

UTAH'S EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS FOR BIRTH TO AGE THREE



UTAH DEPARTMENT OF
**WORKFORCE
SERVICES**
CHILD CARE



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INTRODUCTION

As devoted caregivers in Utah, your role in children's lives is priceless. Through daily interaction, you create enriching learning environments, shaping lifelong success. Relationships play a foundational role in early childhood learning and development, serving as the cornerstone for emotional, social, and cognitive growth. The bonds formed with parents, caregivers, peers, and educators provide children with a sense of security and belonging, creating a nurturing environment where they feel safe to explore and learn. Positive relationships foster trust, empathy, and communication skills, laying the groundwork for healthy social interactions and emotional regulation.

Through meaningful connections, children develop crucial life skills such as cooperation, problem solving, and resilience, preparing them for future academic and personal success. Responsive and supportive relationships provide the scaffolding needed for optimal brain development, shaping the architecture of the growing mind.

Prioritizing and nurturing relationships in early childhood sets the stage for a lifetime of learning, well-being, and thriving in society.



The Utah Early Learning Standards for Birth to Three are rooted in the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and are aligned with the Utah Core State Standards for Early Learning for Ages 3 to 5 as well as the K-12 Core Standards. Collaboratively developed by multiple sectors in early childhood education including The Office of Child Care, Utah State Board of Education, Head Start, family and private child care, and higher education.

These Standards aim to:

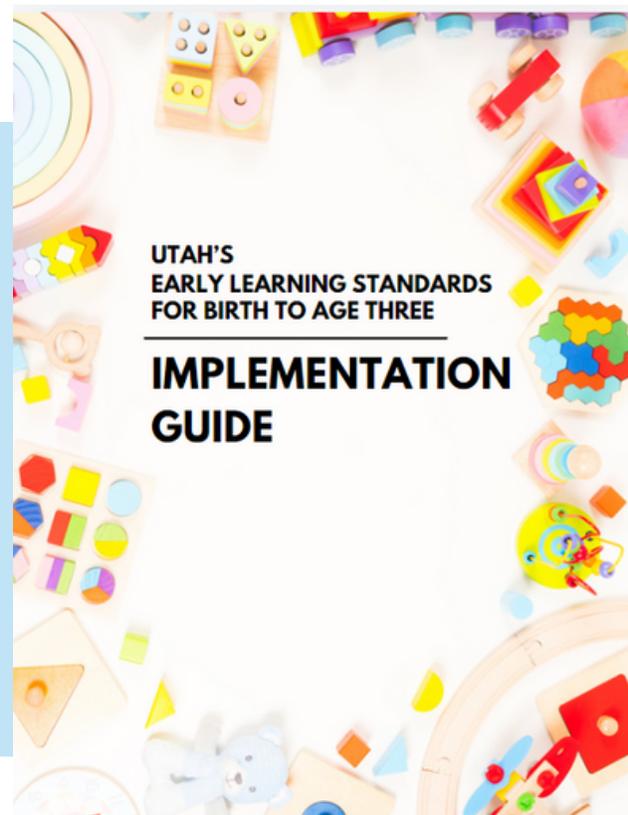
- Enhance understanding of child development for families and professionals.
- Assist in designing tailored activities for children.
- Establish a common language for discussing children's growth.

Utah's Early Learning Standards should not be employed as a curriculum, assessment tool, or checklist. It should never be utilized to deem a child as having failed in any aspect or as unprepared for the transition to kindergarten.

Check out the **Early Learning Standards Implementation Guide** for

- activity ideas
- resources
- detailed information on each indicator and domain in the Utah Early Learning Standards for Birth to Age Three

Find it on www.jobs.utah.gov.



USING THE UTAH EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

Utah’s Early Learning Standards are organized in Domains, Sub-Domains, Goals, and Indicators.

Domains represent broad areas of early learning. They are:

- Approaches to Learning (ATL)
- Physical Development (PD)
- Language and Literacy (L&L)
- Cognition (COG)
- Social and Emotional Development (SED)

APPROACHES TO LEARNING DOMAIN 1:
EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIORAL SELF-REGULATION

Goal ATL-1:
Child manages feelings and emotions with the support of familiar adults.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 0-9 months | Engages with familiar adults for calming and comfort, to focus attention, and to share joy. |
| 8-18 months | Seeks to be close, makes contact, or looks to familiar adults for help with strong emotions. |
| 16-36 months | Uses various strategies to help manage strong emotions, such as removing oneself from the situation, covering eyes or ears, or seeking support from a familiar adult. |

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Looks to others for help in coping with strong feelings and emotions.
- Uses strategies, such as seeking contact with a familiar adult or removing oneself from a situation to handle strong feelings and emotions.

DID YOU KNOW?
The strategies children use to manage strong emotions may vary based on cultural background. For example, some children may be much more likely to use self-soothing strategies while others may seek out comfort from adults.

Sub-Domains categorize components within domains.

Goals are broad expectations for children’s learning.

Indicators outline specific observable skills, behaviors, and concepts. Children may show these at different times, and additional indicators related to the goals may also be observed.

Did you know? boxes provide helpful tips and details about the standard on the page.



APPROACHES TO LEARNING

The Approaches to Learning domain incorporates emotional, behavioral, and cognitive self-regulation as well as initiative, curiosity, and creativity.

An important part of becoming a successful learner is developing the ability to self-regulate in a variety of situations. This ability is also essential to early childhood mental health. In infancy, building emotional, behavioral, and cognitive self-regulation happens within consistent, responsive relationships. As children get older, they become better able to regulate on their own, though adults still provide guidance.

The **Approaches to Learning** domain covers emotional, behavioral, and cognitive self-regulation, as well as qualities like initiative, curiosity, and creativity. Strengthening these skills helps children learn, grow, and overcome challenges in school.

Learning how to regulate emotions and behaviors starts with consistent, caring relationships in infancy and continues with guidance from adults. As children grow, they develop coping strategies for managing emotions and following rules, leading to more positive learning experiences. They also build cognitive skills like attention, impulse control, and memory, which help them solve problems and learn new things. Overall, children's engagement in learning influences their development across all areas and sets them up for success in school.

CONSIDERATIONS

Several factors impact children's learning approaches. Some children are natural risk-takers, enthusiastic about trying new things, while others prefer to observe before diving in.

Children with disabilities often need personalized instruction and accommodations to help them learn how to learn, especially regarding sustained attention or managing emotions.



ADULTS SUPPORT APPROACHES TO LEARNING WHEN THEY:

- Follow the child's lead to create a predictable routine
- Respond quickly to children's cues and provide comfort
- Provide support for the child to self-regulate and problem-solve



APPROACHES TO LEARNING DOMAIN 1: **EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIORAL SELF-REGULATION**

Goal ATL-1:

Child manages feelings and emotions with the support of familiar adults.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9 months Engages with familiar adults for calming and comfort, to focus attention, and to share joy.

8-18 months Seeks to be close, makes contact, or looks to familiar adults for help with strong emotions.

16-36 months Uses various strategies to help manage strong emotions, such as removing oneself from the situation, covering eyes or ears, or seeking support from a familiar adult.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Looks to others for help in coping with strong feelings and emotions.
- Uses strategies, such as seeking contact with a familiar adult or removing oneself from a situation to handle strong feelings and emotions.



DID YOU KNOW?

The strategies children use to manage strong emotions may vary based on cultural background. For example, some children may be much more likely to use self-soothing strategies while others may seek out comfort from adults.

Goal ATL-2:

Child manages actions and behavior with the support of familiar adults.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Responds to attentive caregiving by quieting or calming down, such as when being fed or being comforted during moments of physical distress.

8-18
months

Looks to familiar adults for assistance and guidance with actions and behavior.

16-36
months

May try to calm self by sucking on fingers or thumb when overly excited or distressed. Begins to manage and adjust actions and behavior with the guidance of familiar adults using words or signs such as “Stop” or “No” during conflict with a peer instead of hitting. Lets the adult know when they are hungry or tired.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Participates in and follows everyday routines with the support of familiar adults.
- Communicates verbally or nonverbally about basic needs.
- Manages short delays in getting physical needs met with the support of familiar adults.
- Learns and follows some basic rules for managing actions and behavior in familiar settings, such as holding an adult’s hand when crossing the street.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING DOMAIN 2: COGNITIVE SELF-REGULATION

Goal ATL-3:

Child maintains focus and sustains attention with support.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Develops some ability to filter out distracting sensory stimuli in order to focus on and attend to important people or objects in the environment with support.

8-18
months

Shows increasing ability to attend to people, objects and activities in order to extend or complete an activity, or to join others in a common focus.

16-36
months

Participates in activities and experiences with people, objects, or materials that require attention and common focus.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Maintains engagement in interactions with familiar adults and children.
- Chooses to join in activities or pays attention to tasks and activities that are self-initiated.
- Maintains focus and attention on a simple task or activity for short periods of time.

Goal ATL-4:

Child develops the ability to show persistence in actions and behavior.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Shows increasing ability to continue interactions with familiar adults or toys for more than just a brief time.

8-18
months

Shows willingness to repeat attempts to communicate or to repeat actions to solve a problem even when encountering difficulties.

16-36
months

Shows increasing ability to stay engaged when working towards a goal or solving a problem. Often tries different strategies until successful.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Persists in learning new skills or solving problems.
- Continues efforts to finish a challenging activity or tasks with support of an adult.

ATL Goal 5:

Child demonstrates the ability to be flexible in actions and behavior.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Shows repetitive patterns in actions or behaviors but sometimes tries more than one approach to solving a problem or engaging someone in interaction.

8-18
months

Shows ability to shift focus in order to attend to something else, participate in a new activity or try a new approach to solving a problem.

16-36
months

Modifies actions or behavior in social situations, daily routines, and problem solving, such as playing quietly when asked or adjusting to changes in schedule.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Adjusts to changes in routines or usual activities' when informed ahead of time by adults.
- Makes common, everyday transitions that are part of a daily schedule.
- Shows flexibility in problem solving by trying more than one approach.



DID YOU KNOW?

Caregiving routines such as feeding, meals and snacks, diapering and toileting, dressing, and sleeping provide a framework for an infant's or toddler's day.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING DOMAIN 3: INITIATIVE & CURIOSITY

Goal ATL 6:

Child demonstrates emerging initiative in interactions, experiences, and explorations.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Initiates interactions with familiar adults through expressions, actions, or behaviors.

8-18
months

Points to desired people, objects or places, and initiates actions, such as looking for a favorite toy or bringing a book to an adult to read. Actively resists actions or items not wanted.

16-36
months

Prepares for or starts some activities without being directed by others, such as getting ready for the next activity or bringing a ball to a new child at the playground.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Engages others in interactions or shared activities.
- Demonstrates initiative by making choices or expressing preferences.
- Attempts challenging tasks with or without adult help.
- Shows eagerness to try new things.

| Goal ATL 7: | |
|--|---|
| Child shows interest in and curiosity about objects, materials, or events. | |
| DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION | <p>0-9 months</p> <p>Shows excitement when engaged in learning, such as smiling at an adult, laughing after batting at a mobile, or knocking over a toy.</p> |
| | <p>8-18 months</p> <p>Approaches new events, experiences with others, or materials with interest and curiosity, such as intently listening to a new song or examining new toys or materials.</p> |
| | <p>16-36 months</p> <p>Participates in new experiences, asks questions, and experiments with new things or materials, such as collecting leaves and pinecones in the fall.</p> |

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Persists in learning new skills or solving problems.
- Continues efforts to finish a challenging activity or tasks with support of an adult.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING DOMAIN 4: **CREATIVITY**

Goal ATL 8:

Child uses creativity to increase understanding and learning.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Uses a variety of ways to interact with other people. Modifies expressions, actions, or behaviors based on responses of others.

8-18
months

Finds new things to do with familiar, everyday objects, such as using a cooking pot for a hat or a spoon as a drumstick.

16-36
months

Combines objects or materials in new and unexpected ways. Shows delight in creating something new.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Pays attention to new or unusual things.
- Shows willingness to participate in new activities or experiences.
- Uses language in creative ways, sometimes making up words or rhymes.



Goal ATL 9:

Child shows imagination in play and interactions with others.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Emerging:
Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed

8-18
months

Uses sounds, gestures, signs, or words playfully through songs, finger plays, or games.

16-36
months

Uses imagination to explore possible uses of objects and materials. Engages in pretend or make-believe play with other children.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses pretend and imaginary objects or people in play or interaction with others.
- Uses materials such as paper, paint, crayons, or blocks to make novel things.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Perceptual, motor, and physical development is foundational to children's learning in all areas because it permits children to fully explore and function in their environment

The success of Utah's young children is strongly linked to their health. The goal of this domain is to support early childhood educators and families in developing healthy, responsible children with the knowledge and skills that lead to lifelong healthy behaviors.

The Physical Development domain is represented as four elements: perception, gross motor, fine motor, and health, safety, and nutrition.

Perception refers to children's use of their senses to gather and understand information and respond to the world around them. Motor skills support children in fully exploring their environment and interacting with people and things. Young children learn best through movement. **Gross motor skills** refer to moving the whole body and using larger muscles of the body, such as those in the arms and legs. **Fine motor skills** refer to using the small muscles found in individual body parts, especially those in the hands and feet. The fourth element is **health, safety, and nutrition**. By responding to children's cues about hunger, thirst or discomfort, adults help children learn how to communicate about their health. Adults help children learn about safety and nutrition by discussing and modeling healthy choices.

CONSIDERATIONS

For many reasons, the progression of perceptual, motor, and physical development vary in young children. Cultural and individual differences must be taken into account. In some cultures, children use brushes to write their names or utensils to eat that require a great deal of hand-eye coordination. Their fine motor development may differ from other children because of their life experiences. Children's food preferences are culturally-based, and they may reject foods that are usually considered healthy in other cultures.

Children with disabilities may require more individualized instruction or accommodations. For example, children with physical disabilities may need adaptations, modifications, or assistive technology to help them move or hold objects. With appropriate support and opportunity for full-body play, all children can achieve strong outcomes in perceptual, motor, and physical development.

ADULTS SUPPORT PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT WHEN THEY:

- Provide opportunities for children to move their whole bodies
- Encourage children to do as much self-care as they are able



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT DOMAIN 1: PERCEPTION

Goal PD 1:

Child uses perceptual information in directing own actions, experiences, and interactions.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Uses perceptual information to organize basic understanding of objects when given opportunities to observe, handle, and use objects, including recognizing differences in texture and how things feel.

8-18
months

Uses perceptual information about properties of objects in matching and associating them with each other through play and interaction with an adult, such as using a play bottle to feed a baby doll.

16-36
months

Observes others making things happen to understand the cause and effect relationship of intention and action, such as seeing an adult prepare to go outside and then going to get their own jacket.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Combines information gained through the senses to understand objects, experiences, and interactions.
- Adjusts ways of interacting with materials based on sensory and perceptual information, such as pressing harder on clay than on play dough to make something.
- Modifies responses in social situations based on perceptual information, especially when meeting new people, such as hiding their face from an unfamiliar person.

Goal PD 2:

Child uses perceptual information in directing own actions, experiences, and interactions.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Emerging:
Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed

8-18
months

Uses sounds, gestures, signs, or words playfully through songs, finger plays, or games.

16-36
months

Uses imagination to explore possible uses of objects and materials. Engages in pretend or make-believe play with other children.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses pretend and imaginary objects or people in play or interaction with others.
- Uses materials such as paper, paint, crayons, or blocks to make novel things.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT DOMAIN 2: GROSS MOTOR

Goal PD 3:

Child demonstrates effective and efficient use of large muscles for movement and position.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Explores new body positions and movements, such as rolling over, sitting, crawling, hitting or kicking at objects to achieve goals.

8-18
months

Moves from crawling to cruising to walking, learning new muscle coordination for each new skill, and how to manage changing ground surfaces.

16-36
months

Gains control of a variety of postures and movements including stooping, going from sitting to standing, running, and jumping.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Coordinates movements and actions for a purpose.
- Walks and runs, adjusting speed or direction depending on the situation.

Goal PD 4:

Child demonstrates effective and efficient use of large muscles to explore the environment.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Uses each new posture (raising head, rolling onto back, sitting) to learn new ways to explore the environment. For example, sits up to be able to reach for or hold objects.

8-18
months

Uses body position, balance, and especially movement to explore and examine materials, activities, and spaces.

16-36
months

Uses a variety of increasingly complex movements, body positions, and postures to participate in active and quiet, indoor and outdoor play.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Explores environments using motor skills, such as throwing, kicking, jumping, climbing, carrying, and running.
- Experiments with different ways of moving the body, such as dancing around the room.

Goal PD 5:

Child uses sensory information and body awareness to understand how their body relates to the environment.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Responds to sounds and sights in the environment by orienting head or body to understand the information in the event. For example, a young infant will turn towards an adult and reposition their body to be picked up.

8-18
months

Shows awareness as an accomplished crawler or walker of new challenges or dangers in the environment, such as steep inclines or drop-offs.

16-36
months

Shows understanding of what size openings are needed for their body to move through. Learns about body size, such as doll clothes won't fit on a child's body or a child's body won't fit on dollhouse furniture.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Maintains balance and posture while seated and concentrating, such as working with clay, blocks, markers, or looking at a book.
- Adjusts position of body to fit through or into small spaces.



DID YOU KNOW?

Prolonged use of car seats, floor seats, exersaucers, and bouncers can lead to "container baby syndrome".

Constant use of these devices limits a baby's movement, which is essential for developing the strength and coordination needed for skills like rolling over, sitting up, crawling, and walking.



PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT DOMAIN 3: FINE MOTOR

Goal PD 6:

Child coordinates hand and eye movements to perform actions.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Coordinates hands and eyes when reaching for and holding stable or moving objects.

8-18
months

Uses hand-eye coordination for more complex actions, such as releasing objects into a container, picking up pieces of food one by one, or stacking cups, rings, or blocks.

16-36
months

Uses hand-eye coordination when participating in routines, play and activities, such as putting on a mitten, painting at an easel, putting pieces of a puzzle together, or folding paper.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses hand-eye coordination to manipulate objects and materials such as completing puzzles or threading beads with large holes.
- Uses hand-eye coordination in handling books, such as turning pages, pointing to a picture, or looking for a favorite page.

Goal PD 7:

Child uses hands for exploration, play, and daily routines.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Uses single actions to explore shape, size, texture, or weight of objects, such as turning an object over or around, or dropping or pushing away an object.

8-18
months

Explores properties of objects and materials by using various hand actions, such as pulling at them, picking them up to examine them, pointing to learn their names, turning knobs on objects, or turning pages in a board book.

16-36
months

Plans ways to use hands for various activities, such as stacking, building, connecting, drawing, painting, and doing self-care skills or routines.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses hands efficiently for a variety of actions or activities, such as building with blocks, wiping up a spill, or feeding self.
- Coordinates use of both hands to put things together, such as connecting blocks or linking toys.

Goal PD 8:

Child adjusts reach to grasp and use tools.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Uses increasingly refined grasps, matching the grasp to the task, such as using an index finger and thumb to pick up pieces of cereal or using the whole hand to bang objects together.

8-18
months

Extends reach by using simple tools, such as a pull string, stick, or rake to pull a distant object closer.

16-36
months

Adjusts grasp to use different tools for different purposes, such as a spoon, paintbrush, or marker.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Adjusts grasp with ease to new tools and materials.
- Uses pincer grasp with thumb and fingers to manipulate small objects or handle tools, such as stringing small beads.
- Uses hand tools in a variety of ways, such as a rolling pin with clay or play dough, or a toy shovel with sand.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT DOMAIN 4: HEALTH, SAFETY, & NUTRITION

Goal PD 9:

Child demonstrates healthy behaviors with increasing independence as part of everyday routines.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Emerging:

Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed

8-18
months

Anticipates and cooperates in daily routines, such as washing hands, blowing nose, or holding a toothbrush with assistance from adults.

16-36
months

Participates in healthy care routines with more independence, such as washing hands, blowing nose, brushing teeth, or drinking from a cup.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Shows increasing independence in self-care routines with guidance from adults.
- Puts on or takes off some articles of clothing, such as shoes, socks, coat, or hat.

| Goal PD 10: | |
|---|--|
| Child uses safe behaviors with support from adults. | |
| DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION | <p>0-9 months</p> <p><i>Emerging:</i> Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed</p> |
| | <p>8-18 months</p> <p><i>Emerging:</i> Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed</p> |
| | <p>16-36 months</p> <p>Accepts adult guidance, support, and protection when encountering unsafe situations. Learns some differences between safe and unsafe play behaviors, such as not to stand on chairs or tables, or not to put small objects in mouth.</p> |

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Cooperates with adults when in unsafe situations, such as taking an adult’s hand to cross a street or being cautious around an unfamiliar dog.
- Shows some understanding of safe and unsafe behaviors, such as not touching a hot stove.

Goal PD 11:

Child demonstrates increasing interest in engaging in healthy eating habits and making nutritious food choices.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Emerging:

Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed

8-18
months

Shows interest in new foods that are offered.

16-36
months

Shows willingness to try new nutritious foods when offered on multiple occasions. Sometimes makes nutritious choices about which foods to eat when offered several choices, with support from an adult.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Expresses preferences about foods, specifically likes or dislikes, sometimes based on whether the food is nutritious.
- Sometimes makes nutritious choices with support from an adult.
- Communicates to adults when hungry, thirsty, or has had enough to eat.



DID YOU KNOW?





LANGUAGE & LITERACY

Communication is fundamental to the human experience, and language and literacy are essential to children's learning.

The development of language begins in infancy as adults model speaking and listening to infants. By the preschool years, many children have a vocabulary that includes several thousand words and continues to increase at a remarkable rate. Children who are dual language learners (DLL) may combine their two languages or switch between them.

Language development involves two main skills: listening and understanding (receptive language) and using language (expressive language). Babies start paying attention to language sounds even before birth. Through caring, responsive interactions with adults, infants quickly learn to communicate using facial expressions, gestures, and eye contact. They progress from babbling to comprehending spoken words and eventually speaking or signing their own first words. Toddlers rapidly acquire new vocabulary and use language to express themselves, ask questions, and participate in brief conversations.

Emergent literacy includes learning how to hold and use a book and beginning to understand that print carries meaning.

CONSIDERATIONS

Language and literacy skills can develop in any language, and for the most part, they develop first in the child's home language. Supporting development of the home language helps prepare young children for learning English as well.

Children with disabilities may need extra support when they are learning to communicate. They may need listening devices to help them hear or assistive tools to help them speak or write clearly. Depending on the child's needs, programs can support the development of sign language as a means of communication.

Programs must promote language and literacy outcomes through appropriate and intentional support so that all children can develop strong skills in language and literacy.

ADULTS SUPPORT LANGUAGE & LITERACY WHEN THEY:

- Read daily
- Engage in back-and-forth conversations with children
- Sing a wide variety of songs, including those that reflect the cultural makeup of the world



LANGUAGE & LITERACY DOMAIN 1: ATTENDING & UNDERSTANDING

Goal L&L 1:

Child uses perceptual information in directing own actions, experiences, and interactions.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Attends to verbal and non-verbal communication by turning toward or looking at a person. Participates in reciprocal interactions by exchanging facial expressions and language sounds with familiar adults.

8-18
months

Shows understanding of the meaning of familiar caregivers' verbal and non-verbal communication and responds with facial expressions, gestures, words or actions, such as looking at people or objects being referred to.

16-36
months

Shows recognition of words, phrases, and simple sentences. Participates in conversations in ways that show understanding by following comments or suggestions with actions or behavior.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Shows understanding of some words and phrases used in conversation, such as by responding to simple questions.
- Shows comprehension of simple sentences, such as by listening to and following one- or two-step directions.

Goal L&L 2:

Child learns from communication and language experiences with others.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Pays attention when familiar adults talk or sign about objects, people, or events during face-to-face interactions by changing focus, making eye contact, or looking at people or objects.

8-18
months

Participates in joint attention with an adult by looking back and forth between the adult and object. Points or gestures when an adult is pointing, naming, or signing about a familiar or new object and learns names and uses of objects.

16-36
months

Participates in increasingly complex and lengthy periods of joint attention with adults. Shows interest, understanding, or enjoyment when participating in language activities, such as demonstrating understanding of objects' functions and uses, or when joining in games, songs, rhymes, or stories.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Acts on descriptions provided by others about people, objects, or events.
- Demonstrates interest and understanding when participating in language activities or games.



DID YOU KNOW?

Cultural expectations can influence adult-child interactions in many ways. For example, in some cultures, children are taught to show respect to adults by making direct eye contact when spoken to. In other cultures, children are taught that respect is demonstrated by avoiding direct eye contact.



LANGUAGE & LITERACY DOMAIN 2: COMMUNICATING & SPEAKING

Goal L&L 3:

Child communicates needs and wants non-verbally and by using language.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Learns how to use different means of communication to signal distress or discomfort, solicit help, and to communicate interests and needs to others.

8-18
months

Uses a variety of ways to communicate interests, needs and wants, such as saying or making a sign for “More” when eating.

16-36
months

Combines words or signs from one or more languages into phrases and sentences to communicate needs, wants, or ideas, such as “More milk,” “I want juice,” “Mas leche,” or “Quiero juice.”

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses combinations of words and simple sentences or signs in a variety of situations.
- Uses simple sentences, such as 3–4 word sentences to communicate needs and wants.



DID YOU KNOW?

Children who are dual language learners may combine their two languages or switch between them.



Goal L&L 4:

Child initiates non-verbal communication and language to learn and gain information.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9 months

Takes turns in non-verbal conversations by using facial expressions, sounds, gestures or signs to initiate or respond to communication.

8-18 months

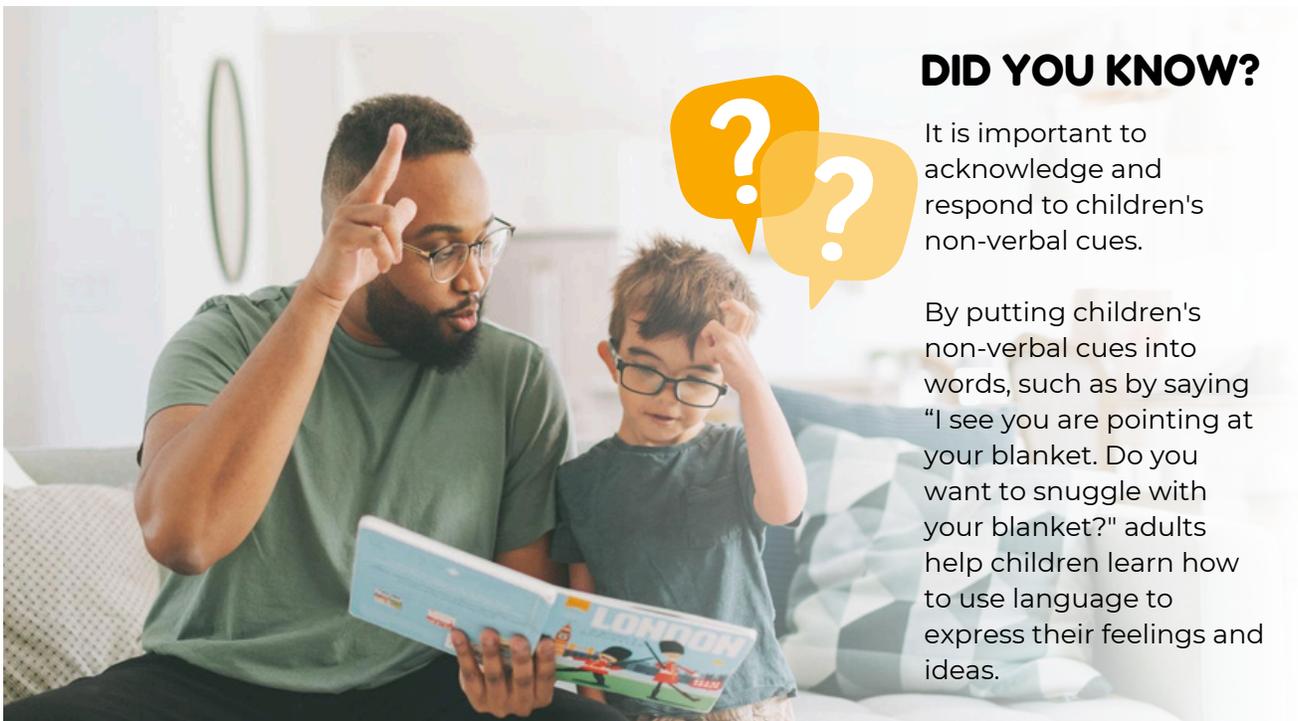
Asks simple questions using gestures, such as pointing, signs or words with variations in pitch and intonation.

16-36 months

Seeks information and meaning of words by asking questions in words or signs, such as “What’s that?” or “Who’s that?” or “Why?”

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Asks questions in a variety of ways.
- Repeats or re-phrases questions until a response is received.



DID YOU KNOW?

It is important to acknowledge and respond to children's non-verbal cues.

By putting children's non-verbal cues into words, such as by saying “I see you are pointing at your blanket. Do you want to snuggle with your blanket?” adults help children learn how to use language to express their feelings and ideas.

Goal L&L 5:

Child uses increasingly complex language in conversation with others.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Explores sounds common in many languages, such as “ma-ma” or “ba-ba.”

8-18
months

Initiates and participates in conversations by babbling and using gestures, such as showing or giving, or by using words or signs. Communicates mainly about objects, actions, and events happening in the here and now.

16-36
months

Participates in conversations with others using spoken or sign language that includes simple sentences, questions, and responses. Sometimes describes experiences that have happened in the past or are about to happen.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses sentences of three or more words in conversation with others.
- Asks and answers simple questions in conversations with others.
- Refers to past or future events in conversation with others

Goal L&L 6:

Child uses non-verbal communication and language to engage others in interaction.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Uses facial expressions, including smiling, or uses gestures or sounds, such as cooing or babbling, to engage familiar adults in social interaction.

8-18
months

Repeats actions or single words to initiate or maintain social interactions with other children or adults, such as clapping hands or calling a name to get someone's attention.

16-36
months

Uses words, signs, phrases, or simple sentences to initiate, continue, or extend conversations with others about feelings, experiences, or thoughts.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Initiates and responds in conversations with others.
- Participates in simple conversations with others that are maintained by back-and-forth exchanges of ideas or information.
- Engages in simple conversations by expressing own feelings, thoughts, and ideas to others.

LANGUAGE & LITERACY DOMAIN 3: VOCABULARY

Goal L&L 7:

Child understands an increasing number of words used in communication with others.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Looks at familiar people, animals or objects when they are named such as mama, puppy, or ball.

8-18
months

Looks or points at a person or object that has been named, follows simple directions, and responds appropriately to the meaning of words or signs.

16-36
months

Comprehends an increasing number of words or signs used in simple sentences during conversation and interaction with familiar adults and children.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Shows understanding of the meaning of common words used in daily activities.
- Attends to new words used in conversation with others.
- Understands most positional words, such as on, under, up, or down.

Goal L&L 8:

Child uses an increasing number of words in communication and conversation with others.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

May use signs or verbalizations for familiar people or objects.

8-18
months

Imitates new words or signs and uses some words or signs for naming or making simple one-word requests, such as saying or signing “milk” when asking for a drink.

16-36
months

Uses an increasing number of words in communication and conversation with others and adds new vocabulary words regularly.

Children who are DLLs may have a combined vocabulary in both languages that is similar in number to other children’s vocabulary in one language.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Shows rapid growth in number of words or signs used in conversation with others.
- Demonstrates a vocabulary of at least 300 words in home language.
- Asks questions about the meaning of new words.

LANGUAGE & LITERACY DOMAIN 4: EMERGENT LITERACY

Goal L&L 9:

Child attends to, repeats, and uses some rhymes, phrases, or refrains from stories or songs.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Listens and attends to culturally and linguistically familiar words or signs in rhymes or songs.

8-18
months

Says a few words of culturally and linguistically familiar rhymes and repetitive refrains in stories or songs.

16-36
months

Says or repeats culturally and linguistically familiar rhymes, phrases, or refrains from songs or stories.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Repeats simple familiar rhymes or sings favorite songs.
- Retells familiar stories using props.

Goal L&L 10:

Child uses an increasing number of words in communication and conversation with others.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Explores a book by touching it, patting it, or putting it in mouth.

8-18
months

Holds books, turns pages, looks at the pictures and uses sounds, signs, or words to identify actions or objects in a book.

16-36
months

Pretends to read books by turning pages and talking about or using signs to describe what is happening in the book.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Asks to have several favorite books read over and over.
- Holds book, turns pages, and pretends to read.

Goal L&L 11:

Child recognizes pictures and some symbols, signs, or words.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Looks at pictures of familiar people, animals, or objects while an adult points at and/or names the person, animal, or object.

8-18
months

Points at, signs, or says name of, or talks about animals, people, or objects in photos, pictures, or drawings.

16-36
months

Recognizes and uses some letters or numbers, such as letters in one’s name, and shows increasing interest in written forms of language, such as print in books or signs on buildings.

Children who are DLLs recognize and use written forms of each of their languages.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Points to and names some letters or characters in their names.
- Recognizes familiar signs on a building or street.
- Attributes meaning to some symbols, such as a familiar logo or design.

Goal L&L 12:

Child comprehends meaning from pictures and stories.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Looks at picture books and listens to an adult talk about pictures in a book.

8-18
months

Points at pictures in a book, making sounds or saying words and interacting with an adult reading a book.

16-36
months

Talks about books, acts out events from stories, and uses some vocabulary encountered during book reading.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses pictures as a guide to talk about a story that has been read.
- Asks or answers questions about what is happening in a book or story.
- Identifies the feelings of characters in a book or story.

Goal L&L 13:

Child makes marks and uses them to represent objects or actions.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Emerging:

Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed

8-18
months

Makes marks on a paper with a large crayon or marker to explore writing materials.

16-36
months

Makes scribbles on paper to represent an object or action, even though an adult might not recognize what it is.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Draws pictures using scribbles and talks with others about what they have made.
- Draws straight lines or curved lines.
- Makes letter-like marks or scribbles on paper.

DID YOU KNOW?



Toddlers make marks on paper to represent an object or action. They often talk with others about what they have drawn. The development of children's fine motor skills will impact their emerging capacity to draw and eventually write.





COGNITION

Infants enter the world ready to learn and immediately begin to acquire and process new information.

Cognitive development includes reasoning, memory, problem solving, and thinking skills that help young children understand and organize their world. This also evolves into complex mathematical thinking, scientific reasoning, abstract thinking, and other skill acquisition.

Children play an active role in their own cognitive development by exploring and testing the world around them, but they also need support from parents, teachers and other adults.

When infants and toddlers feel safe and secure, they are more willing to experiment with their world, such as discovering how a pull toy works, observing what happens when they turn on a faucet, and trying out different behaviors to see how people react. In the process, they begin to understand basic mathematical, spatial, and causal relationships.

Toddlers also explore concepts through a variety of symbolic activities, such as drawing and pretend play. More and more, young children can rely on their developing memory to help them make sense of the world. All this activity in the first three years lays the foundation for the more complex cognitive skills that develop later.

CONSIDERATIONS

Because cognitive development encompasses a broad range of skills, behaviors, and concepts, children display great individual variation in their development. Prior experiences, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, temperament, and many other factors can impact the rate and course of cognitive development.

Children with disabilities may require extra support as they use their senses and bodies to explore or as they describe their scientific investigations. The instruction and learning opportunities young children experience set the stage for their cognitive development and success.

ADULTS SUPPORT COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT WHEN THEY:

- Observe children's use of toys and materials, paying attention to signs of boredom or frustration and making changes accordingly
- Provide toys that encourage exploration, including a variety of shapes, sizes, and containers.
- Talk with toddlers about what they notice, including effects of actions.
- Play games with children (e.g., peek-a-boo, hide-and-seek, etc.)

COGNITION DOMAIN 1: EXPLORATION & DISCOVERY

Goal COG 1:

Child actively explores people and objects to understand self, others, and objects.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Uses the senses and a variety of actions to examine people and objects, such as mouthing, touching, shaking or dropping.

8-18
months

Acts intentionally to achieve a goal or when manipulating an object, such as trying to get an adult to do something or trying different ways to reach a toy under a table.

16-36
months

Observes and experiments with how things work, seeks information from others, or experiments with different behaviors to see how people and objects react.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Learns about characteristics of people and properties and uses of objects through the senses and active exploration.
- Experiments with everyday objects or materials to answer “What?”, “Why?” or “How?” questions.

Goal COG 2:

Child uses understanding of causal relationships to act on social and physical environments.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Repeats an action to make things happen or to get an adult to repeat an action, such as dropping a toy from the high chair repeatedly and waiting for an adult to pick it up.

8-18
months

Engages in purposeful actions to cause things to happen, such as making splashes in a puddle or rolling a ball to knock over a tower.

16-36
months

Identifies the cause of an observed outcome, such as the tower fell over because it was built too high. Predicts outcomes of actions or events, such as turning the faucet will make water come out.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Makes simple predictions about what will happen next, such as in a story or in everyday routines.
- Anticipates some cause and effects of own actions, such as what happens while running with a cup of water.

COGNITION DOMAIN 2: MEMORY

Goal C 3:

Child recognizes differences between familiar and unfamiliar people, objects, actions, or events.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Recognizes familiar people by their faces or voices. Learns to distinguish between familiar and unfamiliar people.

8-18
months

Remembers actions of familiar adults, the usual location of familiar objects, and parts of familiar routines. Notices and responds to new people, objects, or materials in the environment.

16-36
months

Anticipates and communicates about multiple steps of familiar routines, activities, or events. Expresses surprise or asks about unexpected outcomes or unusual people, actions, or events.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Comments about similarities or differences between new people, objects, or events, and ones that are more familiar.
- Tells others about what will happen next or about changes in usual routines or schedules.

Goal C 4:

Child recognizes the stability of people and objects in the environment.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Shows awareness that people and objects still exist when they are out of sight or sound range. May turn head or crawl towards a parent or other familiar adult who leaves the room.

8-18
months

Searches for hidden or missing people or objects in the place they were last seen or found. May wait and watch at a door or window for the return of a family member.

16-36
months

Uses a variety of search strategies to find hidden or missing people or objects, including looking in multiple locations for things that have been missing for some time.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Notices who is missing from a familiar group, such as family at dinner or children in a playgroup.
- Looks in several different places for a toy that was played with a few days before.

Goal C 5:

Child uses memories as a foundation for more complex actions and thoughts.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Shows excitement with a toy or other object that was played with days earlier. Anticipates familiar actions or routines, such as getting picked up or being fed.

8-18
months

Remembers how to use objects or materials from previous experience. Anticipates routines or events by taking action, such as going to the table when it is time to eat.

16-36
months

Tells others about memories and past experiences. Remembers how to do a series of actions that were observed at an earlier time.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Recalls a similar family event when hearing a story read.
- Prepares for next routine or activity based on past experiences, such as gets hat or coat when it is time to go outside.
- Repeats simple rules about expected behavior, such as “We wash our hands before we eat.”



DID YOU KNOW?

Toddlers engage in repetitive actions as a way of testing their ideas and solidifying their understanding of how

the world works. An adult might know that the food will land on the floor (again!), but a toddler isn't convinced until they've tried it several times with the same result.



COGNITION DOMAIN 3: REASONING & PROBLEM-SOLVING

Goal C 6:

Child learns to use a variety of strategies in solving problems.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Engages in simple repeated actions to reach a goal, such as trying to get whole hand and then fingers or thumb in mouth.

8-18
months

Explores how to make something happen again or how something works by doing actions over and over again, such as repeatedly filling a container and emptying it out.

16-36
months

Engages in activities for longer periods of time and tries several times to solve more challenging problems, often using a combination of actions or behaviors.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses a variety of strategies to solve problems, such as trial and error, simple tools, or asking someone to help.
- Tries to solve the same problem in several different ways at different times.

Goal C 7:

Child uses reasoning and planning ahead to solve problems.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Uses own actions or movements to solve simple problems, such as rolling to the side to reach an object or kicking to make something move.

8-18
months

Tries different solutions to everyday problems until discovering one that works. May try the same strategy multiple times even if it is not working.

16-36
months

Uses problem solving and experimenting to figure out solutions to everyday problems, including in social situations, such as when two children who both want to fit into a small car agree to take turns.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Tries to fix things that are broken, such as putting a toy back together or using tape to repair a torn paper.
- Plans ways to solve problems based on knowledge and experience, such as getting a stool to reach a book that is on a shelf after trying to reach it on tiptoes.

COGNITION DOMAIN 4: MATHEMATICAL THINKING

Goal C 8:

Child develops sense of number and quantity.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Attends to quantity in play with objects, such as reaching or looking for more than one object.

8-18
months

Uses a few basic words to refer to change in the amount of objects, such as asking for “more” or saying “all gone” when a plate is empty.

16-36
months

Uses language to refer to quantity, such as using some number words or signs to identify small amounts, or using other words referring to quantity, such as a little, too much or a lot.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Counts small number of objects (2–3), sometimes counting the same object twice or using numbers out of order.
- Identifies “more” or “less” with a small number of items without needing to count them.
- Uses fingers to show how old they are.

Goal C 9:

Child uses spatial awareness to understand objects and their movement in space.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Explores or examines objects and watches objects when they move.

8-18
months

Explores how things fit together, how they fit with other things, and how they move through space, such as a ball thrown under a table.

16-36
months

Predicts or anticipates how things move through space, or fit together or inside other things, such as putting smaller objects into a small box and larger objects into a large box.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Does puzzles with interlocking pieces, different colors and shapes.
- Understands some effects of size or weight when picking up or moving objects.

Goal C 10:

Child develops sense of number and quantity.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Explores or examines differences between familiar or unfamiliar people or between different types of objects, such as by mouthing or shaking a toy.

8-18
months

Matches objects by similar or related characteristics, such as matching shapes with openings in a shape-sorting box or by putting a toy bottle with a baby doll.

16-36
months

Sorts objects into two groups based on a single characteristic, such as grouping toy animals separately from toy cars, or putting red socks and white socks in different piles.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Sorts toys or other objects by color, shape or size.
- Orders some objects by size.
- Identifies characteristics of people, such as “Dad has black hair like me.”

COGNITION DOMAIN 5: IMITATION & SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION & PLAY

Goal C 11:

Child observes and imitates sounds, words, gestures, actions, and behaviors.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Child observes and imitates sounds, words, gestures, actions, and behaviors.

8-18
months

Imitates what other people did earlier, such as wiping up a spill or closing a door.

16-36
months

Imitates more complex actions, words, or signs at a later time in order to communicate, make, or do something.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Watches and imitates adult actions involving multiple steps, such as getting spoons and forks to set a table.
- Imitates someone else's conversation, such as in pretend play or on a toy phone.

Goal C 12:

Child uses objects or symbols to represent something else.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Emerging:
Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed

8-18
months

Uses toy objects in ways similar to the real objects they represent, such as talking on a toy phone.

16-36
months

Uses objects as symbols to represent other objects during pretend play, such as using blocks for toy cars or trucks.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses familiar objects to represent something else.
- Improvises with props during pretend play, such as using a towel for a blanket or making a cookie out of play dough.
- Understands that some symbols have meaning, such as a sign or a drawing.

Goal C 13:

Child uses pretend play to increase understanding of culture, environment, and experiences.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Emerging:
Children are laying a foundation for this skill to be developed

8-18
months

Imitates everyday actions of others, such as pretending to feed a doll or stuffed toy.

16-36
months

Acts out routines, stories, or social roles using toys and other materials as props, such as setting toy dishes and cups on a table or pretending to shop for groceries.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Seeks to involve others in pretend or make-believe play.
- Looks for props to use when telling or making up a story.
- Uses pretend play to try out solutions to everyday problems, such as ways to respond to stressful situations.



SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Positive social and emotional development in the early years provides a critical foundation for lifelong development and learning.

As children observe and interact with familiar adults, they begin to learn how to express and interpret a broad range of emotions. Social and emotional development go hand-in-hand in the early years.

Social development refers to a child's ability to create and sustain meaningful relationships with adults and other children. Infants and toddlers develop relationship-building skills and behaviors through their earliest interactions with important adults in their lives. Children who develop trusting relationships with adults are able to more fully explore and engage in the world around them. They know that the adults will support them in challenging times.

Emotional development refers to a child's ability to express, recognize, and manage their own emotions as well as respond appropriately to others' emotions. Emotional development in infants is closely tied to their social development with adults as well as to individual differences. These early relationships teach young children how to express and interpret a wide range of emotions.

CONSIDERATIONS

The rate and path of social and emotional development varies in young children. Cultural and linguistic backgrounds must be taken into account as well as individual differences. Some cultures encourage children to be outgoing. Other cultures encourage children to be reserved in social interactions and emotional expression.

Each child has their own temperament, or emotional style. Some children have bigger emotional reactions than other children, or approach new situations with more caution than others, or prefer more set routines than others. Adults help children learn to regulate their behaviors by providing support that is in tune with the child's temperament.

Children with disabilities may require more individualized instruction or accommodations. They may need intentional guidance from teachers to help them form friendships or to express their feelings.

ADULTS SUPPORT SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT WHEN THEY:

- Soothe by voice and touch to help children reach a calmer state
- Identify and name emotions to help children recognize and eventually identify feelings
- Recognize emotional cues and respond in ways that meet the unique needs of each child



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DOMAIN 1: RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS

Goal SE 1:

Child develops expectations of consistent, positive interactions through secure relationships with familiar adults.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Interacts in predictable ways with familiar adults. Responds positively to familiar adults' efforts to help with stressful moments.

8-18
months

Looks to familiar adults for emotional support and encouragement. Reacts or may become distressed when separated from familiar adults.

16-36
months

Engages in positive interactions in a wide variety of situations with familiar adults. Looks to or seeks familiar adults for comfort when distressed or tired.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Shows emotional connection and attachment to familiar adults.
- Turns to familiar adults for protection, comfort, and getting needs met.

Goal SE 2:

Child uses expectations learned through repeated experiences in primary relationships to develop relationships with other adults.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Shows recognition of familiar adults by turning head toward familiar voice, smiling, reaching, or quieting when held. May avoid or withdraw from unfamiliar adults.

8-18
months

Moves or stays close to familiar adults for emotional security when unfamiliar adult approaches. May look at familiar adults to gauge comfort level with unfamiliar adult.

16-36
months

Often watches from a distance or waits for reassurance from familiar adult before approaching someone new. May engage in positive interactions when meeting new people, such as sharing a book with a visitor.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Engages in and may initiate behaviors that build relationships with familiar adults.
- Uses familiar adults for reassurance when engaging with new adults.

Goal SE 3.

Child learns to use adults as a resource to meet needs.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Communicates needs to familiar adults by using a variety of behaviors, such as, crying, looking, smiling, pointing, dropping, reaching, or banging objects.

8-18
months

Looks to or seeks help from a familiar adults, such as taking the adult's hand and leading them to something the child wants or needs.

16-36
months

Asks familiar adult for help or assistance when encountering difficult tasks or situations.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Seeks assistance from familiar adults in new or difficult situations, such as reaching for a toy on a high shelf.
- Shows preference for familiar adults when in distress.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DOMAIN 2: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN

Goal SE 4:

Child shows interest in, interacts with, and develops personal relationships with other children.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Looks at attentively, touches or explores another child's face. Shows recognition of familiar children through actions or behaviors, such as smiling, reaching, touching, or making sounds directed to the child.

8-18
months

Participates in simple back-and-forth interactions with another child. Interacts with a few children on a regular basis, knows some of their names, likes or dislikes.

16-36
months

Seeks out other children for social interaction including initiating contact and responding to others. Develops friendships and engages in more elaborate play with friends.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Shows increasing interest in interacting with other children.
- Shows preference for particular playmates, such as greeting friends by name.

Goal SE 5.

Child imitates and engages in play with other children.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Responds to another child’s actions or sounds during play with a toy by watching attentively, touching the other child, or reaching for or taking the toy.

8-18
months

Participates in simple imitation games, such as making similar sounds or running after another child. Plays next to other children with similar toys or materials.

16-36
months

Joins in play with other children by sometimes taking turns or doing joint activities with a common goal, such as building block structures with others or pretending to eat together.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses multiple strategies, such as imitating or responding, in order to enter play with other children.
- Engages in extended play with other children with a common focus.
- Engages in simple cooperative play with other children.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DOMAIN 2: EMOTIONAL FUNCTIONING

| Goal SE 6: | |
|--|---|
| Child learns to express a range of emotions. | |
| DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION | <p style="text-align: center;">0-9 months</p> <p>Expresses feelings of comfort, discomfort, enjoyment, fear, surprise, anger, or unhappiness by crying, smiling, laughing or through facial expressions, body movements or gestures, often to elicit a response from a familiar adult.</p> |
| | <p style="text-align: center;">8-18 months</p> <p>Expresses a variety of emotions and modifies their expression according to the reactions of familiar adults, based on the child’s cultural background.</p> |
| | <p style="text-align: center;">16-36 months</p> <p>Expresses a range of emotions, including surprise, guilt, embarrassment, or pride, based on increasing awareness of their effects on others.</p> |

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Expresses a variety of emotions through facial expressions, sounds, gestures, or words.
- Uses words to describe some feelings or emotions that reflect an awareness of other people’s emotions.

Goal SE 7.

Child imitates and engages in play with other children.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Attends with interest when others show they are happy, sad, or fearful by their facial expressions, voices, or actions.

8-18
months

Responds to others' emotional expressions, often by sharing an emotional reaction, such as smiling when an adult smiles or showing excitement when other children are excited.

16-36
months

Shows understanding of some emotional expressions of others by labeling the emotions, asking questions about them, or responding in appropriate non-verbal ways.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Recognizes feelings and emotions of others.
- Responds to feelings and emotions of others with support from familiar adults.
- Describes feelings of characters in a book with support from an adult.

Goal SE 8:

Child expresses care and concern towards others.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

May cry when another child cries.

8-18
months

Looks sad or concerned when another child is crying or upset. May seek adult's help or offer something, such as a blanket, food, or a soft toy.

16-36
months

Expresses empathy toward other children or adults who have been hurt or are crying by showing concerned attention. May try to comfort them with words or actions.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Shows care and concern for others, including comforting others in distress.
- Responds to needs of others and tries to help others with simple tasks.

Goal SE 9.

Child manages emotions with the support of familiar adults.

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRESSION

0-9
months

Quiets or stops crying when held and gently rocked or talked to by a familiar adult.

8-18
months

Looks to or seeks comfort when distressed and accepts reassurance from a familiar adult, or engages in self-comforting behaviors, such as sucking on fingers or thumb to calm self when upset or in new situations.

16-36
months

Shows developing ability to cope with stress or strong emotions by using strategies, such as getting a familiar toy or blanket or seeking contact with a familiar adult.

INDICATORS OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT BY 36 MONTHS:

- Uses different ways to calm or comfort self when upset.
- Responds positively to emotional support from adults and other children.



DID YOU KNOW?

All babies cry. It is normal for some babies to cry for 5 hours a day or more. Caregivers must never, ever shake a crying baby. Learn more at dontshake.org.

APPENDIX

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Figure 1. Domain Overlap Between Utah Early Learning Standards for Birth to Age 3, Head Start’s Early Learning Outcome Framework, and Utah State Core Standards for Early Learning for Ages 3 to 5.

The table below illustrates the conceptual crossover between the learning domains of common learning frameworks used in Utah.

| Utah Early Learning Standards for Birth to Age 3 (2024) | Head Start’s Infant/Toddler Early Learning Outcomes Framework | Utah State Core Standards for Early Learning for Ages 3 to 5 |
|---|---|--|
| Language & Literacy | Language and Communication | English Language Arts |
| | | Fine Arts |
| Physical Development | Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development | Health Education |
| | | Physical Education |
| Cognition | Cognition | Mathematics |
| | | Science |
| Social and Emotional Development | Social and Emotional Development | Social Studies |
| Approaches to Learning | Approaches to Learning | Lifelong Learning Practices |

FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE

- o **Activities and Strategies**, Utah Office of Child Care
- o **Head Start Early Learning Standards**, Head Start
- o **Utah State Core Standards For Early Learning for Ages 3 to 5**, Utah State Board of Education