitions).
- Provide venues for gatherings of several generations to share experiences from the past and what may be possible in the future.
- Develop ongoing events for families with young children.
- Provide opportunities for families to participate in solving community problems or giving input on issues (ex. involvement in parent-teacher associations, community work days, neighborhood achievement celebrations).

Strategies POLICYMAKERS can use to promote children's KNOWLEDGE OF SOCIAL STUDIES:

- Provide support for activities for families with young children that are safe, accessible, and affordable.
- Provide support for initiatives that encourage seniors to work with children (ex. foster grandparents program).
- Provide community programs that meet the needs of families with young children.
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- Create public venues for cultural diversity and enlightenment for families and their young children.

Cognitive: Social Studies

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF CONSUMERS :

- Describe the jobs people do and how they work together.
- Describe your job and how you work with others (ex. take your child to your work place to visit).
- Give your child tasks to perform to earn an item or treat that they want.
- Provide your child the opportunity to save or work toward something (ex. savings, special outings).
- Explain how family decisions are made and model sound budgeting, spending and saving practices.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF CONSUMERS :

- Invite community helpers into the classroom to talk about their jobs.
- Provide play opportunities for children to purchase things in dramatic play.
- Arrange field trips to community service agencies and businesses.
- Add community worker props to play areas.
- Read books (informative and fiction) that talk about people working together within the community.
- Demonstrate, explain, and provide activities about how things can be used as a substitute for money.
- Encourage children to cooperate and share with others.
- Explain how some things are owned by no one (ex. sunshine, air).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in their **UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF CONSUMERS** when they:

- Demonstrate knowledge of community workers and their roles
- Demonstrate an awareness of the use of money (ex. purchasing goods and services)
- Begin to realize that people rely on others for goods and services
- Develop an understanding of how goods and services are produced and distributed
- Participate in play related to business (ex. store, beauty shop)
- Talk about what they want to be when they grow up
- Use pretend money while engaging in dramatic play activities
- Begin to understand limitations for purchases (ex. don't have enough money to buy what they want)
- Begin to understand the concept of sharing

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Domain 5:

Creativity and the Arts



Creative arts are an important component of children's learning experiences. Through the arts, children explore and represent their ideas about the world, reveal their inner thoughts and feelings, find ways to understand themselves, enrich the world, and bring beauty to it. Teachers and parents can support creative learning by providing process-oriented play experiences that encourage children to use their imaginations and to experiment with new ideas and materials. Included in the creative arts domain are indicators that focus on:

- Visual arts
- Movement and music
- Dramatic play

Creativity and the Arts

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's VISUAL ARTS:

- Participate with your child in activities to encourage creativity (ex. drawing, painting, modeling with play dough).
- Show interest in creative and artistic activities of your child by asking open-ended questions (ex. "Tell me about your painting." "What do you like about what you made?").
- Encourage your child to represent events and experiences through visual arts (ex. draw a picture of a family celebration, make favorite foods out of play dough).
- Display your child's artwork at home.
- Accept and positively acknowledge your child's creative attempts.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's VISUAL ARTS:

- Provide many opportunities for children to explore and participate in a variety of art media, materials, and tools (ex. painting with sponges, finger painting, block printing, sand painting, making collages, making play dough).
- Acknowledge and talk with children about their use of materials and their creative expressions.
- Use artwork as a means for children to explore and extend topics being studied in the classroom.
- Expose children to a variety of cultural art forms.
- Make art materials accessible to children throughout the majority of the day.
- Display children's art throughout the classroom.
- Encourage children to create cooperative and group visual art projects (ex. creating a mural on a papered wall, tracing each other's bodies, creating structures out of boxes).



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **VISUAL ARTS** when they:

- Focus on the process of creating artwork, rather than on the end result
- Select different media to express emotions and ideas
- Participate in a variety of art experiences and explore various materials (ex. paints, markers, clay, papier maché)
- Participate in creative art activities that are part of one's community and culture
- Use lines, shapes, colors, and textures to create personal art forms
- Create art in two and three dimensions
- Talk about own creative works and the works of others

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS**:

- Provide opportunities for showcasing children's works in visual, musical, dance, and dramatic expression.
- Provide cultural community art events for children and families with young children.
- Sponsor community-based creative arts programs.
- Provide resources for families to support children's creative expression.
- Support arts throughout the community (ex. museums, theaters, concerts).
- Encourage community leaders and members to become involved with early childhood programs and recognize the importance of appropriate early learning opportunities.

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS**:

- Develop policies that support and provide resources encouraging creativity and arts throughout the community.
- Provide support for programs for visiting artists and performers representing various cultures.
- Provide resources for venues and activities in the arts for young children and families to visit and explore.
- Ensure that programs incorporate creative arts as an integral part of a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

Creativity and the Arts

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's MOVEMENT AND MUSIC:

- Create opportunities for your child to express ideas and feelings to a variety of music forms through dance and body movements.
- Sing familiar songs, chants, and finger plays with your child while driving.
- Improvise with your child, making up songs about events and experiences, real or imaginary.
- Expose your child to music and dance of various cultures.
- Encourage your child to respond to the changes in tempo, rhythm, and pitch.
- Expose your child to community musical and dance performances.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's MOVEMENT AND MUSIC:

- Support children's preferences by giving children choices.
- Expose children to music and dance of various cultures.
- Call attention to the varying changes and styles in tempo, rhythm, and pitch as children listen to music and watch dance performances.
- Encourage children to be creative during singing (ex. changing words or song endings).
- Provide many opportunities for children to explore and participate in movement and music activities (ex. spontaneously exploring sounds produced by striking a variety of materials such as pots, pans, and wooden spoons; exploring various musical instruments; moving to music with ribbons or scarves; using recordings).
- Make music an integral part of the day.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **MOVEMENT AND MUSIC** when they:

- Create music and movements that represents ideas, experiences and feelings alone or with others (ex. dance, sway, tap toes, clap hands)
- Sing familiar songs, rhymes, and chants
- Change words or tunes of familiar songs to make a new song
- Listen and respond to different types of music.
- Join in and create music and movement activities that express part of their culture
- Explore musical instruments of different cultures
- Participate in adult-guided movement and music activities

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Creativity and the Arts

Strategies FAMILY MEMBERS can use to facilitate children's DRAMATIC PLAY:

- Read books with your child and act out parts of the story together.
- Expose your child to community theater performances.
- Encourage your child to retell and make up stories.
- Interact with your child as he/she engages in dramatic play activities, following your child's lead, encouraging your child's imagination, and expanding your child's knowledge.

Strategies TEACHERS AND CAREGIVERS can use to facilitate children's DRAMATIC PLAY:

- Encourage children to act out plays, stories, and events using various props (ex. puppets, costumes).
- Encourage role-play problem-solving of classroom and other real situations (ex. taking turns, resolving conflicts, dealing with traumatic events).
- Provide real life materials that reflect a variety of cultural, family, and ethnic backgrounds for children to use as props in their dramatic play schemes (ex. pots, pans, food boxes, mortar and pestle, fungi stick, coal pot).
- Provide opportunities and materials for children to engage in dramatic play in which they can experiment with various adult roles (ex. setting up a doctor's office or restaurant in the classroom).
- Interact with children as they engage in dramatic play activities, following their lead and expanding their knowledge.



EARLY CHILDHOOD INDICATORS OF PROGRESS

Children show progress in **DRAMATIC PLAY** when they:

- Participate in dramatic play activities that represent fantasy and real life experiences
- Engage in cooperative pretend play with other children, by leading or following in dramatic play schemes
- Create props and costumes from available materials, either realistic or symbolic
- Act out or replay a personal experience
- Use different voices to portray different characters

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Strategies **COMMUNITY MEMBERS** can use to promote children's **CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS**:

- Provide opportunities for showcasing children's works in visual, musical, dance, and dramatic expression.
- Provide cultural community art events for children and families with young children.
- Sponsor community-based creative arts programs.
- Provide resources for families to support children's creative expression.
- Support arts throughout the community (ex. museums, theaters, concerts).
- Encourage community leaders and members to become involved with early childhood programs and recognize the importance of appropriate early learning opportunities.

Strategies **POLICYMAKERS** can use to promote children's **CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS**:

- Develop policies that support and provide resources encouraging creativity and arts throughout the community.
- Provide support for programs for visiting artists and performers representing various cultures.
- Provide resources for venues and activities in the arts for young children and families to visit and explore.
- Ensure that programs incorporate creative arts as an integral part of a developmentally appropriate curriculum.

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