

# Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines Birth through 3rd Grade

## *April 2021 Update*

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The Department of Early Learning (DEL) is now the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF). Visit [www.dcyf.wa.gov](http://www.dcyf.wa.gov) for early learning, early intervention, and other childhood development information.

Thrive by Five Washington is no longer in operation and is now Start Early Washington. Start Early works with public and private partners to promote comprehensive birth-to-five learning experiences for all children in Washington State. Visit their website to learn more ([www.startearly.org/where-we-work/washington/](http://www.startearly.org/where-we-work/washington/)).

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) oversees public K-12 education in Washington. Visit [www.k12.wa.us](http://www.k12.wa.us) for additional resources.

If you have questions about this publication, please email [dcyf.communications@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:dcyf.communications@dcyf.wa.gov).

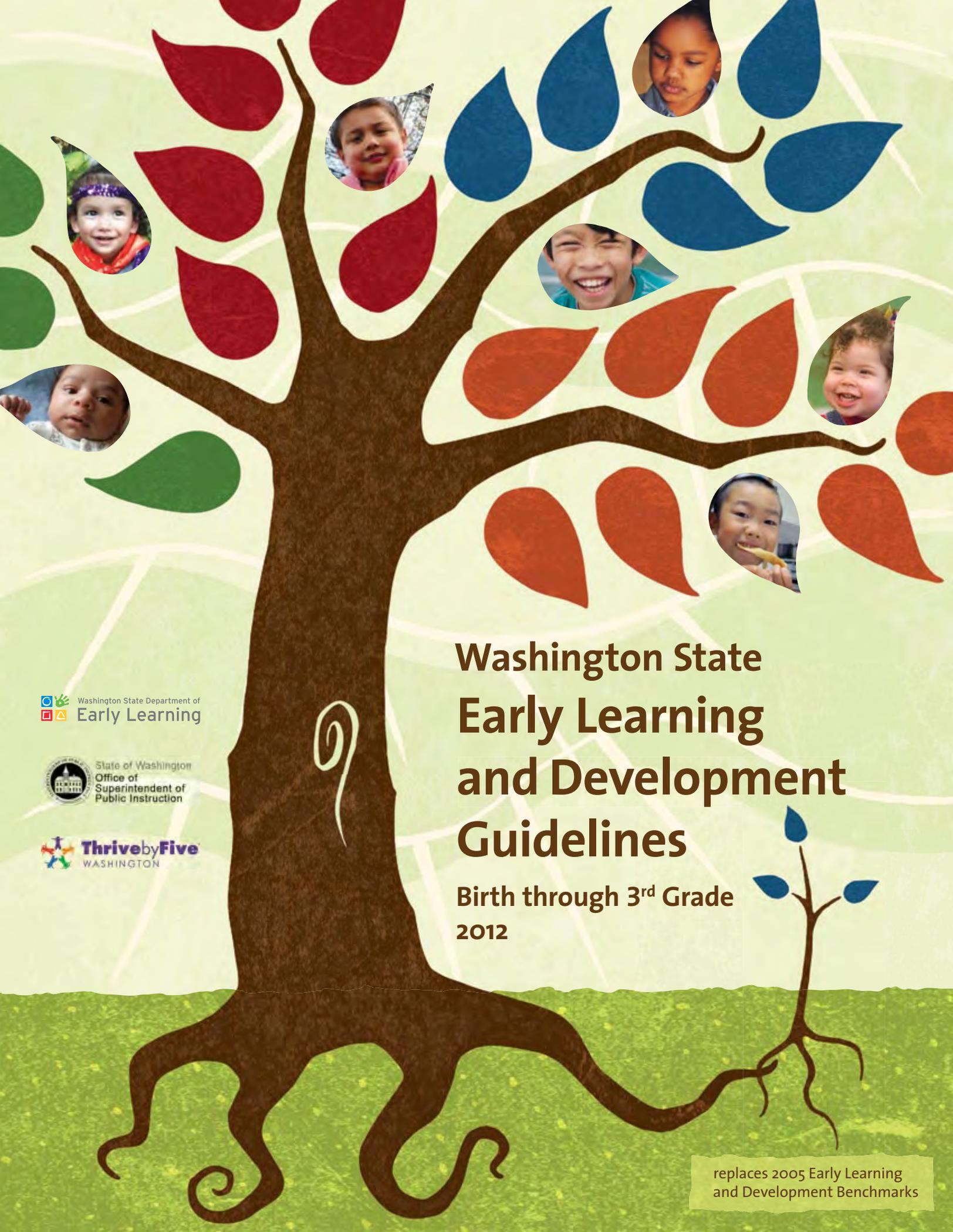
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Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**

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 Washington State Department of  
Early Learning

 State of Washington  
Office of  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction

 **ThrivebyFive**  
WASHINGTON

# Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines

Birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade  
2012

replaces 2005 Early Learning  
and Development Benchmarks

*“I commend the Department of Early Learning, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Thrive by Five Washington for their leadership, and their tireless effort to review and revise the Early Learning and Development Guidelines. This was a true group effort that united the work of organizations, early learning professionals, communities and cultural organizations that touched every area of the state. These guidelines for our early learners will be a huge benefit for our children, as well as parents, early learning professionals and teachers in Washington for years to come.”*

Governor Chris Gregoire

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Guidelines online:

[www.del.wa.gov/development/benchmarks/Default.aspx](http://www.del.wa.gov/development/benchmarks/Default.aspx)

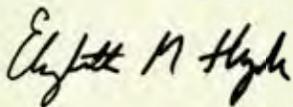
Thank you for using the *Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines*. These guidelines describe behaviors and skills that children may demonstrate birth through grade 3, and how you as a parent or early learning professional can support their healthy development.

The Department of Early Learning (DEL), the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and Thrive by Five Washington led a process starting in 2010 to review and revise the 2005 *Early Learning and Development Benchmarks*. For more than a year, parents, early learning providers, K-3 teachers, principals, advocates and representatives from diverse communities around the state helped in this process. We also undertook a broad public outreach effort, receiving helpful comments from more than 400 individuals and organizations. As a result, these *Early Learning and Development Guidelines* are a research-based resource document that focuses on the early years, which are so important to success in school and life (birth through grade 3).

Several key resources were considered in creating these *Guidelines*:

- Washington's 2005 *Early Learning and Development Benchmarks*.
- Early learning standards from other states.
- Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) program standards.
- Our state's academic learning standards (Grade Level Expectations, or GLEs) for grades K-3 in all subjects, including the newly adopted Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and for Mathematics. (Our state's academic learning standards focus solely on what students should know and be able to do throughout grades K – 12. They do not include social/emotional development, an important component of healthy development. These *Guidelines* include information about social/emotional development for parents, teachers, and other adults that support children in grades K-3.)

We hope the *Early Learning and Development Guidelines* are a valuable resource for families, caregivers and educators.



Bette Hyde  
Director  
Department of Early Learning



Randy Dorn  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction



Nina Auerbach  
President and CEO  
Thrive by Five Washington



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*“What I enjoy most about my role as Director of Early Learning is my ability to visit child cares and preschools and see this fantastic learning happening in children. It is wonderful to observe not only the children’s learning, but the excitement on the part of child care providers as well as parents as everyone learns together. My advice to parents and child care providers is to enjoy children and let them be your guide. Children are natural learners, eager to explore their world. They will give you feedback with their behaviors about what they’re interested in, or when they are tired, excited or exhausted. There is plenty of learning that can be saved to the next day. My advice is to enjoy and love them.”*

Bette Hyde, Director, Washington State  
Department of Early Learning



# Welcome!

The *Early Learning and Development Guidelines* are for everyone who loves, cares for and educates young children. The Guidelines are a resource to help you support and enhance children’s learning and development. They can also be a tool to help you—parents, families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers, and others who care for or work with children—to share information with each other.

In this section you will learn:

- Purposes of the Guidelines
- Why early learning, birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, matters
- How children learn
- Why and how the Guidelines were developed
- Guiding Principles
- How the Guidelines can be a resource for you

# Purposes of the Early Learning and Development Guidelines

*By the Guidelines Development Committee, 2011*

These Guidelines are a statewide resource for everyone who loves, cares for and educates young children. The Guidelines provide essential information to support and enhance children's development and learning.

## Washington's Guidelines:

- Provide a tool about children's development that includes practical strategies for children at different stages of growth.
- Provide suggestions for where to go and who to ask for additional information on growth and development of young children.
- Promote a whole-child approach that affirms that learning and development are interrelated and build on previous learning.
- Acknowledge, honor and embrace the tremendous diversity and variation that exists for children and families.
- Recognize and celebrate what children learn to help plan for the next stages of growth and development.
- Align with the State Early Learning Plan, and reflect federal, state, and Tribal learning standards.

## Washington's Guidelines aspire to:

- Encourage dialogue and sharing between everyone who loves, cares for and educates children.
- Inform professional development for caregivers, providers, teachers, and other early learning professionals.
- Incorporate current and culturally inclusive research on child development and best practices.
- Develop and nurture the relationship between early learning and K-12 so that all schools are ready for all children and all children are ready for school.

As important as it is to understand what the Guidelines are, it is equally important to understand what they are not.

## What Washington's Guidelines are NOT:

- Not an exhaustive guide to child development nor a development checklist. Children's development is highly individualized and unique to each child.
- Not an assessment tool or for use to determine children's eligibility for various programs or services.
- Not a curriculum.
- Not an instrument to collect statewide information on the overall status of children in Washington state.
- Not permanent and unchanging. Washington is committed to updating the Guidelines every five years in order to take into account new learning.

# Early Learning and Development ... It Matters!

## The early years of a child's life are amazing.

Children are learning at birth—even before. The early years are the most extraordinary period of growth and development in a child's lifetime. This rapid change once seemed mysterious. But today we know much more about how children grow and develop.

A child's very first year is crucial for building the brain. The graph below highlights how a child's senses, language and knowing (cognition) all burst into high gear from before birth and in the first 12 months of life. Interactions with parents, caregivers, child care

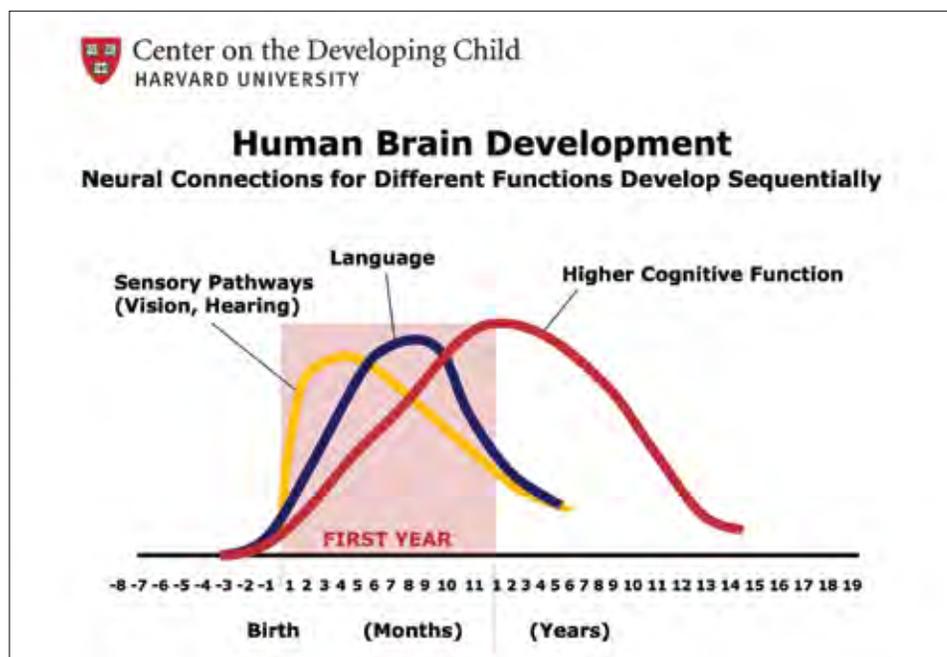
professionals, teachers and other caring adults play a key role in brain development. There are less than 2000 days from the time a child is born until he or she enters kindergarten. Every day counts.

## Early learning is about the whole child.

Early learning covers all areas of a child's learning and development. In the years from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, children gain physical and social skills, and develop emotionally and cognitively. Nurturing the whole child from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is essential for preparing all children in Washington for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade set the foundation.

As babies and toddlers develop, they first become aware of and then start to make sense of their world. The years from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade lay the foundation for a child's future learning. This is the time to maximize each child's learning potential.



Please note that the first half of the graph shows months, the second half is years.  
Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. Used by permission. Source: Nelson, C.A., in *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development* (2000). Shonkoff, J. & Phillips, D. (Eds.).

Birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is also the time for parents, caregivers, child care professionals, healthcare providers and teachers to observe and track each child's development closely. Every child grows and develops at his or her own pace. It is important for parents to talk with the child's healthcare provider at every visit about the milestones the child has reached and what to expect next. It is also important for parents to tell the child's healthcare provider if they notice any signs of possible developmental delay. Parents and teachers can track the child's developmental milestones using the "Differences in Development" section in the Guidelines, which follows each age group.

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# How Children Learn

## Learning starts with families and communities.

Families are their child's first, most important and life-long teachers. They are also responsible for their children 24 hours a day, seven days a week, no matter what, until the children grow up. Parents and families care about their children and look for ways to support their healthy growth. This can be hard work! Parents embed their children in a web of relatives, friends and social networks. This community offers safety, opportunities, learning and support.

Family and community traditions, languages and activities are the foundation for children's learning and development. Children build their identities from the people, communities and places in their lives. Over time the web of support expands to include caregivers, child care professionals, teachers, health care providers, librarians and others who serve children and families.

## Children learn through relationships, play and active exploration.

Children learn through the relationships they have with their parents, families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and communities. Children observe their parents and caregivers closely and respond. Nurturing relationships help children become secure, confident, curious and communicative people. These relationships help children learn how to control their emotions and relate to others. Interacting with a caring adult helps build the child's brain.

Children also learn through play and exploration. In play children express their zest for living. They learn hands-on through interacting with the world around them. They observe, listen, touch, taste and smell. They try things out and notice what happens. They use their creativity and imagination.

Children who have disabilities or developmental delays, or who are at risk for delays, may need special attention to promote their social and emotional development. For example, some face challenges in developing successful relationships with other children or in sustained play. Screening and early intervention are crucial.

## Every child and family has unique gifts and abilities.

Each child has a unique set of strengths, talents and interests, along with areas where he or she needs more support. Children grow and learn at their own speed. It is not possible to tell exactly when a child will perfect a given skill. For some children, health care needs, disabilities or developmental delays may affect how and when they learn and grow. It is important for adults to support children where they are to extend their learning and development.

## Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and free of hunger.

Children need to have their basic needs met in order to learn. Health care for pregnant women is a first step for healthy development. Well-child visits provide important review of development, behavior, immunizations, oral health, vision and hearing. Every day, balanced nutrition, adequate sleep and physical activity help children grow, and set the stage for healthy habits and learning. Children also need safe places to live and play. They need to learn when and how to call on a trusted adult for help.

## Learning and development build on prior learning and development.

Children learn in the same way that they build a tower of blocks. One block goes on top of another. The tower can stand as long as the blocks have a firm

base. The *Early Learning and Development Guidelines* provide examples of things children are learning to be, do and know at different ages, whether at home, in their communities, in formal early learning settings or in school. The steps in growth and learning may span several ages as they build up. The example below shows how learning builds on prior learning and progresses across ages.

### How Learning Builds: Approximate Age When Reading Skills Develop

Reads closely to find main ideas and supporting details in a story				
Retells familiar stories using beginning, middle and end				continues
Pretends to read a book or tell a story or during play			continues	continues with actual reading and storytelling
Enjoys being read to and talked to, focusing on the person speaking		continues	continues	continues
	<b>Young Infants (0 to 11 months)</b>	<b>Ages 3 to 4 Years</b>	<b>Age 5 and Kindergarten</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Grade</b>

## Learning is interrelated.

A child’s growth and development in one area influences and/or depends on development in another area. No one area of development and learning is more important than another. A child’s physical and cognitive development reinforce each other.

To help adults, however, the Guidelines are organized within each age group by six areas of development (see box). Activities in any of these areas will enhance development in other areas, too. For example, exploring outdoors can help children develop in many ways, as shown in the example below.

Guidelines’ Areas of Development
1. About me and my family and culture
2. Building relationships
3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around
4. Growing up healthy
5. Communicating
6. Learning about my world

### Example of Interrelated Learning: Exploring Outdoors

Activity	Area of Development
Short outdoor explorations give an infant new sounds to hear, things to see, smells and motions. They help an older child develop coordination and physical health.	3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around 4. Growing up healthy
Listening with interest to what your child says and adding more details help the child develop trust and comfort with familiar adults.	1. About me and my family and culture 2. Building relationships 5. Communicating
Asking questions about what you see outdoors, such as “Where do you think the ant is going with the leaf he’s carrying?” encourages your child’s creativity and curiosity.	3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around 6. Learning about my world
Having your child describe and compare the color, size, shape and surroundings of things you see outdoors develops the child’s thinking and observation skills.	6. Learning about my world
Taking turns naming things you see helps increase the number of words your child knows, and expands his or her knowledge about the environment.	5. Communicating 6. Learning about my world

## Young children can learn more than one language.

Washington is richly diverse, with more than 200 spoken languages.<sup>1</sup> Many children learn two or more languages at a very young age. They may:

- Learn two or more languages at the same time from birth, or
- While still mastering the home language(s), learn an additional language.

Both are sometimes called “dual language learners” or, when one of the languages is English, “English language learners.”

Learning two or more languages or dialects at a young age benefits a child in a number of ways. These benefits include a higher level of thinking and reasoning abilities, and better problem solving and listening skills. For many residents, being fluent in their home language or dialect of English is part of preserving and connecting with their culture.

Children who are learning more than one language or dialect may experience a silent period or seem to be learning more slowly. This is because they are absorbing the sounds and learning the words of the new language. For most children, learning more than one language does not lead to delays in speech or language development.

### Learning Tribal language when English is spoken at home.

Many tribal children in Washington speak mainly or only English in their homes. To restore their languages, tribes are helping their families and communities to learn and use as much of their Native language as they can around their children. For tribal children, learning their Native language is an important part of forming their identity.

Children who learn a dialect of English at home first, then their tribal language and school/formal English, need to know that both their home language and their tribal language are valued. Child care profession-

als and teachers can foster children’s home and tribal language development while helping them gain solid skills in school/formal English.

### Respecting the home language and adding English.

Caregivers, child care professionals and teachers need to respect and foster the languages of their children. Doing so can go a long way toward supporting children’s social and emotional development and academic achievement. Language patterns and structure vary from one language to another. Some cultures place more importance on talking and some on nonverbal communication. Adults need to take these factors into account when considering the child’s progress in learning school/formal English.

Caregivers, child care professionals and teachers can honor multiple languages and cultures by:

- Using pictures, props and gestures, as needed.
- Using gestures to show what an expected action is, while saying the words to provide a label.
- Learning words and phrases of the child’s language.
- Learning and teaching a song in the child’s language.
- Providing books, pictures and labels that reflect the child’s language/culture (while recognizing that some languages rely more on oral tradition than on writing).
- Encouraging the child or family to teach the child’s classmates a song or tell a story from their language and culture.
- Inviting families to explain the differences in expected behaviors between home and the care/school setting.

For more information, see the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic>) or Migrant and Bilingual Education Office at OSPI (<http://www.k12.wa.us/MigrantBilingual/default.aspx>).

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<sup>1</sup> OSPI reported to the legislature that in 2009-10, public school K-12 students served by the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program spoke a total of 203 languages. See <http://www.k12.wa.us/LegisGov/2011documents/EducatingEnglishLanguageLearners.pdf>

## Building “executive function” is crucial for learning and development.

Children who are feeling good and feeling good about themselves develop key self management skills, called executive function. These skills act like an airport’s air traffic controller who manages the arrivals and departures of dozens of airplanes on several runways.

Children develop these skills through interactions with adults, starting at birth. Adults can help by:

- Being responsive to your child’s needs.
- Encouraging your child to try different ways to do something.
- Playing hide-and-search games with your child.
- Playing games that require following “rules” that you agreed on and can change together, such as when playing make-believe.
- Providing ample time and enough materials for make-believe play with other children.
- Asking your child what he or she is doing and feeling, and why.
- Asking your child: “What else could you do? What do you think would be best?” in a nonjudgmental, interested tone.
- Sharing your own thinking about what you are doing and feeling, and why.
- Problem-solving with your child in daily activities.
- Listening to your child’s ideas and thoughts.
- Noticing what allows laughter to bubble up and playing in ways that allow for your child’s laughter (avoiding tickling, which can feel overwhelming).
- Involving your child in cultural activities.
- Talking with your child in the tribal or home language.

Developing executive function helps children learn to: pay attention; reason logically; exercise judgment; control their impulses; plan; identify goals and work to achieve them; and assess what is happening and adjust as needed.

## Children learn in and through their environment.

Whether a child is in a formal early learning setting, a classroom, or at home, the environment plays an important role in learning.

### Some questions to consider:

- Does the environment create a sense of belonging? Does it reflect the child’s family and culture?
- Is it safe and organized? Is it aesthetically inviting and engaging?
- Are the spaces flexible and accessible?
- Does the environment give the child opportunities to explore, wonder and try new things? Does it inspire curiosity?
- Is it appropriate for the child’s age and stage of development?
- Do materials for the child to play with allow a variety of uses? Are there different things to see, hear and feel – indoors and out?
- Does the environment encourage children to take initiative?
- Are there opportunities for the child to be physically active, and to use the hands and fingers?

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# Why and How the Guidelines Were Developed

## The Guidelines replace the 2005 Benchmarks.

Having a set of generally agreed-upon guidelines helps parents, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers all work together to help children grow and learn. Many states have guidelines as a resource to prepare all children for school and life. Our state developed the *Washington State Early Learning and Development Benchmarks* in 2005. The intent was to review and update that document every five years. This document, the 2012 *Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines*, replaces the 2005 Benchmarks. It is both an update and a redesign.

The Washington State Department of Early Learning (DEL), the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and Thrive by Five Washington led the process that developed these Guidelines. They formed a 51-member Guidelines Development Committee with a broad representation (see the Acknowledgements for a full list). This committee discussed and came to agreement on the principles on which to base the Guidelines. These principles are provided below. Based on these principles, they decided on the Guidelines' purposes, listed on page 2.

## The Guidelines' redesign includes several advances.

The revised Guidelines celebrate Washington's increasingly diverse population. They reflect what has been learned about child development since 2005. They support the standards of the Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP) and Head Start, and provide meaningful connection to the state's learning standards for kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

Extending the Guidelines through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is new in this edition and is very intentional. It reflects the age span covered in the State of Washington's 10-year Early Learning Plan, endorsed by Governor Gregoire in 2010. Using this age span also reflects the growing momentum in school districts and early learning systems across the state to align learning from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

The Guidelines Development Committee worked to make the Guidelines useful to all the adults in children's lives. As part of this effort, they sought wide public review. The final document was shaped by comments sent in by approximately 495 individuals, groups and communities around the state.

# Guiding Principles

*By the Guidelines Development Committee, 2011*

Every child in Washington has diverse strengths rooted in his or her family's unique culture, heritage, language, beliefs, and circumstances. Early learning that supports the full participation of every child builds on these strengths by fostering a sense of belonging and supporting positive social relationships.

## We believe that ...

- Every child and family has unique gifts and abilities that are to be celebrated and nurtured.
- Birth to third grade is the most extraordinary period of growth and development that lays a foundation for learning throughout one's life.
- Families are their child's first, most important, and life-long teachers.
- Children are active learners who learn through relationships, play, active involvement, engagement, exploration and use of their senses.
- Every child and his or her family deserve equitable access to appropriate supports that acknowledge their uniqueness and enable them to reach their full potential.
- Learning and development are interrelated; this means that learning builds upon previous learning and development in one area impacts other areas.
- Children learn best when they are emotionally and physically healthy, safe and free of hunger.

## Therefore, we are committed to ...

- Valuing and embracing all children and their families.
- Promoting the retention of home language and culture.
- Involving parents, families and communities as partners and decision makers in early learning.
- Building trust and fostering collaborative partnerships that benefit children, their families and the professionals who work with them.

- Helping everyone who loves, cares for and educates children by providing information about children's growth, development and experiences.
- Supporting children's health and safety.
- Encouraging environmental responsibility and global community.

## We will ...

- Build understanding of the importance of high-quality, inclusive early learning practices and programs.
- Create a dynamic, usable and accessible set of Guidelines that support a variety of experiences that reflect a whole-child approach.
- Reflect and honor diverse communities and cultures across Washington state in the Guidelines.
- Use clear, warm and easy-to-understand language.
- Make the Guidelines available in multiple languages.
- Use a reflective process to update the Guidelines, incorporating feedback based on the experiences of families, caregivers, providers, teachers, other early learning professionals, and current and culturally inclusive research.

# How the Guidelines Can Be a Resource for You

The Guidelines can help families and professionals build knowledge together.

The *Early Learning and Development Guidelines* are a tool that all the adults in children's lives can use to share information with each other. The Guidelines create a space for two types of expertise to come together as equals:

- Families' deep knowledge, experience and observations about their children, and
- Professionals' knowledge and experience—whether child care providers, teachers, health care providers, or others who care for or work with children.

Each age group in the Guidelines begins with the same set of open-ended questions for families. These questions invite families to describe what they observe about their children and what they consider to be important. These descriptions might not conform to the Guidelines' categories or examples of skills. Families in different cultural communities may describe understanding, skills and abilities that are far more advanced than some in the Guidelines' examples. Welcome the differences! Where there are differences, there are opportunities for building new knowledge together about how children develop and learn.

The Guidelines' intent is to build bridges between families, birth through age 5 caregivers/educators, K-12 educators, and other professionals serving children. To help everyone speak the same "language," the Guidelines use as little jargon as possible.

The Guidelines are organized by age and area of development.

## Age

The Guidelines Development Committee chose to organize the Guidelines by the child's age to help parents, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers quickly find information about the children they care for and teach. However, the age cutoffs are not firm. Children grow and learn at their own speed. As children gain a new ability, they might not use it every time at first. Older children will continue to show the abilities they gained at earlier ages.

For the first three years of life, the Guidelines use the following age groups: Young Infants (birth through about 11 months); Older Infants (about 9 through 18 months); and Toddlers (about 16 through 36 months). In these age groupings, the months of age overlap. This is intended to emphasize what the child is learning rather than the child's age.

For the years that are often called preschool, the Guidelines separate by year: Ages 3 to 4 Years and Ages 4 to 5 Years. The "Age 5 and Kindergarten" section describes the growth and learning of children ages 5 to 6 years, whether in kindergarten or not.

The next sections are by grade in school (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>) rather than age. These sections are in harmony with the state learning standards beginning with kindergarten to support children's learning, along with the child's physical and social-emotional development during these years.

## Areas of development

Within each age, the Guidelines use the same six areas of development (the numbered major headings) and the same bolded topic headings under each area of development. To see how a specific skill or ability develops across several ages, check the same area of development or topic heading under each age. Or check the Table of Contents by Topic.

## Relation to other standards

The Guidelines Development Committee created the Guidelines to be in harmony with other learning standards, guidelines, and benchmarks, and their underlying research. The committee examined and

incorporated elements from: the 2005 Benchmarks; our state’s kindergarten assessment process, known as Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS); the Washington state learning standards beginning with kindergarten (including the recently adopted Common Core State Standards for mathematics and for English language arts); ECEAP and Head Start standards; other states’ early learning guidelines; and many other sources. (See the Sources section at the end of this document for a full list.)

The Guidelines are intended to support and supplement these primary sources, especially for parents and families. The table below shows how the areas of development in the Guidelines relate to those in other key standards documents.

## How the Guidelines Relate to Early Learning Domains, Head Start Framework and Washington State Learning Standards

Guidelines Area of Development	Early Learning Domains	Head Start Framework <sup>2</sup>	Washington State Learning Standards
1. About me and my family and culture	Social-Emotional; Approaches to Learning	Social & Emotional Development; Social Studies Knowledge & Skills; Approaches to Learning	Washington State K-12 Health and Fitness Learning Standards
2. Building relationships	Social-Emotional	Social & Emotional Development	Washington State K-12 Health and Fitness Learning Standards
3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around	Physical Well-Being, Health and Motor Development	Physical Development & Health	Washington State K-12 Health and Fitness Learning Standards

Guidelines Area of Development	Early Learning Domains	Head Start Framework <sup>2</sup>	Washington State Learning Standards
4. Growing up healthy	Physical Well-Being, Health and Motor Development	Physical Development & Health	Washington State K-12 Health and Fitness Learning Standards; Washington State K-12 Educational Technology Learning Standards
5. Communicating	Language, Communication and Literacy	Language Development; English Language Development; Literacy Knowledge & Skills	Washington State K-10 Grade Level Expectations – Communication; Washington State K-10 Grade Level Expectations – Reading; Washington State K-10 Grade Level Expectations – Writing; Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts; Washington State K-12 World Languages Learning Standards
6. Learning about my world	Cognition and General Knowledge	Logic & Reasoning; Mathematics Knowledge & Skills; Science Knowledge & Skills; Social Studies Knowledge & Skills; Creative Arts Expression	Washington State K-12 Mathematics Learning Standards; Common Core State Standards for Mathematics; Washington State K-12 Science Learning Standards; Washington State K-12 Integrated Environmental and Sustainability Learning Standards; Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards; Washington State K-12 – The Arts Learning Standards

<sup>2</sup> Head Start notes that its Framework is not appropriate for programs serving infants and toddlers.

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# The Guidelines are for everyone who loves, cares for and educates children.

## If you are a parent:

The five questions at the beginning of each age section can help you reflect on what you already know about your child. You can share your responses with your child's caregivers, child care professionals and teachers, and talk about how they are helping your child develop and learn. You can also use the Guidelines to find out more about growth and learning at different ages, and get tips on ways you can support your child's development.

## If you are a birth through age 5 caregiver or child care professional:

You can use the Guidelines as a tool with the child's family. For example, you could ask them to reflect on the five questions for families at the start of each age section, and share their responses with you. You might share some activities they could do at home that will foster their child's growth and learning. You might also encourage families to have a health care provider do a developmental screening to check the child's development. In addition, you can use the Guidelines to reach out to kindergarten and primary grade teachers, and talk with them about what children learn with you and how it relates to what they will be learning in school. (For a larger vision of what children will learn in school, you can see our state's learning standards at the OSPI web site, [http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR\\_GLE.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR_GLE.aspx)) You can also use the Guidelines to spark your thinking about ways you can help children learn and grow.

## If you are a kindergarten through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade teacher or a school-age caregiver:

The Guidelines can be a resource to help you talk with child care and preschool teachers, and with parents. The Guidelines support the state learning standards by offering a broader view of the development of the whole child, including social/emotional development. The Washington State Learning Standards (including the recently adopted Common Core Standards for

English Language Arts and Mathematics) continue to be the core for the instruction children receive in their classrooms. The Guidelines are meant to affirm and support your teaching in the context of the child's family and culture. You can access the state's learning standards and resources to support learning about them through your school district and OSPI. (See grade-level standards and resources at <http://standards.ospi.k12.wa.us/>)

In the future, OSPI, K-12 and state early learning partners plan to consider how the *Early Learning and Development Guidelines* can be integrated with our state's learning standards for the primary grades in all subject areas. The partners believe that by explicitly teaching self-management, interpersonal skills, and sense of self in the context of the child's family and culture, our children will be better prepared for upper grade school and beyond. The Guidelines sponsors would like your thoughts about how to make this linkage meaningful.

## If you are a health care provider or you work with children and families:

The Guidelines can be a resource for talking with parents, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers about children's learning and development.

## Everyone who cares for or works with children:

Feel free to cut and paste these Guidelines into smaller segments, or to use the parts that fit your needs. DEL, OSPI and Thrive by Five Washington invite your feedback on how you use the Guidelines and your suggestions for their next revision (in approximately 2016). Please see the comment form on the last page or send a message to [communications@del.wa.gov](mailto:communications@del.wa.gov)

Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# Young Infants Birth to 11 Months



*“Every night after coming home from working nine hours a day, I greet my 4-month-old daughter with smiles and hugs, whispering, ‘Mommy loves you.’ She kicks her feet in excitement and smiles from cheek to cheek, making baby gestures. I respond, imitating her sounds, ‘Goo, goo.’ I carry her in my arms, we sit on the rocking chair, and I begin to read her Goodnight Moon. She listens, pats every page and pulls the book toward her mouth. Being a mother is an amazing experience. She depends on me to guide her along this amazing journey of life.”* Alicia Prieto-Fajardo

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND HERE

First there are some questions for families to reflect on. They offer a springboard for families, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers to talk together about fostering each child's growth and learning.

Next under each area of development, the Guidelines are in two columns. "Children may . . ." provides examples of things that children this age are learning to be, do and know. "Ideas to try with children . . ." offers examples of things families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and other caring adults can do to help children learn and develop in healthy ways. Different families may encourage learning and development in different ways.

These Guidelines are a resource. They are not an exhaustive guide to child development, and are not intended to be an assessment tool, a curriculum or a tool to collect data on children.

# What families already know about their children

## Five questions to reflect on

1. What has your child done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“Parents are their child’s first and most important teachers, and what excites me most about the new Washington Early Learning Guidelines is the potential to share information with parents—in a way that they can really use—about what children can do and learn at different stages of development. The Guidelines celebrate the extraordinary diversity we are fortunate enough to have in our state and are meant to be a guide for ALL children. I believe the Guidelines will help create and strengthen partnerships between parents and educators, making it possible for more children to enter school ready to succeed and to continue succeeding throughout their elementary years.”*

Nina Auerbach, CEO, Thrive by Five Washington



# 1. About me and my family and culture

## ↓ Children may ...

### Family and culture

#### Young Infants develop trusting relationships with familiar adults

- Show preference for primary caregivers.
- Smile at, make sounds, and move body to interact with caregivers. Smile, wave or laugh to respond to friendly adults.
- Respond to caregiver’s face, words and touch.
- Cry to express or relieve self of a variety of feelings; cry may increase when caregiver listens and responds to child’s need.
- Feel safe releasing feelings (such as by crying, trembling, etc.) in the presence of a familiar adult.
- Cry when caregiver is not in sight or cling to caregiver when strangers are nearby.

### Self concept

- Respond with movement and/or sounds when someone speaks the child’s name.
- Explore own toes and fingers.
- Repeat an action to get more effect (such as wriggling in the crib to shake a mobile hanging above, smiling and cooing to get the caregiver to smile back).
- Show pride (face “lights up”) at own behavior.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Family and culture

#### Young Infants develop trusting relationships with familiar adults

- Hold, cuddle, hug, smile and laugh with your child.
- Have simple “conversations” with your child to let him/her know what you are doing and what is happening.
- Respond promptly and consistently to your child. Help and comfort your child when he or she is upset or stressed. Identify source of distress (such as hunger, diaper, noise) and try to remedy it. Listen with warmth and caring.
- Respond in an understanding way to your child’s sounds, moods, gestures and facial expressions.
- Stay close to your child in a new setting to be reassuring.
- Involve your child in family and cultural traditions, rituals, routines and activities.

### Self concept

- Use your child’s name when you talk together.
- Communicate with your child about what the child is seeing, hearing and doing, if appropriate.
- Give the child toys and objects to shake, push, poke, etc.
- Show respect for the child and everyone in the environment.



*“By giving our daughter the chance to express herself through art, we are showing her that creativity is a form of expression and freedom.”*

Justin Busby

## ↓ Children may ...

### **Self management**

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**Young Infants efficiently release tension through babbling, crying, trembling, yawning and laughing.**

- Cry, make sounds and move body to let caregiver know of the need for help, attention or comfort.
- Respond by relaxing or crying harder when adult pays attention. Grow more confident when encouraged to release feelings.
- Use sounds, facial expressions, and body movements to connect with others and with objects in the environment.
- Hold caregiver’s attention by babbling, looking at face, etc.
- Look away at times to control the timing of the interaction.

**Young Infants begin to calm their own feelings.**

- Use adult to reassure self by cuddling, grasping adult’s finger, etc.
- Comfort self by cooing, babbling, or by clutching, sucking or stroking a favorite blanket or other item.

**Young Infants use a trusted adult as a secure base from which to explore**

- Move away from adult by rolling, scooting, etc.; look back at adult.
- Look for caregiver’s response in uncertain situations or when trying something new.
- Wait briefly to touch or eat something in response to caregiver’s direction.

**Young Infants begin to notice routines**

- Participate in repeated routines, such as lifting arms toward caregiver to be picked up.

### **Learning about learning**

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**Young Infants observe and explore their surroundings**

- Explore own body (such as reaching for toes); explore the face and body of caregivers (such as touching ears, hair, hands).
- Show preference for certain toys and activities.
- Show interest in exploring, feeling and looking at objects new to the child.
- Use all senses to explore.
- Begin to act bored (cry, fussy) if activity doesn’t change.
- Start interactions with familiar adults and children (such as by smiling or making sounds).
- Start to show the ability to briefly hold in mind a memory of people and things that are out of sight.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### **Self management**

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**Young Infants efficiently release tension through babbling, crying, trembling, yawning, and laughing.**

- Let the child express a variety of feelings including distress; respond to the child’s feelings, and comfort with closeness and soothing words.
- Be aware of cultural differences in expression of feelings.

**Young Infants begin to calm their own feelings.**

- Notice and help the child learn to calm by holding caregiver’s fingers, sucking fingers or holding the blanket.
- Continue to respond to child’s distress with closeness, soothing words and listening.
- When infant looks away, wait until he or she looks back to continue talking and playing.

**Young Infants use a trusted adult as a secure base from which to explore**

- Provide a safe and interesting environment for the child to explore.
- Stay nearby while child explores to give child the feeling of security.

**Young Infants begin to notice routines**

- Provide consistent routines for daily activities such as for naptimes.

### **Learning about learning**

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**Young Infants observe and explore their surroundings**

- Play with your child every day.
- Introduce materials and activities; give the child time to try different things.
- Watch to see what materials and activities hold your child’s attention, and what the child enjoys.
- Limit the child’s time spent in infant equipment (car seat, carrier, or other containers).
- Take your child outdoors; talk about what the child is hearing, seeing and feeling.

## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Interactions with adults

- Smile at adults.
- Respond to contact with adults, and later, initiate, by using vocalization, facial expressions and body movement.
- Enjoy playing with adults (shown by happy gestures, smiles, gurgles, etc.).

#### Interactions with children

- Smile at other children.
- Initiate contact with other children with vocalizations, facial expressions and body movements.
- Enjoy interacting with other children (shown by happy gestures, smiles, gurgles, etc.).

#### Social behavior

- Notice others' physical characteristics (such as by patting a sibling's hair).
- Notice emotional expressions of adults and other children. Imitate facial expressions.
- Play social games.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Interactions with adults

- Play turntaking games with your child, such as peek-a-boo.
- Give your child a chance to see faces and emotions; name the emotions, if appropriate.

#### Interactions with children

- Give the child opportunities to interact with other children at home, at friends' or relatives' homes, or in small groups.
- Guide your young infant's interactions with other children by helping with watching, and gentle touching.

#### Social behavior

- Read or tell stories about families and friends.
- Help your child learn to identify family members, friends and their relationships and roles.
- Show your child how to be kind to others and treat others with respect.

*“Watching a child grow and change is one of the greatest joys in life. Having the Guidelines will let you know if kids are on the right track and what to expect next. It will also help you with ideas of appropriate activities for the child. Relax and enjoy the moment.”*

Sue Winn, Family Childcare Provider



# 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

## ↓ Children may ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Lift head; lift head and chest with weight on hands, when lying on stomach.
- Hold head upright and steady without support.
- When lying on back, bend at hips to lift feet, reach with hands and arms, move head side to side; begin to notice own hands.
- Roll from back to side, back to front and front to back with increasing control.
- Move to explore (roll, crawl, scoot, creep).
- Sit with support; and later, sit without support.
- Stand with support.

### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Grasp caregiver's fingers.
- Play with own hands by touching them together.
- Reach for toys, objects and bottles with both hands.
- Transfer toys or objects from hand to hand.
- Reach, grasp and release objects.

### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Turn toward sound and touch.
- Focus eyes on near and far objects; recognize familiar people and things at a distance.
- Follow moving things with eyes.
- Explore things nearby with mouth and hands.
- Actively play, exploring and interacting with what's nearby.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Provide safe places and times for your child to move around.
- Give your infant "tummy time" while playing with toys or with you.
- Put toys or position yourself just out of reach to encourage rolling, scooting, creeping and crawling.
- Sing songs and play games that involve big movements with arms and legs.

### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Give your child toys or safe objects to reach, grasp, shake and drop.
- Play finger plays and hand games with your child.

### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Gently rock, swing or bounce your child in your arms or in a rocking toy.
- Give your child toys or safe objects with different textures, shapes, colors, smells and sounds; name the textures, shapes, colors, smells and sounds.
- Go outside to explore or for playtimes



*"When my son first came to me as a foster child at 9 months old, he was not crawling or eating solid food. He had been sick most of his life as a result of being around constant smoking. And he had been held or confined in a car seat most of the time to keep him away from the drug paraphernalia that was in the apartment. But with the freedom to move around, healthy food, regular sleep, and loving care from me and an excellent child care provider, he soon started to crawl. Then he really came into his own and was walking at 15 months. He's now 10 and has received awards every year in elementary school for running the fastest and longest for his grade."*

Adoptive single parent

# 4. Growing up healthy

## ↓ Children may ...

### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Soothe self and fall asleep.
- Participate in dressing.

### Nutrition and health

- Suck and swallow.
- Connect breast or bottle with getting fed.
- Help caregiver hold the bottle.
- Chew and bite; eat finger foods.

### Safety

- Prefer caregiver over a stranger.
- Stop/wait when caregiver says “no” or gives a nonverbal cue for alarm/danger.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Give your child a safe and comfortable place to sleep; put infant to sleep on his or her back.
- Practice cleanliness routines, such as washing hands before and after meals, swabbing gums, etc.
- Keep regular nap and mealtime routines.
- Give child opportunity to take off socks or mittens.

### Nutrition and health

- Learn and follow your baby's hunger cues for when to feed and when to stop, so he or she drinks an appropriate amount of breast milk or formula. Avoid feeding on a strict schedule.
- Introduce healthy strained foods, then finger foods, as recommended by the child's health care provider. Avoid offering juice or sweetened beverages before 12 months of age.
- Understand the typical signs of illness in a child, and respond with help and soothing; get outside help if needed.
- Call the Family Health Hotline, 1-800-322-2588, to get connected to health resources in the community. Take your child to a health clinic or provider on a regular basis for well-child visits, including immunizations, and developmental, vision and hearing screenings. See also Child Profile, <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/childprofile/default.htm>
- Avoid television, DVDs, computers, tablets or other screen viewing by the child. (See American Academy of Pediatrics, <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;128/5/1040>)

### Safety

- Explain when things are too hot or too cold to touch safely.
- Supervise and guide your child's activities.
- Provide a safe environment (such as keeping choking hazards and poisons out of reach, covering electrical outlets) and avoid asthma triggers (cigarette smoke, mold); provide clear guidance to stop unsafe behavior.
- Understand the risk factors and signs of child abuse and neglect. Respond appropriately. (See <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/What-to-Know-about-Child-Abuse.aspx>, and DEL's Child Care Center Licensing Guidebook, Section 7)



*“As an early learning professional and now a parent, I value literacy as a foundational element of life-long learning. We incorporate informal and intentional daily activities for our four-month-old to support language, such as story time, exploring books, describing routines and labeling emotions. It is amazing to see his interest in books and to watch his skills develop around language and literacy development.”*

Angela Abrams, parent and Early Learning Quality Improvement Coordinator,  
Educational Service District 105

## 5. Communicating (literacy)

Note: Communication skills begin before birth. Language is an important part of cultural identity. Language skills begin in the child’s home language(s). Tribal children may be learning their tribal language at the same time as a home language. Bilingual and bicultural families may speak more than one language at home.

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Show interest in speech of others.
- Cry, coo and make other sounds.
- Cry in different ways depending on whether hungry, in pain or tired.
- Imitate adult facial expressions.
- Respond when the child’s name is called.
- Vocalize, squeal, laugh and gesture to communicate.
- Babble, try to talk and copy sounds.
- Begin to say consonant sounds, such as “m,” “b.”
- Pay attention to what adult is looking at or pointing to.
- Use a variety of sounds to express emotions.
- Reach and point to communicate.
- Follow simple requests.
- Take turn in “conversation” or vocal play with adults.
- Say first word.

#### Reading

- Imitate sounds of language.
- Show awareness of the sounds of spoken words by focusing on the person speaking.
- Explore books’ physical features (such as by chewing on cloth books).
- Focus attention for a short period of time when looking at books.
- Begin to participate in stories, songs and fingerplays.

#### Writing

- Watch when someone writes or draws.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Talk with the child, read and tell stories, sing songs.
- Play games and fingerplays that involve taking turns.
- Let your child know that you are interested in his or her sounds, gestures and vocalizations by responding and having “conversations.”
- Describe everyday objects and activities; talk about what you are doing during daily routines; play naming games (such as “Where’s \_\_\_?” Or “What’s that?”), when appropriate.
- Introduce new words in context by saying what your child sees, hears, smells, touches and tastes, when appropriate.
- Repeat questions or directions as needed; help your child understand by using gestures.
- Expand on your child’s language. For example, when he or she says “ba-ba,” say “yes, it’s your bottle.”
- Support use of the home language.

#### Reading

- Look at and read storybooks together; look at picture books, books with repetition; use board, plastic or cloth books.
- Play games with words and sounds.
- Show the child how to look at the pictures and turn pages of the book; don’t worry if he or she turns many pages at a time.
- Use storybooks from child’s own culture and other cultures.
- Read and/or tell stories many times.

#### Writing

- Let your child watch you write or draw. Give the child the chance to scribble.

# 6. Learning about my world

## ↓ Children may ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

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- Pay attention to sights and sounds.
- Look for dropped object.
- Gaze at and track an object with his/her eyes.
- Act to trigger a pleasing sight, sound or motion, such as kicking at a mobile; repeat actions many times to cause a desired effect.
- Show curiosity about things and try to get things that are out of reach.
- Imitate sounds; imitate actions, such as clapping hands, pushing a toy.
- Search for a hidden object.

### Math

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- Play with toys and things of different sizes and shapes.
- Anticipate “more” during routines.

### Science

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- Use the senses (mouthing, watching, grasping, reaching) to get information and explore what’s nearby.
- Use more than one sense at a time, such as when looking at, feeling and shaking a rattle.
- Repeat behaviors to figure out cause and effect. For example, a toy released high always goes down (law of gravity).
- Enjoy filling containers and dumping them out.
- Show interest in animals and pictures of animals.

### Social Studies

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- Show interest in people.
- Notice daily routines.

### Arts

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- Gaze at pictures, photos and mirror images.
- Show interest in sounds, tones, voices, music, colors and shapes.
- Notice and move to music and/or rhythms.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

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- Give your child safe experiences with cause and effect, such as shaking rattles to get a sound, winding up a toy to get music, and balls to roll.
- Play games with your child that show that things that are hidden are still there, such as peek-a-boo, hide and seek, and putting your keys in your pocket.
- Respond to your child’s signals that he or she need help with a toy or activity.
- Play back-and-forth games with sounds and actions; include imitation.

### Math

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- Count out toys or objects; name colors and shapes.
- Use words and play games that involve “more,” “again” or “another.”
- Offer blocks or similar toys to play with, and items with sizes, such as nesting cups or spoons.
- Provide different safe shapes and objects to offer a stimulating environment.

### Science

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- Offer objects that invite the use of more than one sense, such as a toy that rolls and makes music.
- Sing songs and look at books about nature and animals. Take your child outdoors and talk about what you see and hear.
- Give your child the chance to safely explore water, sand or dirt, and to use the senses with things in nature (such as feeling grass).
- Give your child the chance to interact safely with animals.
- Give your child the chance to fill containers, such as boxes and bowls, and empty them.

### Social Studies

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- Take your child on walks or visits in the neighborhood and community. Introduce your child to places you go often and trusted people.

### Arts

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- Give your child opportunities with a variety of music and rhythms.
- Describe what your child sees, hears, feels and smells, if appropriate.
- Give your child a chance to use hands to explore water, soap suds, grass, or similar textures.

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See also, Parent Help 123 on infant child development, <http://www.parenthelp123.org/infants/child-development>, and more in the Information Resources section.

# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

As a parent, you know your baby best.

You notice things such as how and when your baby smiles, sits up, learns new words, walks, or holds a cup. What you are seeing is how your child is growing through different stages of development.

Every baby grows and develops at his or her own pace. It is important to talk with your child's healthcare provider at every visit about the milestones your baby has reached and what to expect next. It is also important to tell your baby's healthcare provider if you notice any of these signs of possible developmental delay. Please make sure to discuss your concerns if:

## **By age 2 months, your baby:**

- Doesn't respond to loud sounds
- Doesn't watch things as they move
- Doesn't smile at people
- Doesn't bring hands to mouth
- Can't hold head up when pushing up, when on tummy

## **By age 4 months, your baby:**

- Doesn't watch things as they move
- Doesn't smile at people
- Can't hold head steady
- Doesn't coo or make sounds
- Doesn't bring things to mouth
- Doesn't push down with legs when feet are placed on a hard surface
- Has trouble moving one or both eyes in all directions

## **By age 6 months, your baby:**

- Doesn't try to get things that are in reach
- Shows no affection for caregivers
- Doesn't respond to sounds around him or her
- Has difficulty getting things to mouth
- Seems very floppy

- Doesn't make vowel sounds (such as "ah," "eh," "oh")
- Doesn't roll over in either direction
- Doesn't laugh or make squealing sounds
- Seems very stiff, with tight muscles

## **By age 9 months, your baby:**

- Doesn't bear weight on legs with support
- Doesn't sit with help
- Doesn't babble ("mama," "baba," "dada")
- Doesn't play any games involving back-and-forth play
- Doesn't respond to own name
- Doesn't seem to recognize familiar people
- Doesn't look where you point
- Doesn't transfer toys from one hand to the other

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children be screened for general development at the 9-month visit. Ask your child's healthcare provider about your child's developmental screening.

## For more information:

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Talk to your child's health care provider. If you have concerns about your child's development, you may also call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588. This hotline can tell you about free developmental screening and other services, and give you the name of the Family Resources Coordinator (FRC) for your local area. The FRC can help you find out if your child needs further evaluation.

For concerns about children birth to three years old, you can find information from the state Department of Early Learning's Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program at <http://www.del.wa.gov/esit> or go to [http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart\\_English.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart_English.pdf) for more information on developmental milestones.

The Family Health Hotline can also provide information about immunizations, state-sponsored health insurance, and other resources: [www.withinreachwa.org](http://www.withinreachwa.org). Parent Help 123 offers information on infant development, screening and other resources: <http://www.parenthelp123.org/infants/child-development>

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at 1-800-CDC-INFO or at [www.cdc.gov/concerned](http://www.cdc.gov/concerned) also offers information. See CDC's *Milestone Moments* brochure: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents\\_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf)

## EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

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Early intervention services during the first years can make a big difference in a child's life. Washington's Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program coordinates a statewide system of early intervention services for children birth to age 3 with developmental disabilities and/or developmental delays. Eligible infants and toddlers and their families are entitled to individualized, high-quality early intervention services in accordance with the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C.

**What parents and caregivers can do:** If you have concerns about your child's development, a Family Resources Coordinator (FRC) will work with your family to determine if your child is eligible for Part C services. If eligible, the FRC and team, including you, will create an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) to deliver services. This is a team effort, with the FRC, parents, caregivers and early intervention providers all working together. The FRC and team, including you, will work together to create a transition plan to move out of early intervention into other services when your child turns 3 years old. Some children will be eligible for preschool special education services offered by the local school district under Part B of the IDEA. For other children, community-based services may be available.

To find the name of the FRC in your local area, call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588. For more information on development, click on [http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/transition\\_English.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/transition_English.pdf)



Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# Older Infants 9 to 18 Months



*“A mother was trying to get her 13 month-old boy to stand by himself. He would get his legs bent with feet on the floor, but his head was still on the floor, too. All of a sudden, he rolled up into a squat. Then he pulled himself up almost to standing. And boom! Down he went to sit on the floor again. But he thought this was fun! He’d pull himself up and fall back down over and over, laughing. Eventually he got the hang of it and could stand on his own next to his excited and proud mom.”*

Sabrina Fields, Home Visitor, Denise Louie Education Center, Seattle

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND HERE

First there are some questions for families to reflect on. They offer a springboard for families, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers to talk together about fostering each child's growth and learning.

Next under each area of development, the Guidelines are in two columns. "Children may . . ." provides examples of things that children this age are learning to be, do and know. "Ideas to try with children . . ." offers examples of things families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and other caring adults can do to help children learn and develop in healthy ways. Different families may encourage learning and development in different ways.

These Guidelines are a resource. They are not an exhaustive guide to child development, and are not intended to be an assessment tool, a curriculum or a tool to collect data on children.

# What families already know about their children

## Five questions to reflect on

1. What has your child done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“When working with children, I am constantly amazed at the unlimited potential that each child has. The glow in children’s eyes and excitement on their faces as they learn new skills and reach new achievements is the ultimate reward. We, as adults, have the power and responsibility to keep this glow and excitement alive as children move through their educational journey.”*

Lexi Catlin, Early Childhood Professional Development Coordinator, Educational Service District 105



**Note:** Child continues the growth and learning from the prior age.

# 1. About me and my family and culture

## ↓ Children may ...

### Family and culture

#### Older Infants develop trusting relationships with familiar adults

- Respond when someone speaks the child’s name.
- Seek out trusted caregiver(s) for comfort and support.
- Demonstrate fear of unknown people and places.

### Self concept

#### Older Infants show their preferences

- Protest when does not want to do something; know what he or she likes to do.
- Point to indicate what he or she wants.
- Choose things to play with.
- Try to do things on own. Show joy when completing a simple task.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Family and culture

#### Older Infants develop trusting relationships with familiar adults

- Hold, cuddle, hug, talk and play with child.
- Respond consistently to child’s requests for attention or help. Soothe child in distress with closeness and words.
- Involve your child in family and cultural traditions, rituals, routines and activities.
- Prepare for transitions or separations; tell what will happen next; use a consistent departure routine.
- Arrange a meeting with all the adults caring for your child, to become acquainted.

### Self concept

#### Older Infants show their preferences

- Respond in a positive and helpful way to child’s moods, gestures, words and facial expressions.
- Use your child’s name when talking with him/her.
- Talk with your child about parts of the body and what they do (“We use our teeth to chew”).
- Provide objects for the child to learn to use.
- Be aware that change of routine, being overtired, or being ill may result in more protests and resistance.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Self management

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#### Older Infants use trusted adult as a secure base from which to explore

- Look for caregiver's response in uncertain situations or when trying something new. Test caregiver's response, such as reaching for a forbidden object, then looking to see how caregiver responds.
- Move away from caregiver to explore environment; may do so repeatedly.
- Pay attention to an object a caregiver is looking at or talking about.
- Make an effort at times to reengage a caregiver's attention if he or she is distracted.

#### Older Infants begin to participate in repeated routines

- Participate in repeated routines, such as lifting arms toward caregiver to be picked up.
- Follow some rules and routines, and simple directions.

#### Older infants continue to express emotions

- Either relax or cry harder when adult pays attention. Grow more confident when encouraged to release strong feelings.
- Express and respond to a variety of emotions.

### Learning to learn

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- Use all senses and a variety of motions to explore.
- Learn through play and interaction with others.
- Try different approaches to reaching a desired object or achieving a goal.
- Make creative use of items, such as turning a bucket upside down to be the base for a tower.
- Actively play games with caregivers that involve repetition, such as peek-a-boo; anticipate own turn.
- Experiment to see if objects have the same effects, such as shaking a stuffed animal to see if it makes a noise like a rattle.
- Apply something already learned to something new, such as banging on a drum to make a sound, then banging on a bucket.
- Repeat a simple activity until successful.
- Stay focused on an activity for a sustained period of time.
- Begin to be able to hold information in mind (such as the location of a hidden object) and keep track of simple changes (track the movement of a hidden object).

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Self management

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#### Older Infants use trusted adult as a secure base from which to explore

- Provide a safe and interesting environment for the child to explore; stay nearby.
- Stay close to your child in a new setting for reassurance; show your trust and respect for adults that are new to the child.
- Point out interesting objects or events to your child.

#### Older Infants begin to participate in repeated routines

- Continue consistent routines for daily activities such as mealtimes and naptimes; give child a chance to participate more (e.g. help with dressing, using spoon).
- Talk with your child about routines and any changes to the routine, if appropriate.
- Give simple directions and give the child time to respond.

#### Older infants continue to express emotions

- Let the child express unhappy feelings and distress; respond with closeness and soothing words.
- Respond with words and understanding to new emotional expressions, such as surprise, interest.
- Help your child learn to calm self by using a favorite toy or blanket, talking to self.
- Give your child choices when appropriate.
- State rules in positive ways (such as "we use a gentle touch").

### Learning to learn

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- Offer a variety of safe and interesting toys and objects.
- Play with your child every day; encourage curiosity and effort.
- Observe your child to understand his or her temperament, activity level and preferences.
- Give the child time to try out different materials and master them (such as time to put together a puzzle).
- Look at storybooks and tell stories with your child.
- Play hiding games with your child.

## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Interactions with adults

- Enjoy playing with adults.
- Follow adult's pointing or gaze to share the same activity or topic.
- Initiate interactions by smiling, with vocalizations or gestures.

#### Interactions with peers

- Respond to others' smiles and emotions. React when someone is crying or upset.
- Show interest in other children by watching and trying to imitate them (such as following an older sibling around).
- Recognize other children, their names and their family members.

#### Social behavior

- Laugh when others laugh.
- Interact with children; notice similarities and differences.
- Take turns in social games.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

- Accept adults stepping in when there are disputes over toys and play.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Interactions with adults

- Talk and play with the child; introduce materials and games the child hasn't tried before.
- Model cooperation and sharing in daily activities, such as making a meal with family members.

#### Interactions with peers

- Give the child opportunities to interact with other children at home, at friends' or relatives' homes, or in small groups.
- Help the child play with others by talking about and showing how to share and take turns.

#### Social behavior

- Read or tell stories about families and friends.
- Help your child learn to identify family members, friends, and their relationships and roles.
- Show your child how to be kind to others.
- Share stories, songs and poems about your child's culture and traditions.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

- Step in to resolve conflicts; talk about how to resolve the conflict; practice when the child is calm.

*“Working in early childhood classrooms I have come to realize: Children are the best teachers I know! A child's smile is the most honest expression I have ever seen.”*

Gail Neal, Director, Multicultural Child & Family Hope Center, Tacoma



# 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

## ↓ Children may ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Rock back and forth on hands and knees; creep or crawl.
- Pull self up to a stand, holding onto something or someone.
- Walk holding onto furniture (“cruising”).
- Walk.
- Climb.
- Dance or move to music.

### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Use fingers and toes in play.
- Manipulate balls and other toys. Enjoy using different ways to manipulate, such as pounding, tapping, etc.
- Pick up things (such as cereal O’s) between thumb and forefinger.
- Coordinate eye and hand movements, such as putting things into a box.

### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Use sense of smell, touch, taste, sight and hearing to experience objects.
- Enjoy exploring and responding to different textures, such as hard tabletops or soft cushions.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Provide safe places and times for child to move around, including frequent opportunities outdoors.
- Provide sturdy furniture or people for the child to use to pull self to standing.
- Offer balls, games, toys and other activities that encourage movement.
- Dance, sing songs, play games, play music to encourage rhythmic movement.
- Let the child walk while outside as well as indoors.

### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Provide toys or safe objects to reach, grasp, shake, poke, drop.
- Continue to play finger plays and hand games with your child.
- Introduce safe objects and toys to encourage more controlled movements and investigation, such as busy boxes, activity centers and such.
- Let the child pick up cereal or similar food to practice thumb and finger grasp.

### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Let your child play on safe rocking, swinging or climbing structures.
- Give your child safe objects with different textures, shapes, colors, smells and sounds; talk about what the child feels, sees, smells, hears.
- Go outside to explore or for playtimes.



*“The health and education of the child is the power of the state, the nation and the world!! That trajectory is developmental in nature and starts early, even prior to conception. Success over the child’s life span depends on a healthy start.”*

Maxine Hayes, MD, MPH, Director,  
Washington State Department of Health

# 4. Growing up healthy

## ↓ Children may ...

### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

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- Begin to be aware of own needs (cry when need changing, get blanket when tired, etc.).
- Soothe self and fall asleep.
- Help with dressing, undressing and diapering.
- Wash and dry hands, with help.

### Nutrition and health

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- Grasp and drink from a cup.
- Feed self with a spoon.
- Eat finger foods.
- Eat a variety of nutritious foods.
- Be able to control the speed of eating.

### Safety

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- Be able to tell who are his or her main caregivers and family, and who are strangers.
- Be distracted from unsafe behavior with words (such as “no-no” or “stop”) or signals from adults.
- Look to adults before initiating an unsafe behavior.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

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- Give your child a safe and comfortable place to sleep; put infant to sleep on his/her back. See <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/documents/SIDS.pdf>
- Make sure he/she gets adequate sleep.
- Acknowledge child’s understanding of need for diaper change, something to drink, etc.
- Continue to practice cleanliness routines such as washing the child’s hands, brushing teeth and gums, wiping nose etc.; let child help with daily living skills.
- Keep nap and mealtime routines.

### Nutrition and health

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- Take your child for regular health visits and developmental screenings. Keep immunizations up-to-date. Take your child to a dental clinic or dentist at 1 year of age. (See Child Profile, <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/childprofile/default.htm>)
- Understand the typical signs of illness in a child and respond to help and soothe; get outside help if needed.
- Safely provide a variety of healthy foods and snacks (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, lean proteins), including foods from various cultures. Limit sweetened beverages overall and juice to one serving per day.
- Let child have opportunity to feed self with spoon and cup, and eat finger food, as appropriate.
- Include your child in family-style meals.
- Avoid screen time (viewing television, DVDs, computers, tablet computers) for the child. (See American Academy of Pediatrics, <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;128/5/1040>)

### Safety

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- Explain when things are too hot or too cold.
- Use a consistent phrase like “no-no” or “stop” to help child learn to stop unsafe behavior.
- Supervise and guide your child’s activities as he or she gets more active and curious.
- Provide a healthy and safe environment (remove choking hazards, cover electrical outlets, put poisons out of reach, avoid cigarette smoke and mold, etc.).
- Understand the risk factors and signs of child abuse and neglect; respond appropriately. (See <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/What-to-Know-about-Child-Abuse.aspx> and DEL’s Child Care Center Licensing Guidebook, Section 7)

# 5. Communicating (literacy)

Note: Communication skills begin before birth. Language is an important part of cultural identity. Language skills begin in the child's home language(s). Tribal children may be learning their tribal language at the same time as a home language. Bilingual and bicultural families may speak more than one language at home.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Turn to the person speaking, and pay attention to what the speaker is looking at or pointing to.
- Turn, stop or speak when name is called.
- Respond appropriately to familiar words (such as clapping when caregiver says “Clap”).
- Point to familiar persons and things in answer to the question “Where is \_\_\_\_\_?”
- Use words, sounds and gestures to get attention, make requests, comment, greet.
- Use consistent sounds to indicate a specific person or thing, such as saying “dada” for daddy.
- Name familiar people, animals and objects.
- Use eight to 20 understandable words in home language.
- Use single-word speech (such as saying “Up” to be picked up) and short, two-word sentences (“Me go.”).
- If learning two languages, may not use words in the second language, but communicate with gestures and facial expressions.
- Take part in simple conversations.
- Enjoy following single-step directions. (“Bring me the ball”)

### Reading

- Make the sounds of familiar words when read to.
- Show awareness of the sounds of spoken words by focusing on the person speaking.
- Point to pictures and words in book; have favorite books; increasingly able to handle books, with help; try to turn pages.
- Bring a book to an adult to read aloud.
- Focus attention for a short period of time when looking at books.
- Participate in stories, songs, finger plays and rhymes.

### Writing

- Scribble or make marks on paper without help.
- Grasp marker or crayon with fist and mark on paper in any location.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Read story books and tell stories with your child.
- Describe everyday objects and activities (such as red car, rock the baby); talk about daily routines.
- Introduce new words in context (“This is a juicy peach”).
- Repeat questions and directions as needed; demonstrate or show the answer if needed; ask who, what and where questions.
- Play naming games while exploring outside, looking at books, putting toys away, etc.
- Acknowledge child's attempts to say new words; expand what child says.
- Show you understand your child's words and gestures; have conversations.

### Reading

- Read books, recite lyrics and poems with rhymes and repetitive language.
- Select books with familiar activities; introduce books from diverse cultures; use the library if available.
- Have child point to pictures as you read or tell the story.
- Use cloth, plastic or board books. Show how to hold the book and turn pages. Be aware that child may treat a book as a toy.
- Sing songs and play games with the sounds of words and rhymes.

### Writing

- Provide your child with writing and drawing tools (crayons, markers, chalk, etc.) and surfaces (paper, sidewalk).
- Write your child's name and say the letters or sounds as you write.
- Draw and label pictures while talking about family members and familiar activities.
- Have your child help “sign” greeting cards with name or handprint.

*“Inspiring a generation of life-long learners should be the foundation of our educational system from birth and beyond. If a child loves to learn, our job as educators is made easy. Play, wonder, creativity and intention should be our roadmap to achieve this goal!”*

Diane Kroll, Director Early Childhood,  
Puget Sound Educational Service District



## 6. Learning about my world

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Knowledge (cognition)

- Observe others' activities. Then imitate their actions, gestures and sounds.
- Use imitation to make a desired effect, such as activating a toy, or obtaining an object.
- Explore things in many ways, such as shaking, banging, poking and throwing.
- Enjoy playing hiding games; locate an object that has been hidden from view.
- Use objects as intended, such as pushing buttons on a toy phone, or drinking from a cup.
- Use objects as a means to an end, such as using a bucket to take toys from one place to another.
- Seek caregiver's help by making sounds, words, facial expressions or gestures to obtain an object or start an activity.
- Match similar objects.
- Begin make-believe play and imitate the actions of others, such as rocking and feeding a baby doll.
- Explore objects in nonconventional ways.

#### Math

- Understand the idea of “more” related to food or play. Use gestures to ask for more.
- Imitate rote counting using some names of numbers.
- Play with toys and objects of different size and shape.
- Put things together, such as simple matching puzzles, nesting cups.
- Follow simple directions that use words like “in,” “on,” “up” and “down.”

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Knowledge (cognition)

- Give your child safe experiences that show cause and effect, such as turning the lights off or on. Show and explain cause and effect. (“If you throw your toy out of the crib, you can't reach it.”)
- Give your child things to explore; try assembly toys, such as big pop beads or simple puzzles.
- Play games with your child that show that things that are hidden are still there, such as peek-a-boo and hide and seek.
- Explain how different experiences relate to each other. (“It's raining so we need the umbrella.”)
- Help your child try to do things in different ways, such as stacking blocks in a different order.
- Respond to your child's signals for help but also encourage trying a little longer.
- Show your child books and pictures with people who look like the child and people from other cultural groups.
- Provide safe objects, dolls or other toys that encourage the beginnings of pretend play.

#### Math

- Count out toys or objects, let child touch while you count. Name colors and shapes.
- Sing songs and read books with numbers and counting, and that name colors or identify shapes.
- Involve your child in activities that show “more” and “less.”
- Offer your child blocks with numerals or other number toys.
- Give the child toys that have a set of sizes, such as nesting cups or stackable rings.
- Explain and give your child the chance to sort and classify (“Please bring me my white shoes.”).
- Use number words to say how many are in a group.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Science

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- Take action to achieve a goal, such as fitting puzzle pieces together, or activating a toy.
- Express surprise and delight to play outdoors and with natural elements, such as water, sand and mud.
- Express excitement when seeing animals, birds and fish. Show interest in animals and representations of animals.
- Notice the characteristics of natural things, such as leaves, or events, such as rain or wind.
- Respond to caregiver's guidance on how to act appropriately toward and around living things.
- Enjoy using or playing with technology objects, such as a wind-up toy.

### Social Studies

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- Be eager for regular daily activities.
- Recognize the start and end of an event (such as by clapping at the end of a song).
- Explore spaces, such as trying to fit into an open cardboard box.
- Recognize some familiar places, such as home, store, grandma's house.
- Know where favorite toys or foods are kept.
- Know where the trash can and recycle bin are.

### Arts

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- Try a variety of art materials, such as paint, crayons, markers, play dough, clay.
- Try a variety of sound sources, such as rattles, bells, drums.
- Show interest in sounds, tones, voices, music, colors and shapes.
- Enjoy rhythms and movement.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Science

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- Join your child in exploring objects, things found in nature.
- Sing songs and read books together about plants and animals, and how they grow and change.
- Visit a farm, park or zoo to watch animals.
- Show your child how to treat animals respectfully, without harming them.
- Give your child the chance to safely explore dirt, sand and water.
- Talk with your child about changes in the weather.

### Social Studies

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- Talk about what happens before and after daily routines.
- Show how to care for the environment by picking up trash and discarding it in the right place.

### Arts

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- Use descriptive words to talk about what you and your child are looking at.
- Give your child the chance to try safe art materials.
- Clap, stomp, dance, or finger tap to songs, rhymes and rhythms.
- Expose your child to a variety of voice sounds (singing, speaking, humming) and styles of music.

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See also, Parent Help 123 on infant child development, <http://www.parenthelp123.org/infants/child-development>, and more in the Information Resources section.

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# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

As a parent, you know your toddler best.

You notice things such as how and when your toddler walks, plays with toys, talks, or feeds himself/herself using a spoon or fork. What you are seeing is how your toddler is growing through different stages of development.

Every child grows and develops at his or her own pace. It is important to talk with your toddler's healthcare provider at every visit about the milestones your toddler has reached and what to expect next. It is also important to tell your toddler's healthcare provider if you notice any of these signs of possible developmental delay. Please make sure to discuss your concerns if:

## By age 12 months, your child:

- Doesn't crawl
- Can't stand when supported
- Doesn't search for things that he or she sees you hide
- Doesn't point to things
- Doesn't learn gestures like waving or shaking head
- Doesn't say simple words like "mama" or "dada"
- Has lost skills he or she once had (some backsliding is normal)

## By age 18 months, your child:

- Doesn't point to show things to others
- Can't walk
- Doesn't know what familiar things are used for
- Doesn't copy others' actions or words
- Doesn't gain new words
- Doesn't have at least six words
- Doesn't notice when a caregiver leaves or returns
- Has lost skills he or she once had (some backsliding is normal)

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children be screened for general development at the 18-month visit. Ask your child's healthcare provider about your child's developmental screening.

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## For more information:

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Babies can't wait. If there is a question about your child's development, talk with your child's health care provider. If you have concerns about your child's development, you can also call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588. This hotline can tell you about free developmental screening and other services, and give you the name of the Family Resources Coordinator (FRC) in your local area. The FRC can help you find out if your child needs further evaluation.

For concerns about children birth to three years old, you can also find information from the state Department of Early Learning's Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program at <http://www.del.wa.gov/esit> or click on [http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart\\_English.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart_English.pdf) for more information on developmental milestones.

The Family Health Hotline can also provide information about immunizations, state-sponsored health insurance, and other resources: [www.withinreachwa.org](http://www.withinreachwa.org). Parent Help 123 offers information on infant development, screening and other resources: <http://www.parenthelp123.org/infants/child-development>

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at 1-800-CDC-INFO or at [www.cdc.gov/concerned](http://www.cdc.gov/concerned) also offers information. See CDC's *Milestone Moments* brochure: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents\\_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf)

## EARLY TRANSITIONS

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Transitions are part of everyday life. Adjusting to new surroundings and people is an important lifelong skill that children need to learn. Children's first transitions are usually between home and a relative's or caregiver's home, or between home and a child care or preschool. A child may have somewhat different routines on different days of the week. Moving from one environment to another can be hard for a child.

**What parents, caregivers and teachers can do:** Good communication among families, caregivers and teachers is key. Parents can talk with caregivers and teachers early on about the family's traditions, language and daily routines, and the family's and child's preferences for foods and activities. Together, they can look for ways to provide continuity, such as having consistent meal times and familiar foods. Caregivers and teachers can make sure they say the child's and family's name correctly, learn a few key words and phrases in the child's home language, and find out what the child enjoys. They can also include in the care setting or classroom some materials, pictures and/or art that reflect the interests of the child and family.

Parents can talk with their child about the new daily routine. For example, they might say the names of the adults the child will be with, how long the child will be there, and the names of any friends the child will be seeing. Over time, the parents can pay attention to their child's connection with the various caregivers to ensure there are strong attachments.

Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# Toddlers

## 16 to 36 Months



*“I remember watching an assistant educator get down on the floor with my child who at age 2 spent most of her time lying on her back. He lay down, in the middle of the classroom, on his back to see her view. What an incredible step to building a relationship with a child who has such a unique view of the world. What an extraordinary place for my child with special needs to receive her first educational experiences.”*

Colleen Willis, mother of a Kindering Center graduate  
(Kindering provides early intervention services for very young children with special needs)

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND HERE

First there are some questions for families to reflect on. They offer a springboard for families, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers to talk together about fostering each child's growth and learning.

Next under each area of development, the Guidelines are in two columns. "Children may . . ." provides examples of things that children this age are learning to be, do and know. "Ideas to try with children . . ." offers examples of things families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and other caring adults can do to help children learn and develop in healthy ways. Different families may encourage learning and development in different ways.

These Guidelines are a resource. They are not an exhaustive guide to child development, and are not intended to be an assessment tool, a curriculum or a tool to collect data on children.

# What families already know about their children

## Five questions to reflect on

1. What has your child done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“The wonder in their little faces and the sheer joy with each new discovery makes working with young children such a gift. When I follow their lead, wait, watch, listen and help guide their discovery, we learn together.”*

Kathy Fortner, mother of two and  
Early Intervention Provider



**Note:** Child continues the growth and learning from the prior age.

# 1. About me and my family and culture

## ↓ Children may ...

### Family and culture

- Have a relationship with caregivers or family other than the parents or main caregiver.
- Show preference for familiar adults and peers.
- Feel comfortable in a variety of places with familiar adults (such as at home, in the car, store or playground).
- Express caution or fear toward unfamiliar people.
- Recognize roles within the family.
- Participate in family routines.
- Enjoy stories, songs and poems about a variety of people and cultures.

### Self concept

- Separate from main caregiver when in familiar settings outside the home.
- Recognize and call attention to self in a mirror or in photographs.
- Show awareness of being seen by others (such as repeating an action when sees someone is watching).
- Show self-confidence; try new things.
- Make choices (such as what clothes to wear) and have favorite books, toys and activities.
- Take pride in showing completed projects (such as a drawing or stack of blocks) to caregiver.
- Name and express many emotions in self, familiar people, pets.
- Seek the comfort of adults significant to him/her when in new or uncomfortable situations, or needing help, or feeling strong emotions.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Family and culture

- Explain and describe family traditions, history, rituals and activities, and continue to involve your child in them.
- Let child talk about self and family.
- Incorporate child's culture into classroom and play settings.
- Give child props and dress-up clothes for pretend play in different family roles.
- Display photos of child and family members at child's eye level.
- Meet with the family/caregiver/teacher individually to become acquainted.

### Self concept

- Respond to child's emotional and physical needs.
- Listen to child; show interest, empathy and understanding; respond to questions and requests.
- Name your child's feelings as you notice them. Help your child understand and name feelings.
- Talk about things you and your child have done together, including how he or she felt.
- Help child be successful with challenging activities or tasks (e.g., puzzles, putting on clothes).

## ↓ Children may ...

### Self management

- Remember and follow simple routines and rules some of the time.
- Direct others to follow simple rules and routines, even when he or she does not follow them.
- Have trouble learning new behavior when routines are changed.
- Respond well to adult guidance, most of the time. Test limits and try to be independent.
- Stop an activity or avoid doing something if directed.
- Express strong feelings through tantrums.
- Do things the child has been told not to do.
- Show assertiveness, such as giving orders to others.
- Show growing ability to remember past experiences and tell an adult about them, including information about simple emotions.

### Learning to learn

- Actively explore the environment.
- Ask questions.
- Try new ways of doing things. Experiment with the effect of own actions on objects and people.
- Insist on some choices. Choose an activity and keep at it for longer periods of time.
- Want to do favorite activities over and over.
- Seek and accept help when encountering a problem.
- Invent new ways to use everyday items.
- Enjoy pretend play and creating things.
- Change behavior based on something the child learned before.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Self management

- Give child choices that are okay with you (“Would you like to play with the trucks or the blocks?”).
- Set simple rules and limits and be consistent; know that child’s protests are a typical part of development. Avoid physical punishment.
- Help your child manage and express feelings in safe and appropriate ways. Show ways to express feelings that are acceptable to family and cultural values.
- When your child is angry, talk about how it is okay to show this anger and how it is not.
- Respect that different cultures place different values on independence.
- Recognize and describe child’s appropriate behavior (“You remembered to hang up your coat.”).

### Learning to learn

- Give the child opportunities to explore and try new activities and tasks safely.
- Respond to child’s questions even when he or she asks them over and over.
- Ask the child questions about his or her explorations and activities.
- Give your child time to keep at an activity.
- Encourage your child to play pretend and be creative.



*“Recently there was the classic two-year old thing about ‘what’s mine is mine, what’s yours is mine’ over a ball. The two-year-old’s mother wanted him to share the ball with another little girl, but he was having none of it. He marched off, and we thought he was just getting his own way. But what he did was to get an alternate ball for the little girl. He came back and offered it to her, and she was more pleased with that one. He wasn’t being self-centered after all, but engaging in You-Win/I-Win problem-solving!”*

Janet Russell Alcántara, Program Coordinator,  
Angle Lake Family Resource Center,  
Lutheran Community Services Northwest

## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Interactions with adults

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- Start interactions and play with adults.
- Seek out attention from adults.
- Enjoy turn-taking games with caregivers and may direct adult in his or her role.

#### Interactions with peers

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- Play side-by-side with another child, at times.
- Remember and use the names of familiar peers.
- Start interacting with peers. Show interest in and call them by name. Recognize and want to be with playmates the child knows. Observe and imitate other children's play.
- Begin to include other children in play, such as chase games.

#### Social behavior

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- Be excited to see friends and familiar people. Have a preferred playmate.
- Notice when someone familiar is absent ("Where is Simon?").
- Notice when others are happy or sad and name emotions. ("Mia sad.")
- Notice that what the child likes might not be the same as what others like.
- Follow family routines, such as what the family does at dinner time.
- Be upset when family routines are not followed or change.
- Start to act appropriately as a member of various communities, such as family, classroom, neighborhood, faith community.
- Help with simple chores in the family or classroom community.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

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- Find it hard to wait for a turn. Use adult help to share and take turns.
- Respond appropriately (most of the time) when another child expresses wants, such as to look at a book with him or her.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Interactions with adults

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- Read books or tell stories involving diverse families and cultures. In a group setting, the books might represent all the cultures of the children in the group.
- Demonstrate fairness and respect for others.

#### Interactions with peers

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- Give child opportunities to play with other children. Provide toys or activities that two or more children can play with at once.
- Help your child learn some words in peers' home language.
- Involve child in activities that a group of children do together, such as singing or movement games.

#### Social behavior

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- Demonstrate how to cooperate in daily activities, such as waiting your turn in grocery checkout line.
- Talk to child about the groups he or she is a member of, such as family, classroom, neighborhood, etc.
- Encourage child to help with household or classroom chores.
- Give child props and dress-up clothes to take on family and community roles at play time.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

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- Read, tell stories or give examples about simple conflicts and how the characters solved the conflict.
- Help the child understand others' feelings and actions.
- Talk with child about rules, limits and choices, and how they help people get along.
- Set limits and be consistent; redirect aggressive behavior.

# 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

## ↓ Children may ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Walk and run well, or use a mobility device, if needed. Change speed and direction.
- Climb into and out of bed or onto a steady chair.
- Jump up and down. Squat. Stand on tiptoe.
- Pull toys while walking.
- Walk up and down stairs one at a time.
- Kick a ball that is not moving.
- Throw a ball or beanbag. Catch a large, bounced ball against the body.
- Enjoy being active. Join in active games, dance, outdoor play and other physical activity.

### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Reach, grasp and release with more control.
- Use tools such as spoon, crayon, toy hammer.
- Use fingers to paint, play with clay, line up blocks. Stack a few blocks.
- Grasp small items with thumb and finger.
- Nest up to five cups or other items.

### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Dance or move to music and rhythms.
- Show eye-hand coordination—build with blocks, work simple puzzles, string large beads, put together and take apart items like pop beads.
- Become aware of where the body is in relation to other things, such as walking around a table without bumping into it.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Supervise child's activities.
- Encourage your child's physical activity every day both inside and outdoors. Provide opportunities to walk and climb in a natural environment, if possible.
- Give child opportunities to run, throw, jump, climb. Help your child throw balls or beanbags.
- Encourage child to do activities that promote balance.
- Provide your child with push and pull toys.

### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Give child opportunities to use crayons, markers, paintbrushes.
- Give child opportunities to use toys with parts to take apart and put together.
- Provide opportunities to use fingers to pick up small items, and do finger plays.

### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Dance and sing songs with actions, and play movement games together.
- Provide opportunities to move in variety of spaces such as under, through, between; use furniture or playground equipment.



*“As a foster parent of children who attend the Multicultural Day Care Center, I feel extremely supported by the staff. The children here feel like this is their home, the teachers are like family and give more than education. They have created a stable, nurturing community that provides children who have very uncertain lives with the peace and safety they need to grow and succeed.”*

Cordell Zakiyyah

*“My son was very reserved, not much for talking or opening up. Once the teachers began to work with him and pull him out of his shell, I noticed a higher level of confidence and joy for learning, and a new level of excitement arose because of all his teachers.”*

Jenell Parker



## 4. Growing up healthy

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Want to take care of self.
- Dress and undress completely (except for fasteners), with help.
- Have sleeping routines, such as getting and arranging soft toys to take to bed.
- Sleep well. Wake up rested and ready to be active.
- Show interest in toilet training. Use the toilet by about age 3 years, with help.
- Wash and dry hands, with only a little help needed.
- Cooperate with tooth-brushing.

#### Nutrition and health

- Feed self with a spoon, without help.
- Feed self a sandwich, taking bites.
- Recognize and eat a variety of healthy foods. Choose among food options.
- Name five or six of own body parts.

#### Safety

- Recognize safety rules, but not always follow them.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Give the child opportunities to do daily living skills by self, such as dressing and undressing, helping with brushing teeth, washing and bathing, wiping nose.
- Support child's interest in toileting; teach toileting skills.
- Continue sleep routines and help child calm self before bedtime. Make sure your child gets adequate sleep.
- Respect the personal care methods that some families use to promote independence.

#### Nutrition and health

- Continue regular health and dental visits, and developmental, vision and hearing screenings.
- Set regular times for meals and snacks. Offer a variety of healthy foods (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, lean proteins) and beverages (water, milk, up to 4 oz. per day of 100% juice); include foods from home cultures.
- Include child in family-style meals; model serving oneself.
- Talk to child about how food and water help us to be healthy. Help child understand any personal food allergies.
- Reward positive behavior with attention, not with sweets or other food. Instead celebrate with praise and excitement.
- Avoid screen time (viewing television, DVDs, computers, tablet computers) for the child under 2 years old. At 2 years and over, limit screen time at child care to 30 minutes per week, and at home to two hours per day. Consider not having a television in the child's bedroom. (See American Academy of Pediatrics, <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;126/5/1012>)

#### Safety

- Supervise and guide your child's activities.
- Provide a safe environment (remove choking hazards and poisons; avoid cigarette smoke and mold, etc.).
- Teach your child to tell a trusted adult when he or she is hurt or afraid, or sees something that is not safe.

# 5. Communicating (literacy)

Note: Communication skills begin before birth. Language is an important part of cultural identity. Language skills begin in the child's home language(s). Tribal children may be learning their tribal language at the same time as a home language. Bilingual and bicultural families may speak more than one language at home.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Respond appropriately to familiar words. Respond to directions that include verbs, such as run, jump, reach, open.
- Touch correct body parts in songs or games where you identify parts of the body.
- Use more than 100 words. When learning more than one language, the child might not use words equally in both languages.
- Enjoy learning new words.
- Point to and name objects when told their use (“What do you drink with?”).
- Name items in a picture book, such as a cat or tree.
- Use mostly one- and two-syllable words, with some three-syllable words.
- Use three- or four-word sentences with a noun and verb.
- Use negatives (“I don’t want it”).
- Use adjectives in phrases (such as a big bag, or a green hat).
- Ask and answer simple questions, as appropriate for the culture.
- Speak clearly enough in home language to be understood most of the time.
- Begin to follow grammatical rules, though not always correctly.
- Change tone to communicate meaning.
- Recount an event, with help. Communicate about recent activities.
- Remember and follow simple directions in home language and attempt to make sense of directions that include gestures (such as the gesture for “come here”) in a second language.
- Follow two-step directions with complex sentence structure (noun + verb + adverb, such as “Put the toys away quickly”). Struggle if too many directions are given at once.
- Take turns in longer conversations.
- Use gestures or phrases to show respect for others, though need adult prompts sometimes.
- Enjoy making animal sounds to represent familiar animals.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Use as wide a vocabulary as you can when talking with your child in the home language.
- Speak in complete sentences.
- Name new things when introducing them to your child; use descriptive words.
- Give your child word books. Read daily and explain new words.
- Give your child the chance to experiment with new words by giving the first part of a sentence and asking your child to complete the sentence.
- Ask your child questions that need more than a single-word answer, such as why or how questions. Make sure to wait long enough for your child to answer.
- Respond with the correct pronunciation when your child mispronounces something.
- Read books or tell stories in the child's home language and in other languages, if possible. Use props, such as puppets or dolls, with the stories.
- Read or tell the same story often, then ask your child about it.
- Tell your child stories about his or her family, community and culture.
- Use rhymes and songs, and encourage your child to join in.
- Let a child learning two languages ask and answer questions first in his or her home language or dialect. Show that you value the home language.
- Help your child talk on the telephone, and encourage him or her to listen to the person on the other end.
- Give your child the chance to communicate with other children.
- Help your child take turns listening and talking in conversations.
- Show and give your child the chance to practice culturally and socially appropriate courtesies.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Reading

- Enjoy reciting phrases from familiar rhymes, stories and fingerplays. Say the last word of a familiar rhyme to complete it.
- Join in rhyming games and songs with other children.
- Sing songs with or recite letters of the alphabet.
- Begin to understand that print represents words (for example, pretend to read text).
- Know the right side up of a book. Turn pages, usually one at a time. Imitate reading by turning pages, remembering and telling the story.
- Notice both words and pictures on a page. Describe the action in pictures.
- Recite familiar words in a book when read to.
- Recall characters or actions from familiar stories.
- Anticipate what comes next in known stories.
- Recognize print in the neighborhood (such as stop signs, signs on buildings, etc.).
- Ask to be read to, or for storytelling. Request a favorite book or story many times.

### Writing

- Label pictures using scribble writing or ask an adult to label the pictures.
- Use symbols or pictures to represent oral language and ideas.
- Scribble and make marks on paper, and tell others what the scribble means.
- Draw horizontal and vertical lines.
- Use a variety of writing tools (pencil, marker, paint brush).

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Reading

- Read or tell stories to your child every day; ask questions about the story while reading it.
- Make up rhyming songs using your child's name and the names of family members.
- During everyday activities, point out words and sounds that are alike, such as fruits with the same beginning sound (peach, pear, plum).
- Sing alphabet songs together.
- Give your child chances to point out letters and words on street signs, store signs, billboards, etc.
- Encourage your child's efforts to identify letters.
- When reading with your child, show the book cover and read the title and author's name.
- Sometimes while reading, run your finger along the text to show the flow of reading.
- Show your child different forms of printed matter (invitation, flyers, bills, take-out menus) and talk about their purposes.
- Take your child to the library, bookstore or other places to explore books.

### Writing

- Praise your child's attempts at writing; offer a variety of writing tools such as pencil, crayon, marker.
- Give your child the chance to draw. Ask about the drawing, and write what the child says at the bottom of the drawing.
- Ask your child to tell a story. Write it down as he or she speaks, then read it back.
- Let your child see you writing, such as making a grocery list.

*“What we learned in our early childhood program  
[written by graduates of a multicultural ECEAP/child care]:*

- *Respecting/social skills*
- *Never late to school*
- *Learning more*
- *Getting/asking for help*
- *Learning right from wrong*
- *Homework is getting finished*
- *Meeting new people*
- *Helping out*
- *Caring for other people*
- *Get to know the resources/  
nature of the community  
you're in*
- *We learn how to have fun . . .  
but in the right way”*

Tasia, Amiah, Letecia, Jasie, Kindergarten – 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students,  
Multicultural Child & Family Hope Center, Tacoma



# 6. Learning about my world

## ↓ Children may ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

- Experiment with the effect of own actions on things and people.
- Know that playing with certain desirable or forbidden things will get adults' attention.
- Make choices, such as which toy to play with.
- Take action based on past experience. For example, if the caregiver blows on hot food before eating it, child will blow on food at the next meal.
- Connect objects with actions (such as a broom for sweeping).
- Repeat an action over and over until successful, such as stacking blocks until they no longer fall down.
- Explore and use trial and error to solve problems.
- Imitate how others solve problems.
- Ask for help when needed.
- Show recall of people and events, such as by clapping hands when told that a favorite person will visit.
- Recall and follow the order of routines, such as washing and drying hands before eating.
- Play make-believe with props, such as dolls or stuffed animals.
- React to puppets as if they are real and not operated by an adult or another child.

### Math

- Count to at least 10 from memory.
- Begin counting small groups of items (up to five).
- Understand the concepts of "one" and "two," such as by following directions to take one cracker.
- Recognize and name a few numerals.
- Identify quantity and comparisons, such as all, some, none. Use comparison words correctly, such as bigger and smaller, more and less.
- Explore measuring tools, such as measuring cups, or a ruler.
- Match simple flat shapes (circles, squares, triangles).
- Identify two geometric shapes, such as a circle and a square.
- Follow simple directions for position, such as up, down, in, on.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

- Clearly explain cause and effect. For example, if your child reaches for something hot, say "You can't touch that because it's hot and will hurt you."
- Help your child play with materials that change when you put them together, such as mixing flour and water to make dough.
- Involve your child in routine activities, explaining why you do them ("We sweep the floor to clean up the dirt").
- Ask your child to help sort the laundry by color.
- Praise your child for using a past event to make a choice.
- Give your child the chance to work out problems with and without your help. When your child can't work out a problem, describe what is happening and suggest possible solutions.
- Encourage imagination by joining your child's make-believe play. Let your child tell you what your role is in the play and follow your child's directions. Make suggestions and encourage your child to try some of them.
- Dispel your child's fears that come from confusion over what's real and what's not.

### Math

- Use numerical concepts in everyday routines. ("Do you want one or two slices of apple?" "Let's cut the cornbread into squares.")
- Continue to practice counting, looking at number books.
- Provide things of different shapes, colors or sizes, such as blocks. Help your child arrange them from smallest to largest, or longest to shortest, or by color. Describe what your child is doing.
- Provide the chance to play with sand, water and containers to pour, fill, scoop, weigh and dump.
- Chart and talk about changes in your child's height and weight.
- Explore outdoors with your child, and look for patterns, size, number and shapes in nature and in the community.



*"Wisdom from a two and a half year old: My granddaughter was walking through a puddle, so I asked her not to do that or she would get her shoes muddy. Her response was, 'I like to walk through puddles. That's what little girls do.' How right she is. Children learn by getting messy and experimenting in their environment."*

Ruth Geiger

## ↓ Children may ...

### Science

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- Look at and handle things to identify what's the same and what's different about them.
- Explore nature using the senses, such as looking at and feeling different leaves.
- Ask simple questions about the natural world ("Where did the rainbow go?").
- Show interest in animals and other living things. Begin to label them by name and to identify traits (such as the sound a cow makes).
- Enact animals' activities (such as eating, sleeping) in pretend play. Move toy animals to mimic animals in the wild.
- Explore the parts of living things, such as the petals on a flower.
- Engage with plants and animals in a respectful way, without adult prompting. Express concern if an animal is injured or sick. Comment on what it takes to make things grow ("That plant needs water").
- Identify weather, such as sun, rain, snow.
- Know that people and animals can live in different kinds of places, such as fish living in the water.

### Social Studies

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- Eager for recurring events ("After lunch, I will hear a story").
- Connect new experiences to past experiences.
- Experiment with physical relationships, such as on/under, inside/outside.
- Help with home and class routines that keep things clean.
- Understand roles of various people in the community.

### Arts

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- Use a variety of materials to express self, such as paint, crayons and musical instruments.
- Sing and make up simple songs and/or music with instruments.
- Explore various ways of moving the body with and without music.
- Imitate movement after watching others perform games or dance.
- Act out familiar stories or events.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Science

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- Offer things to experience with different senses, such as flowers to smell, water and sand to feel, etc.
- Share the wonders of nature with your child. Provide safe opportunities to explore and play outdoors. Talk with your child about the weather, animals and plants you see around you.
- Talk with your child about the traits of different animals, such as the sounds they make, what they eat, how they move. Explain how to treat wildlife safely and respectfully.
- Read or act out stories and legends from the child's culture and other cultures about plants and animals. Read books about children and animals living in different places and climates.
- Show your child pictures of things in the natural world, such as waterfalls, forests, caves, lakes and mountains.
- Involve your child in activities that support/steward the environment.
- Give your child the chance to think ahead by asking "what if" questions about the natural world.
- Allow your child to observe and help take part in doing safe household chores, repairs and problem solving.

### Social Studies

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- Use pictures to talk with your child about what happened in the past and will happen in the future.
- Have your child spend time with elders.
- Use position words, such as asking your child to put a magazine under a book that is on the table.
- Make taking care of indoor and outdoor spaces part of the daily routine, and involve your child in helping.
- Introduce your child to a variety of places in the community, such as library, store, community center; talk about what is the same and different; talk about the people who work there.
- Give your child the chance to listen to story CDs and music from the child's own and other cultures.
- Show and explain how assistive technology (such as motorized wheelchairs, hearing aids) helps people.

### Arts

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- Appreciate and exhibit your child's artwork.
- Display prints and posters with a variety of styles of art.
- Give your child simple musical instruments, such as rhythm sticks, tambourine and drums.
- Give your child the chance to listen to live and recorded music from many cultures and styles.
- Give your child an opportunity to create art and music from natural objects.

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See also Parent Help 123 on child development, <http://www.parenthelp123.org/families/child-development>, and more in the Information Resources section.

# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

As a parent, you know your toddler best.

You notice things such as how and when your toddler learns new skills, eats new foods and plays with others. What you are seeing is how your toddler is growing through different stages of development.

Every toddler grows and develops at his or her own pace. It is important to talk with your toddler's healthcare provider at every visit about the milestones your toddler has reached and what to expect next. It is also important to tell your child's healthcare provider if you notice any of these signs of possible developmental delay. Please make sure to discuss your concerns if:

## By age 18 months, your child:

- Doesn't point to show things to others
- Can't walk
- Doesn't know what familiar things are used for
- Doesn't copy others' actions or words
- Doesn't gain new words
- Doesn't have at least six words
- Doesn't notice when a caregiver leaves or returns
- Loses skills he or she once had

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children be screened for general development at the 18-month visit. Ask your child's healthcare provider about your child's developmental screening.

## By age 2, if your child:

- Doesn't know what to do with common things, such as a brush, phone, fork or spoon
- Doesn't copy actions and words
- Doesn't follow simple instructions
- Doesn't use two-word phrases (for example "drink milk")
- Doesn't walk steadily
- Loses skills he or she once had

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that all children be screened for general development at the 24-month visit. Ask your child's healthcare provider about your child's developmental screening.

## By age 3, if your child:

- Falls down a lot or has trouble with stairs
- Drools or has very unclear speech
- Can't work simple toys such as peg boards, simple puzzles, turning a handle
- Doesn't understand simple instructions
- Doesn't speak in sentences
- Doesn't make eye contact when getting your attention (may vary by culture)
- Doesn't play pretend or make-believe
- Doesn't want to play with other children or with toys
- Loses skills he or she once had

## For more information:

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Talk to your health care provider. If you have concerns about your child's development, call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588. This hotline can tell you about free developmental screening and other services, and give you the name of the Family Resources Coordinator (FRC) in your local area. The FRC can help you find out if your child needs further evaluation.

For concerns about children birth to three years old, you can also find information from the state Department of Early Learning's Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program at <http://www.del.wa.gov/esit> or click on [http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart\\_English.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart_English.pdf) for more information on developmental milestones.

The Family Health Hotline can also provide information about immunizations, state-sponsored health insurance, and other resources: [www.withinreachwa.org](http://www.withinreachwa.org). Parent Help 123 offers information on infant development, screening and other resources: <http://www.parenthelp123.org/infants/child-development>

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at 1-800-CDC-INFO or at [www.cdc.gov/concerned](http://www.cdc.gov/concerned) also offers information. See CDC's *Milestone Moments* brochure: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents\\_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf)

**For children receiving Part C early intervention services:** As your child approaches 3 years old, the Family Resources Coordinator (FRC), and team, including you, will work together to create a transition plan to move out of early intervention into other services when your child turns 3. Some children will be eligible for preschool special education services offered by the local school district under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). For other children, community-based services may be available.

**For children who may be eligible for services offered by the local school district (Part B):** Family involvement has a positive impact on educational outcomes for all students. To support family involvement in special education, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction provides web visitors with user-friendly information and resources on various special education topics. Visit the website at <http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/Families/default.aspx> to find information and guidance for families on "*What To Do If You Think Your Child Needs Special Education.*" Also see the "Differences in Development" section for Age 5 and Kindergarten in these Guidelines for the steps involved in a special education evaluation.

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## Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# Ages 3 to 4 Years



*“In working in early childhood, I have learned that although some children don’t use verbal communication a lot, all children have their own communication style. You have to observe them exploring and testing their communication abilities and limits as they grow.”*

Yolanda Payne, Assistant Teacher, Multicultural Child & Family Hope Center

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND HERE

First there are some questions for families to reflect on. They offer a springboard for families, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers to talk together about fostering each child's growth and learning.

Next under each area of development, the Guidelines are in two columns. "Children may . . ." provides examples of things that children this age are learning to be, do and know. "Ideas to try with children . . ." offers examples of things families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and other caring adults can do to help children learn and develop in healthy ways. Different families may encourage learning and development in different ways.

These Guidelines are a resource. They are not an exhaustive guide to child development, and are not intended to be an assessment tool, a curriculum or a tool to collect data on children.

# What families already know about their children

## Five questions to reflect on

1. What has your child done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“Life presents us with a rich, sophisticated and complex tapestry of learning. Remember that children explore and learn holistically, without dividing that learning into categories. Take every opportunity to introduce your child to as many experiences as possible and trust that profound learning is taking place and that learning can be fun.”*

Martina Whelshula, Ph.D., Member of the Colville Tribe



**Note:** Child continues the growth and learning from the prior age.

## 1. About me and my family and culture

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Family and culture

- Remember the people who are important in the child's life.
- Name most family members, including extended family.
- Recognize the importance of cultural celebrations and traditions.
- Show or talk about objects from family or culture.

#### Self concept

- Proud to say own first and last name.
- Know self as a part of the family, spiritual group, culture, community, and/or other group to which the family belongs.
- Notice self as an important person to family and friends.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Family and culture

- Give your child the chance to interact with family, friends and community members.
- Share with your child about family members and relationships (such as brother, auntie, grandpa).
- Continue to involve your child in family and cultural traditions, rituals, routines and activities. Include the child in roles in which the child can succeed.

#### Self concept

- Pay attention to your child and listen to the child's ideas.
- Help your child feel good about all the things he or she can do. Acknowledge the child for cooperating in routines.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Self management

- Show personal likes and dislikes.
- Identify favorite and familiar activities.
- Find it hard to cooperate when tense, hungry, scared, sad, angry, etc., resulting in behavior that is hurtful, harmful or withdrawn.
- Release or redirect emotional tensions—cry, laugh, tremble, yawn, sing, jump, walk—becoming more relaxed and cooperative afterward.
- Remember and cooperate in daily routines, such as getting into a car seat, and in changes from one activity to another, with occasional reminders.
- Manage changes in routines and learn new behaviors with a little practice.
- Identify simple rules and expect others to follow them.
- Predict what comes next in the day, when there is a consistent schedule.
- Express delight in own abilities. (“I did it myself!”)
- Be able to identify when something is hard to do.
- Sometimes turn down a treat now if a better treat will be available later.

### Learning to learn

- Copy adults and playmates.
- Enjoy creating own play activities.
- Explore objects new to the child while playing.
- Become engrossed in an activity and ignore distractions briefly.
- Imitate real-life roles/experiences in simple role plays.
- Develop own thought processes and ways to figure things out.
- Identify questions and puzzles, and have ideas about ways to figure them out. Try some of these ideas.
- Recognize when making a mistake and sometimes adjust behavior to correct it.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Self management

- Listen to and reflect on your child’s feelings. For example, “I think you feel mad because you threw the puzzle piece on the floor.”
- Set limits for behavior. Go to the child, say what he or she can or cannot do, while firmly but kindly stopping the unwanted behavior. Stay close and offer connection, making time for your child’s feelings. Remind child what is and is not appropriate behavior.
- Be warm and caring, keeping self and child safe.
- Set up predictable routines for the day—getting dressed, meals, tooth brushing, gathering with friends, or whatever your day entails. Help your child to know what is coming next.

### Learning to learn

- Set a “you-and-me” time each day where you follow the child’s lead for five to 30 minutes. Don’t give advice or change the play except for safety concerns.
- Take turns when playing with your child in leading and following the lead.
- Give your child time to figure things out. Stand by with a look, touch, smile, thumbs up or other gesture to encourage what the child is trying to accomplish.
- Tell your child what you noticed he or she did to figure out a problem. Ask what worked best. The next time there is a similar problem, remind him/her of what worked before.
- Provide opportunities for your child to observe and learn how things are done.
- Celebrate your child’s learning together and help explore new ways of learning. Ask your child: How else might you do this?
- Recognize your child for keeping with a task.
- Develop the thought process by asking “What do you think?” and listening without correcting or giving hints. Tell a story but stop short of the ending, and let the child figure out the ending or moral.



*“Each morning when Sasha’s parents left, she would stand in the doorway and cry. We took her hand and guided her into the classroom. Little by little, she developed a transition skill. Now she can start her day anxiety-free. She may come in slowly but has no separation anxiety.”*

A teacher at an early childhood center

## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Interactions with adults

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- Separate from important adults, sometimes relying on another adult to feel safe. Release tensions through laughter, tears, trembling, talking, or yawning.
- Initiate interactions and engage in play with adults.
- Show affection for important adults.

#### Interactions with peers

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- Engage in play with other children. Join in group activities.
- Initiate play with friends, siblings, cousins and/or others.
- Share and take turns with other children.
- Show affection or closeness with peers.
- Make decisions with other children, with adult help.

#### Social behaviors

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- Respond to directions from adults about putting items away or being careful with them.
- Begin to remember and follow multistep directions.
- Notice where things belong and help put them away (such as toys, putting own dishes in the wash basin).
- Work with others as part of a team.
- Explore, practice and understand social roles through play. Adopt a variety of roles and feelings during pretend play.
- Plan play by identifying different roles needed and who will fill these roles. Consider changing roles to fit the interests of children playing.
- Tell stories and give other children the chance to tell theirs.
- Sing, drum and/or dance with others.
- React to peers' feelings (empathy).

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

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- Accept/reach out to children who are different.
- Identify ways to change behavior to respond to another's desires or needs. Remember and follow through on the agreement without further reminders, some of the time.
- Wait for a turn.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Interactions with adults

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- Accept and return hugs to the extent offered by the child.
- When separating, reassure the child that you will return and that the child will be well cared for. If possible, connect your return with something the child will experience (such as, "I'll come back after story time.")
- Listen to and connect with a crying or trembling child to give time and attention to the child to make separating from a loved one less difficult.

#### Interactions with peers

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- Provide playtimes with other children where they decide together what they want to do.
- With your child, go to family gatherings or other places where there are other children. Encourage them to connect and play together.
- Sympathize with and coach your child if he/she has trouble sharing or waiting a turn.

#### Social behaviors

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- Have real conversations with your child about things that interest him or her. Listen to your child and take turns talking and listening so the child experiences the back and forth of conversation. Listen more than you talk at times.
- Help the child understand that conversations have different "wait times" in different families and cultures.
- Encourage your child to have conversations that are child-to-child, child-to-adult, and child-to-elder.
- Take turns telling stories with grandparents, parents and children.
- Read, invent stories or give life examples where people/characters share, take turns and cooperate.
- Share books and pictures of people who look like your child, and books and pictures of people from other cultures.
- Make new friends and include your child. Show your child ways to say hello, share your name and ask theirs, etc.
- Create an orderly environment so the child can see where things go ("You can put that in the garbage"). Describe what you are doing and/or what the child is doing as you pick up and clean up.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

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- Model respect and ways to include people from diverse backgrounds and cultures, and people with disabilities.



*“I think with special needs kids that they learn when they are able. We as parents learned early on that we can’t put time parameters on our daughter’s learning. She will do things when she is ready and learn in her own way. It took a while for us to accept that our daughter wasn’t going to be able to do things as quickly as other kids, but watching her figure something out and get so excited about it is always worth the wait.”*

Shannin Strom Henry

## 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Further develop movement skills using the whole body, such as walking, jumping, running, throwing and climbing. A child in a wheelchair might start and stop the chair, and hold the body upright.
- Use both hands to grasp an object, such as catching a large ball.
- Balance briefly on one leg, such as for kicking a ball.
- Show coordination and balance, such as in walking along a line or a beam.
- Enjoy vigorous play with peers and/or adults.
- Enjoy the challenge of trying new skills.

#### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Draw some shapes and lines using a crayon or pencil.
- Work puzzles of three or four pieces.
- Develop eye-hand coordination, such as in stringing large beads.
- Button large buttons, zip and unzip clothing, and open and close other fasteners.
- Persist some of the time in practicing skills that are difficult.

#### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Move body to music or rhythm.
- Drum, sing, play musical instruments and listen to music from different cultures.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Provide safe places to play.
- Support your child in learning new physical skills.
- Provide one to two hours of daily physical activity. See Let’s Move for ideas (<http://www.letsmove.gov/get-active>).
- Adapt activities as needed for children with special needs.
- Give your child opportunities to try new challenges.

#### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Help your child learn to do tasks with the hands (such as puzzles, buttons, zippers, other fasteners; making things with clay, yarn, paper, etc.).
- Provide your child with writing/drawing tools and paper.

#### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Give your child the chance to use the senses in natural places, such as seeing, smelling and feeling plants outdoors. Encourage your child to share what he or she experiences.
- Give your child opportunities to listen to, watch and join in music and movement activities.

# 4. Growing up healthy

## ↓ Children may ...

### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Dress and undress with help. Take off coat and put it where it belongs.
- Begin to take care of own toileting needs.
- Wash hands and use a towel to dry them.

### Nutrition and health

- Try different healthy foods from a variety of cultures.
- Help to set and clear the table for meals. Self serve meal items.
- Engage in a variety of active play and movement activities. Play outdoor games.

### Safety

- Hold parent's/caregiver's hand when walking in public places.
- Begin to learn safety rules for the child's daily activities.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Provide child-height hooks, baskets, dresser drawer or other space for coats and clothing.
- Help your child learn the skills of going to the bathroom, washing hands, and getting dressed.
- Make sure your child gets adequate sleep.

### Nutrition and health

- Make sure your child gets a healthy variety of foods and adequate sleep. Offer healthy foods from different cultures, when possible.
- Teach your child the words to tell caregivers when he or she needs to go to the bathroom or is feeling sick or hurt.
- Take your child for regular dental, vision and health checkups, including immunizations and developmental screenings (See Child Profile <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/childprofile/default.htm>)
- Provide regular opportunities for physical play, indoors and out, including in parks and other natural spaces.
- Limit screen time (television, DVDs, computers, tablets, games) at child care to 30 minutes per week, and at home to two hours per day. Consider following the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation not to have a television in the child's bedroom. (See <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;126/5/1012>)

### Safety

- Teach your child about holding hands to cross the street.
- Teach your child about safety outdoors, not wandering off, and not going to the water alone.
- Help the child use a helmet for riding a tricycle, and use sunscreen for outdoor activities.
- Provide a safe environment (remove choking hazards and poisons; avoid asthma triggers such as smoke and mold, etc.).
- Define to the child what a "trusted adult" means. Communicate about personal safety, and to say "no" and tell a trusted adult if uncomfortable with any unsafe touching.

*"Providing good learning opportunities for children in their earliest years is every bit as important as in their school years, arguably more."*

Mike Sheehan, Early Childhood Educator



# 5. Communicating (literacy)

Note: Communication skills begin before birth. Language is an important part of cultural identity. Language skills begin in the child's home language(s). Tribal children may be learning their tribal language at the same time as a home language. Bilingual and bicultural families may speak more than one language at home.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Communicate with body language, facial expression, tone of voice and in words.
- Say name, tribal or religious name if the child has one, age and sex.
- Show preference for the home language.
- Name most familiar things.
- Name one or more friends and relatives.
- Ask the meaning of new words, then try using them.
- Speak so most people can understand.
- Use words like “I,” “me,” “we,” and “you” and some plurals (such as cars, dogs).
- Use multi-word sentences, phrases, and gestures to communicate needs, ideas, actions and feelings.
- Respond to questions verbally or with gestures.
- Ask questions for information or clarification.
- Enjoy repeating rhyming words or word patterns in songs, poems or stories.
- Show awareness of separate syllables in words by tapping or clapping for each syllable.
- Remember and follow directions of one or two steps. Struggle to remember and follow complicated or multi-step directions.
- Know three to seven words in tribal language (if the family has one) and use them regularly.
- Participate in conversations. Take turn in group conversations, and listen to others in group for a short period of time.
- Recognize rising and falling intonations, and what these mean.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Watch for and listen to all of your child's ways of communicating.
- Help your child learn new words. Play naming games using things in the room or outdoors.
- Ask what your child is doing, listening to and seeing.
- Ask questions that call for more than a “yes” or “no” answer (such as “What do you think?”) and listen to your child's responses.
- Talk about daily events with your child. Engage your child in conversation. Consider using mealtime as a regular time to talk.
- Include nonverbal as well as verbal communication. For example, when saying “Go get your shoes,” point in that direction.
- Help your child notice that sometimes verbal language and non-verbal/body language are not the same. Children understand body language and facial expressions.
- Tell stories, read or recite poems and/or rhymes with your child. Sing rhyming songs.
- Help your child clap or tap out the beats (syllables) for a name or word.
- Give your child instructions with two steps. For example, “Go to the closet and get your coat.”
- Use tribal language or home language for frequently used terms, such as “yes,” “wash your hands,” “hello,” “see you later,” “thank you,” “are you hungry,” and so on.



*“During circle time, we shared a story about a canoe. We talked about the water, how we interact with water, how if you take care of it, it will take care of you. The children had fun sharing their own experiences: ‘I was on a canoe.’ ‘I got a button blanket.’ ‘I went to my first fish ceremony.’”*

Rebecca Kreth, Manager of the Native American Early Learning Program, Puget Sound Educational Service District

## ↓ Children may ...

### Reading

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- Identify print on signs, etc., asking “What does that say?”
- Identify own name as a whole word.
- Match the beginning sounds of some words. Find objects in a picture that have the same beginning sound, with some adult help.
- Decide whether two words rhyme.
- Request a favorite book.
- Enjoy picture books and being read to. Enjoy looking at books on own. Use pictures to predict a story.
- Listen to and follow along with books in a different language.
- Turn book pages one at a time.
- Use own experiences to comment on a story, though the comments might not follow the story line.
- Retell simple, familiar stories from memory while looking at the book.

### Writing

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- Make marks or scribbles when an adult suggests writing.
- Attempt to copy one or more letters or characters of the home language.
- Draw pictures and tell their story.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Reading

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- Read, tell stories, give examples to your child every day. Use different tones of voice and character voices. Ask questions about what the child has heard, and answer the child’s questions.
- Read alphabet books and solve alphabet puzzles with your child.
- Play rhyming games.
- Show words from different languages for the same picture or object.
- Take your child to the library, if available, and explore children’s books.
- When reading books, pay attention to your child and his or her interests and connection. Read fewer words if needed to keep your child engaged.
- Read favorite books aloud over and over, and encourage your child to look at them on his or her own.
- Ask your child to point out signs that he or she recognizes, and to tell you what each one means.

### Writing

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- Write down what your child says and read it back.
- Write your child’s name and read it to him or her.
- Show words from child’s home language or tribal language if it has a written form.
- Show words in a variety of other languages, including languages that use different alphabets and writing systems.

# 6. Learning about my world

## ↓ Children may ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

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- Ask a lot of “why” and “what” questions.
- Learn by doing hands-on and through the senses.
- Learn through play.
- Recall several items after they have been put out of sight.
- Draw on own past experiences to choose current actions.
- Make plans for ways to do something. May or may not follow through.
- Think of a different way to do something, when confronting a problem, with adult help.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

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- Listen to your child about things he or she is learning to do. Be encouraging. Ask what he or she is doing and why.
- When your child is frustrated by an activity, talk about what might be making the activity difficult, and ask how else he or she might do it. Make suggestions if your child cannot think of a different approach.
- Show how to do something, then give your child a chance to try it.
- Identify and help explore your child’s interests. Find related library books.
- Explain to your child whom to ask for information and when is appropriate to ask.
- Take your child to a park, zoo or your favorite places outside. Let your child explore these new places. Make walks to the grocery store and/or other places in your community into opportunities to explore.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Math

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- Count to 10 and beyond by rote. Count up to five items. Point to objects while counting.
- Identify by sight how many are in a small group of items, up to three.
- Understand that the whole is larger than one of its parts (for example, an apple is larger than an apple slice).
- Identify up to four objects or pictures that are the same. Take objects or pictures that are different out of the group.
- Sort and describe items by size, color and/or shape.
- Match simple flat shapes (circles, squares, triangles).
- Compare size by sight, feel and comparing to hands, feet, etc. (visual and tactile math).
- Use gestures or words to make comparisons (larger, smaller, shorter, taller).
- Compare two objects by length, weight or size.
- Find the total sum of small groups of items.
- Understand words that tell where things are (such as behind, under, in, on). Use these words to identify locations.

### Science

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- Play with materials of different texture (such as sand, water, leaves) and conditions (such as wet, dry, warm, cold), with adult encouragement and supervision.
- Recognize that different forms of life have different needs.
- Begin to understand that some animals share similar characteristics (for example, a tiger and a pet cat share common features).
- Notice and ask questions about what is the same and different between categories of plants and animals. Notice their appearance, behavior and habitat.

### Social Studies

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- Name family members by relationship (such as father, sister, cousin, auntie, etc.).
- Make a drawing of own family as the child sees it.
- Recognize whose parent is whose when parents come for their children or in photos of each others' families.
- Take on family roles in play, identify how each person should behave and act out the part for a brief time. Enjoy changing roles.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Math

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- Play matching games. Ask your child to help set the table with safe items, such as spoons and paper plates, or to find objects around the house/classroom or in books that are the same.
- Play counting games. Count body parts, stairs and other things you use or see every day.
- Explore outdoors with your child and look for shapes and colors.
- Point out numbers on signs, in the grocery store, etc.
- Have your child use body parts (hands, thumbs, feet, arms) to judge the size or length of something.
- Show your child different objects and pictures, and figure out which one is larger by sight (visual math). Show your child how to use body parts (hand, feet, arms, etc.) to measure.
- Ask your child “Which is larger?” or “Which is more?” and listen to the answer. Ask why.
- Ask your child to tell the total of two small groups of items, up to  $3 + 2$ .
- Play “placing” games with your child with location words (such as “Put the ball under/on top of/beside the table.”). Take turns giving the directions.

### Science

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- Help your child explore with the senses—seeing, hearing, touching, and smelling.
- Play a guessing game with different smells.
- Let your child play with different materials. Explore nature and look at leaves, rocks, flowers, etc.
- Cook together.
- Set up a spot to watch plants grow. Invite your child to watch the changes, and explore the look, touch and smell.
- Give your child the chance to care for plants and animals (with supervision), such as watering plants and helping to feed pets. Talk about how animals need many of the same things that people do.
- Point out similarities between familiar animals.

### Social Studies

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- Give examples, or read or tell stories about families.
- Include a variety of family configurations in your stories.
- Help your child make a picture album (such as a stapled booklet), using photos or the child's drawings of family, friends, classmates and/or community members.
- Play family games with your child. Talk about what role you each will take and what actions each person will take. When done, suggest changing roles and playing again.



# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

As a parent, you know your child best.

You notice things such as how and when your child learns new skills, eats new foods and plays with others. What you are seeing is how your child is growing through different stages of development.

Every child grows and develops at his or her own pace. It is important to talk with your child's healthcare provider at every visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next. It is important to tell your child's healthcare provider if you notice any of these signs of possible developmental delay. Please make sure to discuss your concerns if:

## By age 4, your child:

- Can't jump in place
- Has trouble scribbling
- Shows no interest in interactive games or make-believe
- Ignores other children or doesn't respond to people outside of the family
- Resists dressing, sleeping, and using the toilet
- Doesn't understand "same" and "different"
- Doesn't use "me" and "you" correctly
- Doesn't follow three-part commands
- Can't retell a favorite story
- Speaks unclearly
- Loses skills he or she once had

## For more information:

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Talk to your child's health care provider about your concerns. You can also call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588. This hotline can tell you about free developmental screening and connect you to your local school district. Your school district can tell you if your child might be eligible to have an evaluation to determine the need for special education (for ages 3 to 5 years).

The Family Health Hotline can also provide information about immunizations, state-sponsored health insurance and other resources.

You can also find information from the state Department of Early Learning at <http://www.del.wa.gov/development/Default.aspx>, or go to [http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart\\_English.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart_English.pdf)

Parent Help 123 offers information on child development and school readiness: <http://www.parenthelp123.org/families/child-development>.

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at 1-800-CDC-INFO or at [www.cdc.gov/concerned](http://www.cdc.gov/concerned) also offers information. See CDC's *Milestone Moments* brochure: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents\\_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf)

**For children who may be eligible for services offered by the local school district (Part B):** Family involvement has a positive impact on educational outcomes for all students. To support family involvement in special education, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction provides web visitors with user-friendly information and resources on various special education topics. Visit the website at <http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/Families/default.aspx> to find information and guidance for families on “What To Do If You Think Your Child Needs Special Education.” Also see the “Differences in Development” section for Age 5 and Kindergarten in these Guidelines for the steps involved in a special education evaluation.

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Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# Ages 4 to 5 Years



*“My hope for young children is that they learn that they can learn—that important people in their lives support them through the process of learning: trying new things, sometimes succeeding right away, other times struggling, feeling disappointed, receiving encouragement, learning from that whole experience, then trying again.”*

Paula Steinke, Family Friend & Neighbor Program Manager, Child Care Resources, Seattle

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND HERE

First there are some questions for families to reflect on. They offer a springboard for families, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers to talk together about fostering each child's growth and learning.

Next under each area of development, the Guidelines are in two columns. "Children may . . ." provides examples of things that children this age are learning to be, do and know. "Ideas to try with children . . ." offers examples of things families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and other caring adults can do to help children learn and develop in healthy ways. Different families may encourage learning and development in different ways.

These Guidelines are a resource. They are not an exhaustive guide to child development, and are not intended to be an assessment tool, a curriculum or a tool to collect data on children.

# What families already know about their children

## Five questions to reflect on

1. What has your child done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“During the spring, two foster brothers aged 4 and 5 years old came to our center completely nonverbal and with little self-management skills, mostly due to the environment they were removed from. Their only means of communication was screaming, jumping up and down, and waving their arms. Within a few months of working closely with their teachers and being able to interact with peers in a group setting, they were able to successfully communicate their needs to the teaching staff and have made many, many friends. Now they come into the center after school [kindergarten] proud to share their day and sit with staff to do daily homework.”*

Brenda Hayes, Family Support Specialist



**Note:** Child continues the growth and learning from the prior age.

# 1. About me and my family and culture

## ↓ Children may ...

### Family and culture

- Take pride in own family composition and interest in others'. Understand that families are diverse.
- Recognize and respect similarities and differences between self and other people, such as gender, race, special needs, cultures, languages, communities and family structures.

### Self concept

- Describe what he or she likes and is interested in.
- Choose activities to do alone or with others (such as puzzles, painting, etc.).

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Family and culture

- Make sure information about the child's growth, development and social skills is shared between home and school.
- Show a friendly and respectful way of listening and responding to what your child says. Be the model you want the child to be.
- Continue to involve your child in family and cultural traditions, rituals, routines and activities.

### Self concept

- Encourage your child in the things he or she tries, and to try new things.
- Invite your child to share thoughts and feelings about accomplishing a new task.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Self management

- Release emotional tensions in the arms or presence of a caring adult. (By this age, the child may have been discouraged from doing so and find it more difficult than before.) Still is able to cry, laugh, tremble, yawn and/or have non-hurtful tantrums. Is relaxed and cooperative afterward.
- Associate emotions with words and facial expressions.
- Express one or two feelings in role playing life experiences. Adopt a variety of roles in pretend play.
- Anticipate consequences of own behavior. With help, consider possibilities and plan effective approaches to problems.
- Begin to enjoy games where the child has to change behavior in response to changing directions.

### Learning to learn

- Be curious; interested in trying things out.
- Stay with a task for more than five minutes and attempt to solve problems that arise.
- Use imagination to create a variety of ideas.
- Enjoy pretend play (such as using dolls or stuffed animals, or playing “house” or “explorers”).
- Use play as a way to explore and understand life experiences and roles.
- Recognize when making mistakes and fix these errors during a task.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Self management

- Encourage child to express feelings, when appropriate, through words, artwork and expressive play.
- Say what you expect for your child’s behavior. Provide guidance when behavior goes off-track (hitting, breaking things, etc.). Stop the off-track behavior, connect to the child calmly and allow for emotional upset.
- Give your child opportunities to make safe, healthy choices (such as whether to have water or milk at snack time). Show respect for your child’s choices and efforts to solve problems.
- Encourage your child to talk about problems and ways to solve them. Think together about possible actions and consequences of these actions, then help your child choose an effective approach.

### Learning to learn

- Provide extended time to play, away from television.
- Offer interesting objects, toys, games and dolls from different cultures/nations.
- Play question-and-answer games that inspire your child’s curiosity.
- Answer your child’s questions and/or help find answers.
- Teach your child that making mistakes is part of learning.



*“Our 3- to 5-year-old students were eating ‘family style’ and passing a basket of chicken nuggets. Mohammed reached for the basket, but the teacher told him he could not eat those nuggets and instead could have cheese. He cried out, ‘Why?!’ The teacher explained the meal was not for him. He watched, then grabbed a nugget from another child’s plate. Of course this created a scene with the students and a power struggle with the teacher.*

*“After we found out that our Muslim students could not eat any of the meat items on our menu because they were not prepared in a halal/kosher manner, we held a meeting with the teaching staff and families. Then we found a halal/kosher vendor for all our meat items. Now when we serve chicken nuggets, the basket is passed to each child with no difference made for anyone.”*

Angelia K. Maxie, Executive Director,  
Tiny Tots Development Center, Seattle

*“My four-year-old grandnephew surprised me this Christmas. He opened one gift, then could wait while other family members each opened one. He said, ‘We take turns at school,’ and played until it was his turn again. Last year, at 3, he tore into all his packages at once. What a difference!”*

A great aunt



## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Interactions with adults

- Seek emotional support from caregivers.
- Understand that adults may want the child to do something different than he/she wants to do.

#### Interactions with peers

- Play with children the same age and of different ages.
- Initiate an activity with another child.
- Invite other children to join groups or other activities.
- Make and follow plans for games with other children.

#### Social behaviors

- Adjust behavior to different settings (such as using an outdoor voice or an indoor voice), sometimes with reminders.
- Be able to think about behavior, being cooperative and nonhurtful. Able to talk about the best ways to do things.
- Cooperate with other children, share and take turns.
- Connect emotions with facial expressions.
- Care about other children when they are hurt or upset. Describe other children's thoughtful behaviors.
- Listen to what other children want and make plans that take these desires into account.
- Wait for a turn without getting angry or grabbing. May lose interest in the object or activity before getting a turn.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

- Ask for help from another child or an adult to solve a problem.
- Make decisions and solve problems with other children, with adult help.
- Observe that others may have ideas or feelings that differ from the child's own.
- Be able to talk about ways to solve a problem or help another child, and keep in mind the personality and preferences of that child.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Interactions with adults

- Invite elders or guests to the home or classroom to share time and talk with your child. Have the child welcome and make them comfortable.

#### Interactions with peers

- Facilitate play in groups. Modify activities so that all children can join in. Invite older children to read to or play with younger ones.

#### Social behaviors

- Model fair ways to take turns and share.
- Model respect for diversity.
- Model comforting a child who is hurt or upset.
- Model behavior that encourages social and emotional expression.
- Use gestures and social cues to help the child understand the behavior expected (such as washing hands before eating), and use words to label the action.
- Give your child opportunities for dramatic play (let's pretend), to make up stories with other children and act in different roles.
- Encourage planning before playing in these games. (What will you be? What will you do?)

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

- Give life examples, read or tell stories where people/characters share, take turns, cooperate and solve conflicts in a constructive way.
- Model and role play with your child ways to solve conflicts.
- Let your child solve problems when playing with friends, but be nearby to help out if needed.
- During conflicts, encourage your child to talk about what he or she wants and to plan ways to help everyone else get what they want. Encourage thinking of a number of possible solutions before agreeing on one.



*“As a parent of three young children, I have discovered that a large part of the joy of parenting is the ability to value and embrace the differences in each of my children. Watching them learn and grow in different ways, displaying different skills, talents and strengths has been a fascinating and amazing journey.”*

Lisa Favero

## 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

### ↓ Children may ...

#### **Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)**

- Move with purpose from one place to another using the whole body. This might include walking, running, marching, jumping, hopping or climbing. For child in a wheelchair, skills might include steering the chair into different spaces.
- Use both hands to catch. Throw with good aim. Kick an object.
- Show good balance and coordination, such as walking on a wide beam or line.
- Enjoy challenging him- or herself to try new and increasingly difficult activities.

#### **Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)**

- Open and close a blunt scissors with one hand, and cut a straight line.
- Show increasing skill with small materials. Screw and unscrew jar lids, and turn door handles. Use zippers, buttons and snaps. String large beads; fold paper; open and close containers.
- Work puzzles of up to 10 pieces.
- Write some letters or numbers.
- Spend time practicing skills that are difficult. Be aware of what he/she finds difficult and try to do it better.

#### **Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)**

- Delight in playing with materials of different texture (such as sand, water, fabric) and conditions (wet, dry, warm, cold).

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### **Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)**

- Show your child new skills for full body movement.
- Give your child opportunities for in-place movement, such as bending, twisting, stretching and balancing.
- Play games with your child where you mimic each other's motions. Sing songs that identify parts of the body.
- Provide daily physical activity outdoors. Continue exploring natural places outdoors, such as parks.

#### **Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)**

- Give your child things to do with the hands, such as molding play dough or clay, gluing pieces of paper, sticking stickers to paper, tying, buttoning, zipping a zipper, stringing beads, drawing with a crayon, or folding paper for simple origami.
- Have a variety of tools available, such as paint brushes, crayons, markers, pencils, scissors, tape, string, glue, lacing cards, puzzles, boxes with latches, and containers with lids.
- Remind your child that learning new things takes practice. Stay close when your child is trying something hard.

#### **Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)**

- Give your child opportunities to learn through all of the senses (such as smelling flowers, feeling different textures of fabric, hearing an alarm clock, etc.) with eyes blindfolded or closed. Ask the child to describe what he/she experienced.
- Have your child taste and compare different fruits and vegetables.

# 4. Growing up healthy

## ↓ Children may ...

### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Participate easily and know what to do in routine activities (such as meal time, bed time).
- Communicate need to rest, drink and eat.
- Stay awake all day except, for some children, during nap time.
- Dress and undress, with only a little help needed.
- Decide, with a few prompts from adults, when to carry out self-help tasks (such as washing hands).
- Wash and dry hands before eating and after toileting, with some adult help.
- Cooperate while caregiver assists with brushing teeth.
- Cover mouth when coughing.

### Nutrition and health

- Help prepare healthy snacks.
- Eat a variety of nutritious foods and eat independently. Try healthy foods from different cultures.
- Serve self at family-style meals.
- Know what self-care items are used for (such as comb and toothbrush).

### Safety

- Identify trusted adults who can help in dangerous situations.
- Follow safety rules indoors and outdoors.
- Keep a distance from wildlife.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Guide your child in taking care of him- or herself, such as putting on a coat or wiping up spills.
- Show where your child's personal grooming items are.
- Give your child enough time to take care of personal hygiene.
- Make sure your child gets adequate sleep.

### Nutrition and health

- Help your child recognize when he or she needs to rest.
- Engage your child in shopping for healthy food, and in making healthy meals and snacks.
- Talk with your child about food choices related to allergies, religion, culture, family choices and health.
- Take your child for regular dental, health, vision and hearing checkups, including immunizations. (See Child Profile <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/childprofile/default.htm>)
- Limit screen time (television, DVDs, computers, tablets, games) at child care to 30 minutes per week, and at home to two hours per day. Consider following the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation not to have a television in the child's bedroom. (See <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;126/5/1012>)

### Safety

- Discuss clear rules with your child for safety in the city and/or rural areas, such as holding hands in a crowd, wearing a bike helmet, and always using a safety seat when in the car.
- Give life examples and read stories with themes about safety.
- Use dramatic or role play to practice safety. Practice fire, tsunami, flooding and earthquake drills, as appropriate. Explain how to stay safe around water, matches, firearms, etc.
- Talk with your child about the difference between a pet and a wild animal. Provide safety rules for wild animals, and explain that people need to observe at a distance.
- Provide a safe environment.
- Explain what good and bad touching are. Let the child know it is important to tell a trusted adult if another child or adult is using bad touching.

# 5. Communicating (literacy)

Note: Communication skills begin before birth. Language is an important part of cultural identity. Language skills begin in the child's home language(s). Tribal children may be learning their tribal language at the same time as a home language. Bilingual and bicultural families may speak more than one language at home.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Know and use several hundred words in home language. Use new words on own.
- Use words to describe actions (such as “running fast”) and emotions (such as happy, sad, tired and scared).
- Talk in sentences of five or six words.
- Know when it is appropriate to ask questions and whom to ask. Ask questions to get information or clarification.
- Remember and follow directions involving two or three steps, including steps that are not related (such as “Please pick up your toys and put on your shoes”).
- Remember all parts and respond correctly to a request (such as “Bring me the green towel”).
- Tell some details of a recent event in sequence.
- Tell a short make-believe story, with adult help.
- Listen to others and respond in a group discussion for a short period. Remember what was said and gain information through listening.
- State own point of view, and likes and dislikes using words, gestures and/or pictures.
- Join in and make up songs, chants, rhymes and games that play with the sounds of language (such as clapping out the rhythm).
- Sing a song or say a poem from memory.

### Reading

- Know some basic rules of grammar (such as correctly using “me” and “I”).
- Understand that alphabet letters are a special kind of picture and that they have names. Begin to identify individual letters of the alphabet (or characters of the home language) in text.
- Understand which symbols are letters and which are numbers.
- Identify three or more letters with their sound at the beginning of a word (such as “day,” “dog” and “David” all begin with “d”).
- Recognize some signs and symbols in the classroom and community (such as a Stop sign), and use them for information.
- Begin to recite some words in familiar books from memory.
- Know that print has meaning.
- Recognize own name in print.
- Begin to understand the order in which a page is read (for example, English is read from left to right and top to bottom).

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Have a conversation with your child about what the child is doing, listening to and seeing.
- Model respect for the person speaking and for different languages.
- Recognize and explain that some cultures strongly value verbal communication and others place more value on nonverbal communication.
- Use new words in context and explain what they mean.
- When working with a child learning in two languages, use pictures, props and gestures, as needed.
- Play games with your child that require listening and following simple directions that change during the game.
- Do a project with your child that involves following directions in order, such as using a cookbook.
- Use props and role play to encourage your child to participate in group conversations.
- Help your child make up silly songs and chants.
- Teach your child simple words in other languages, such as the words for “hello” and “friend.” Introduce songs, rhymes, chants and finger plays in two or more languages.

### Reading

- Read, or tell stories or give life examples to your child every day. Stop partway through and ask, “What just happened?” and “What do you think will happen next?”
- Tell or read stories from diverse cultures.
- Ask your child to point to a real-world object (cereal box, signs) and point out the letters and/or words.
- Sing word songs with your child, leaving out a word or a letter that you replace with a clap. Play letter games, such as picking a letter and pointing to all the objects that begin with that letter.
- Offer pictures or a picture book and ask your child to use them to tell you a story.
- Read alphabet books and solve alphabet puzzles together.
- Take your child to the library, if available. Help find books about the child's interests (such as dogs, trucks, cooking, etc.).

## ↓ Children may ...

### Reading *continued*

- Tell you what is going to happen next in a story. Make up an ending.
- Identify a variety of printed material (such as books, newspapers, magazines, cereal boxes).
- Use actions to show ideas from stories, signs, pictures, etc.
- Retell more complicated, familiar stories from memory.

### Writing

- Make marks, scribbles or letter-like shapes and identify them as words. Use pretend writing activities during play.
- Use letter-like symbols to make lists, letters and stories or to label pictures.
- Attempt to copy one or more letters of the alphabet.
- Begin to print or copy own name, and identify at least some of the letters.
- Explore writing letters in different languages.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Reading *continued*

- Help your child make picture books using pictures from magazines or photos of your child, family and friends.
- Introduce your child to a variety of reading materials (such as poetry, folk tales, picture books, magazines).
- Ask your child to tell a story, while you write it out to read back later.

### Writing

- Print your child's name on things and help your child try to print it.
- Help your child label his or her drawings.
- Ask your child to draw a story or idea. Then write out the child's description of the drawing to show to him/her.

*“Johnny” was the youngest of five children. He, his mother and siblings were abused by the mother’s boyfriend. When Johnny started coming to our program, he wouldn’t speak or look at our staff, but just sit quietly in a corner with his hands in his pockets. If he did play, it was alone or next to other children, never making eye contact. Johnny’s classroom had two male teachers. After the first year, Johnny would smile at the teachers but only speak a word or two. He still didn’t play with very many children. He would make eye contact but quickly look away. After the second year, Johnny started to smile and hug the teachers daily. He would be excited when he came to class to run and play with a couple of friends he’d made. We believe Johnny has able to restore his trust in men by having the teachers as role models in his life.”*

Tracy Whitley, Lead Teacher/Daycare Supervisor,  
Multicultural Child & Family Hope Center, Tacoma



# 6. Learning about my world

## ↓ Children may ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

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- Ask adults questions to get information (as appropriate in the family's culture).
- Describe likes and interests.
- Apply new information or words to an activity or interaction.
- Build on and adapt to what the child learned before. For example, change the way of stacking blocks after a tower continues to fall.
- Be able to explain what he or she has done and why, including any changes made to his/ her plans.
- Seek to understand cause and effect ("If I do this, why does that happen?").
- Understand the ideas of "same" and "different."
- Recognize objects, places and ideas by symbols (for example, recognize which is the men's room and which is the women's by looking at the stick figure symbols).
- Name more than three colors.
- Group some everyday objects that go together (such as shoe and sock, pencil and paper).
- Predict what comes next in the day when there is a consistent schedule.

### Math

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- Count to 20 and beyond. Count 10 or more objects accurately.
- Give the next number in the sequence 1 through 10.
- Count out 10 items; may use fingers, body parts or other counters, as used in the child's home culture. Count and group things by number.
- Compare groups of up to 10 objects.
- Find the sum when joining two sets of up to five objects.
- Identify by sight how many are in a small group of objects, up to four.
- Use measuring tools in play (such as a ruler, measuring cups, or parts of the body).
- Match and sort simple shapes (circles, squares, triangles).
- Compare size (such as, "I'm as tall as the yellow bookshelf.") Describe objects using size words (big, small, tall, short).
- Compare two objects using comparison words such as smaller, faster and heavier.
- Order three objects by one characteristic, ( such as from smallest to largest).
- Work puzzles with up to 10 pieces.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

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- Use rich vocabulary, describe what you are or the child is doing, seeing, hearing. Mention colors, similarities and differences, etc., in normal conversations.
- Talk with your child about things he or she is learning to do. Be encouraging. Ask your child to tell you how he or she is learning to do something new.
- Show how to do something, then give your child a chance to try it.
- Tell your child when something new is like something he or she already knows how to do.
- Play matching games with your child. Ask the child to find things that are the same and different.
- Play a game with your child to gather and group items that go together, such as shoes and socks, or flowers and vases. Talk about why they go together. Then suggest that your child think of a different way to organize these things.
- Help your child develop problem solving skills. Help your child identify the problem and different possible solutions. Then talk about which solution is the best one. Ask your child to try it and talk about whether it worked. Ask: What else could you try?
- Take time to answer your child's "why" questions. If you don't know the answer, say you don't know and help your child find the answer in a book, from another adult or on the Internet.

### Math

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- Use number names to say the number of an object ("There are two trees").
- Ask your child to count out things to put on the table for a meal or the items in your grocery cart.
- Talk aloud while doing simple math computations (such as counting the number of snacks for the number of children).
- Help your child apply numbers and counting to daily life (such as measuring ingredients for cooking).
- Have your child compare the size of a small animal (such as a bird) with the size of a part of the child's body (fist, arm, etc.).
- Play games that use position and size words (first, last, big, little, top, bottom).
- Have your child compare two small sets of objects and decide whether one group is more, less or the same as the other.
- Involve your child in ways to mark the change from one activity to another (such as clapping, ringing a bell, singing a particular song).
- Use words like "first," "second," and "finally" when talking about everyday activities. This will help your child learn about the sequence of events.

*“One day when I was driving and my 4-year-old granddaughter was with me, she suddenly said, ‘I love you, grandma!’ I replied, ‘And I love you baby, all the way to the sky.’ She replied, ‘I am not a bird, grandma!’ I said, kind of confused, ‘What do you mean you’re not a bird?’ She said, ‘I don’t have a long nose and long arms like a bird.’ ‘Oh,’ I responded, ‘you mean you don’t have a long beak and wings?’ And she said, ‘Ya! I don’t have a long beak and wings, so I’m not a bird to go to the sky!’ ”*

Anna Macias



## ↓ Children may ...

### Math continued

- Create own patterns with a variety of materials. Describe what the pattern is.
- Follow simple directions for position (beside, next to, between, etc.)

### Science

- Ask questions and identify ways to find answers. Try out these activities and think about what to do next to learn more.
- Predict what will happen in science and nature experiences. Consider whether these predictions were right, and explain why or why not.
- Use tools to explore the environment (a magnifying glass, magnets, sifters, etc.).
- Measure sand or water using a variety of containers.
- Use one sense (such as smell) to experience something and make one or two comments to describe this.
- Investigate the properties of things in nature. Begin to understand what various life forms need in order to grow and live.
- Take responsibility in taking care of living things, such as feeding the fish, watering plants, etc.
- Talk about changes in the weather and seasons, using common words, such as rainy and windy.
- Look at where the sun is in the morning, afternoon, evening and night.
- Take walks outside and gather different types of leaves, name colors he/she sees outdoors.
- Participate (with adult direction) in activities to preserve the environment, such as disposing of litter properly, saving paper and cans to be recycled, etc.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Math continued

- Count down the days to an event (such as by crossing out days on a calendar) to develop awareness of the calendar.
- Tell your child what year it is now and what it will be next year, and show how they are written.
- Help your child become familiar with a clock face, and the numbers on a clock. Explain how the numbers relate to times of day (morning, lunchtime, afternoon, etc.).

### Science

- Ask your child to use his/her senses to make observations outdoors and share those observations.
- Share simple weather predictions with your child (today will be hot, cold, sunny, rainy, etc.).
- Have your child use a magnifying glass to look at leaves, his/her fingers, etc.
- Engage your child in cooking, planting seeds and other activities that show cause and effect. Ask your child to describe what is happening and talk about why.
- Have your child conduct simple experiments (such as which object will sink in a pail of water and which will float).
- Fill cups with water to see how many are needed to fill a larger container, such as a pitcher.
- Have your child match pictures of trees, plants, rocks, flowers, fallen logs, etc., with actual items in nature.
- Give your child opportunities through exploration, looking at pictures, etc., to learn that there are many kinds of plants and animals.
- Help your child gather things in nature (such as leaves, rocks, etc.) and encourage sorting of these objects. Help your child understand rules of collecting natural objects so that removing them does not impact the environment or other living things in a negative way.
- Show your child how to sort items for recycling and explain how this supports a healthy environment and community. Give your child the chance to do other things that promote a sense of contributing, such as planting seeds, or turning off lights when leaving a room.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Social Studies

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- Describe family members and understand simple relationships (such as, “Marika is my sister.”)
- Adopt the roles of different family members during dramatic play. Plan what each role does and then enact it.
- Draw own family, as the child understands it.
- Ask questions about similarities and differences in other people (such as language, hair style, clothing).
- Talk about the past and the future, such as what the child did this morning and what his or her family will do this weekend.
- Recognize some people in the community by their jobs (such as grocery store clerk, bus driver, doctor).
- Enjoy taking the roles of different jobs in pretend play.
- Talk about what the child wants to be when he or she grows up.
- Play store or restaurant, with empty food containers, receipts, etc.
- Match objects to their normal locations (for example, a stove in the kitchen, a bed in the bedroom, a tree in the forest).
- Recognize where he or she is when traveling in familiar areas, most of the time.
- Recognize that roads have signs or a name, and houses and apartments usually have numbers to help identify their locations.

### Arts

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- Show an increasing ability to use art materials safely and with purpose.
- Understand that different art forms (such as dance, music or painting) can be used to tell a story.
- Express self through art and music. Take pride in showing others own creations (“Look at my picture.”)
- Use a variety of materials to create representations of people and things (such as drawing a person showing two to four body parts).
- Show creativity and imagination.
- Hum or move to the rhythm of recorded music.
- Ask to sing a particular song.
- Remember the words to a familiar song.
- Enjoy participating in a variety of music activities, such as listening, singing, finger plays, chants, playing musical instruments, games and performances.
- Enjoy learning songs and dances from other cultures.
- Watch other children dance; try to mimic the movements.
- Express feelings through movement and dancing in various musical tempos and styles.
- Perform simple elements of drama (such as audience, actors).
- Participate in dramatic play activities (such as acting out familiar activities, stories or events from own life).

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Social Studies

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- Read stories about different kinds of families and talk about the child’s own family.
- As you go through a day, talk with your child about all the people you see doing jobs that help others.
- Use group time (such as family dinner or circle time) to discuss the idea of community and how we depend on each other.
- Encourage your child to include many community roles in games. Ask your child to talk before playing about what each role will do and why,
- Communicate with your child about other cultures in the community. When possible, go to community festivals, community centers, cultural exchanges, etc.
- Model treating others with respect (such as including everyone in a game, calling others by their correct name, etc.).
- Give life examples, read or tell stories to your child about the place where you live.

### Arts

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- Give your child items that build imagination, such as dress-up clothes, cooking utensils, blocks, etc..
- Take your child to see murals or other community artwork. Explore together the patterns, shapes and colors.
- Provide creative art opportunities with a variety of materials.
- Tell stories and ask your child to draw them.
- Dance with your child. Take turns copying each other’s moves. Try doing this in front of a mirror.
- Give opportunities for the child to experience songs, language and dance from the family’s traditions and other cultures.
- Involve your child in a variety of musical activities (such as singing, dancing, using rhythm instruments) from own and other cultures. Introduce your child to cultural and popular dances.
- Help your child use the body to tell a story or express an idea.
- Help your child act out emotions and characters (such as a happy puppy, an upset cook).
- Take your child to see performances of dance and music at local schools or in the community, and to see people creating arts and crafts, if possible.

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See also Parent Help 123 on child development and school readiness, <http://www.parenthelp123.org/families/child-development>, and more in the Information Resources section.

# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

As a parent, you know your child best.

Every child grows and develops at his or her own pace. It is important to talk with your child's healthcare provider at every visit about the milestones your child has reached and what to expect next. A developmental screening will help you know if your child is developing similarly with other children the same age. It is important to tell your child's healthcare provider if you notice any of these signs of possible developmental delay. Please make sure to discuss your concerns if :

## By age 5, your child:

- Doesn't show a wide range of emotions
- Shows extreme behavior (unusually fearful, aggressive, shy or sad)
- Is unusually withdrawn and not active
- Is easily distracted, has trouble focusing on one activity for more than 5 minutes
- Doesn't respond to people, or responds only superficially
- Can't tell what's real and what's make-believe
- Doesn't play a variety of games and activities
- Can't give first and last name
- Doesn't draw pictures
- Doesn't talk about daily activities or experiences
- Doesn't use plurals or past tense properly
- Can't brush teeth, wash and dry hands, or get undressed without help
- Loses skills he or she once had

## For more information:

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Talk to your child's health care provider about your concerns. You can also call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588. This hotline can tell you about free developmental screening and connect you to your local school district. Your local school district can tell you if your child might be eligible to have an evaluation to determine the need for special education (for ages 3 to 5 years).

The Family Health Hotline can also provide information about immunizations, state-sponsored health insurance and other resources.

You can also find information from the state Department of Early Learning at <http://www.del.wa.gov/development/Default.aspx> or [http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart\\_English.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart_English.pdf).

Parent Help 123 offers information on child development and school readiness: <http://www.parenthelp123.org/families/child-development>

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at 1-800-CDC-INFO or at [www.cdc.gov/concerned](http://www.cdc.gov/concerned) also offers information. Or see CDC's *Milestone Moments* brochure: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents\\_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/parents_pdfs/MilestoneMomentsEng508.pdf)

**For children who may be eligible for services offered by the local school district (Part B):** Family involvement has a positive impact on educational outcomes for all students. To support family involvement in special education, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction provides web visitors with user-friendly information and resources on various special education topics. Visit the website at <http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/Families/default.aspx> to find information and guidance for families on “What To Do If You Think Your Child Needs Special Education.” Also see the “Differences in Development” section for Age 5 and Kindergarten in these Guidelines for the steps involved in a special education evaluation.

## **ALIGNMENT OF LEARNING, BIRTH – 3<sup>rd</sup> GRADE**

Young children learn best when new learning builds on what they already know and it relates to their lives. As children grow and learn from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, they build essential skills and perceptions of themselves as learners. These skills form the foundation for their success in school and in life. For this reason, there is a growing effort in Washington to align learning from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The goal is to make sure that learning at each level builds on what came before and prepares children to meet new challenges.

**What parents, caregivers and teachers can do:** School districts and early learning programs and coalitions across the state are exploring ways to align learning from birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Parents, caregivers and teachers can learn more by connecting with their local early learning coalitions, or checking with the local school district. Most importantly, parents, caregivers and teachers can build relationships among the adults supporting children’s growth and development. Relationships pave the way for alignment.

Parents can also talk with their child’s caregiver or preschool teacher about connecting with the local elementary school, and with the school about connecting with local early learning programs. Together, schools and early learning programs can align their strategies into a continuum of learning.

Every day, parents can support their children’s ongoing learning by reading to their child.

To learn about local early learning coalitions in Washington, see <http://www.thrivebyfivewa.org/earlylearningcoalitions.html>. For information on early learning and schools, see <http://www.k12.wa.us/EarlyLearning/default.aspx>.

## WASHINGTON KINDERGARTEN INVENTORY OF DEVELOPING SKILLS (WaKIDS)

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Children need to be ready for school, but schools and teachers also need to be ready for the children who come to their classrooms. The Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills, or WaKIDS, is a process that addresses both components of “school readiness” to support children’s smooth transition into the K–12 system.

WaKIDS includes three parts:

- Family connection – The family and kindergarten teacher meet and share information about the child who’ll be entering kindergarten.
- Whole child assessment – The kindergarten teacher observes children during school and uses a checklist to get an idea of where the child is in four areas of development: social/emotional; literacy; cognitive; and physical.
- Collaboration – Child care providers, preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers meet and share information about the children entering kindergarten, and about what and how they teach.

WaKIDS was implemented statewide on a voluntary basis in state-funded full-day kindergarten classrooms in school-year 2011-12. Participants included approximately 12,000 children and 796 teachers in state-funded full-day kindergarten schools and partner schools that provided their own funding.

Beginning in the 2012-13 school year, all state-funded full-day kindergarten schools will use the WaKIDS process. By 2014-15 the process is scheduled to be expanded to include all incoming kindergarteners.

For more information, see <http://www.k12.wa.us/WaKIDS/>

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Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# Age 5 and Kindergarten



*“In our family, culture and traditions are very important to us. In order for us to not lose that valuable piece of our heritage, we try to teach our children things that we learned from our parents or grandparents. Now, my 4-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter have learned to make homemade flour tortillas from my mom. It’s such a wonderful way for them to learn and appreciate our ethnic traditions and spend time with the people who love them the most.”* Maggie Mendoza

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND HERE

First there are some questions for families to reflect on. They offer a springboard for families, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers to talk together about fostering each child's growth and learning.

Next under each area of development, the Guidelines are in two columns. "Children may . . ." provides examples of things that children this age are learning to be, do and know. "Ideas to try with children . . ." offers examples of things families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and other caring adults can do to help children learn and develop in healthy ways. Different families may encourage learning and development in different ways.

The Washington State K-12 Learning Standards for all subjects, including the recently adopted Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, continue to be the core for instruction that children receive in their classrooms. The Guidelines were created to be in harmony with these state learning standards, but do not try to repeat their content. For more information on the Washington State Learning Standards, see [http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR\\_GLE.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR_GLE.aspx)

These Guidelines are a resource. They are not an exhaustive guide to child development, and are not intended to be an assessment tool, a curriculum or a tool to collect data on children.

## STARTING KINDERGARTEN

Going to kindergarten can be a major change for children and their families. Most are excited to be taking this step. But there are fears and worries, too. The school setting often means a change from home, or from child care or preschool with a small group of children to a classroom with more children all the same age. Also, child care and preschool have fewer children per adult than schools have. Children may need to travel farther to get to school, and on a different schedule.

**What parents, caregivers and teachers can do:** Families and early learning providers can help children meet this new adventure confidently by talking with them about what may be the same and different in kindergarten. They can arrange to take children on a visit to school, and perhaps to see the classroom they will be going into and meet the teachers. Some child care providers and preschools partner with local schools to visit several times a year. Some school districts have a summer-time kindergarten transition program that helps children learn about their school and practice classroom routines before they enter in the fall. Once school starts, parents can become involved with the school, meet the teachers, and consider volunteering in the classroom.

For more information on school readiness, see <http://www.del.wa.gov/development/kindergarten/Default.aspx>

## What families already know about their children

### Five questions to reflect on

1. What has your child done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“Strengthening early learning programs has been a main focus of mine since I was elected in 2008. I want all children to be successful in school, and that begins by being ready for school. For that to happen, teachers, parents and early childhood educators need to collaborate so that the transition into school is easier. And once children are in school, we also need to have systems in place to support children in all areas of their education.*

*“Those two areas are where the revised guidelines come in. They give everyone a common language they’ll need to talk about all children from all backgrounds. They provide activities and information that help with the development of the whole child, well into grade school. Most important, they were written based on the input from hundreds of people, from parents to child experts to teachers and day-care providers.”*

Randy Dorn, Superintendent of Public Instruction



**Note:** Child continues the growth and learning from the prior age.

## 1. About me and my family and culture

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Family and culture

- Take pride in and know own ethnic/cultural heritage. Recognize different ethnic/cultural groups.
- Identify family customs and traditions.
- Help younger children do things they can't yet do by themselves.
- Enjoy joining friends in music and activities from their cultural traditions.

#### Self concept

- Identify and express own preferences, thoughts and feelings, if appropriate for the child's culture.
- Be aware of gender.
- Express what he/she likes and doesn't like.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Family and culture

- Share with your child about your family and cultural traditions, rituals, routines and activities. Explain why they are important. Make your child part of them.
- Enjoy activities with other families. Arrange for families to share a project, cooking activity, family tradition or story in the classroom.
- Teach your child to help with the care of younger children.
- Meet with the family/caregiver/teacher individually to become acquainted.

#### Self concept

- Identify and help explore your child's questions and interests. Find related library books or information from online resources.



*“The summer before kindergarten my 5 year old daughter felt left out, because everyone else in the family could read. She asked, ‘When am I going to know how to read?’ as though it was something that would just happen to her! She is someone who likes to master skills quickly, so she didn’t like—or believe—my answer: ‘First you learn the alphabet, then all the letter sounds.’ Once she was persuaded that this was the only way, she quickly learned her letters. Throughout the summer we checked out ‘learn to read’ phonics books from our library. By the time kindergarten started, she was a proud reader.”*

Parent

## ↓ Children may ...

### Self management

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- Identify emotions and use words to describe them.
- Express a range of emotions appropriately, such as excitement, happiness, sadness and fear.
- Resist impulses and choose appropriate behavior with little adult direction.
- Make and follow, some of the time, multi-step plans for completing a task.
- Be able to wait—for a turn, a treat, etc.
- Adapt to new environments by behaving and displaying emotions in ways expected.
- Change actions to meet what is expected in different settings and conditions, such as taking shoes off at home, leaving them on at school, and putting boots on in the rain.
- Apply familiar accepted behaviors in new but similar situations, such as using a quiet voice indoors.
- Begin to recognize how own actions affect others.

### Learning to learn

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- Be eager to learn about and talk about a range of topics, ideas and tasks.
- Be curious and seek new information.
- Be flexible and inventive in approaching tasks and activities.
- Stay focused on an activity, even when facing challenges.
- Return to activities after interruptions, including after several days.
- Find more than one way to complete a task.
- Make plans and follow through.
- Develop ways to remember information.
- Join with other children on interests.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Self management

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- Communicate about emotions and how to express them in a constructive way.
- Help your child understand his or her emotions and the emotions of others.
- Help your child learn how to relax and calm self. Let the child know it is okay sometimes to be upset.

### Learning to learn

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- Answer your child’s questions and/or help find answers.
- Encourage your child to try different things. Give your child time to figure things out.
- Acknowledge your child for making an effort to stick with a task.
- Play memory games with your child.
- Create opportunities for your child to initiate activities and make choices.
- Limit screen time – television, DVDs computers, tablets and games.

## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Interactions with peers and others

- Able to express self in new settings.
- Able to adapt to a larger group environment.
- Accept new people who are trusted adults (e.g., teacher, bus driver).
- Make connections with other children in different settings.
- Share suggestions for what to do in play.
- Develop relationships with other children and with adults.

#### Social behavior

- Show understanding of others' feelings.
- Listen to viewpoints of others.
- Able to allow for own personal space ("She's in my chair") and respect others' space.
- Help, share, take turns and cooperate in a group.
- Include children who are a different gender or ethnic background from self, speak a different language, or have special needs.
- Accept the consequences of own actions.
- Behave in accepted ways in different settings.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

- Make decisions and solve problems with other children.
- Resolve some conflicts with peers without adult help.
- Listen to others' ideas and wants, share own ideas and wants, consider what is fair, and make suggestions for different ways to resolve conflicts.
- Understand the concept that sometimes you are the leader and sometimes you are the follower.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Interactions with peers and others

- Arrange opportunities for your child to play with other children. Modify activities to include all children.
- Let your child choose what to play with other children (within limits).
- Encourage your child to listen to others.

#### Social behavior

- Let your child know that different environments have different rules for relationships and behavior.
- Discuss the concept of sharing— food, toys, supplies, playground equipment. Encourage taking turns.
- Encourage positive behavior toward animals and showing respect for them.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

- Let your child work out problems on own with some guidance.
- Give your child the opportunity to be part of a group working together cooperatively.
- Help your child make appropriate and respectful choices when conflicts arise. Have your child describe the problem, identify possible solutions and choose one that seems the best to try.

Children age 5 may help, share, take turns and cooperate in a group.



# 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

## ↓ Children may ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Show continuous growth in movement skills, including jumping, galloping and skipping.
- Play safely in group and individual movement settings.
- Recognize basics about how the human body works, such as the five senses and main body parts.
- Understand how to respect others when playing active games, follow rules.
- Enjoy activities that require attention to form, such as yoga, karate, sports, gymnastics or dance.

### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Help prepare meals and with tasks such as stirring and kneading.
- Use the hands and fingers in a variety of ways, such as stringing beads, holding pencils properly, connecting blocks and working puzzles.
- Roll clay or dough into “snakes.”
- Be interested in working to do things “right” and will practice skills for short periods of time.

### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Use all the senses to observe and explore.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Give your child the opportunity for physical activity every day.
- Give your child the opportunity to play outdoors safely and to explore the environment.
- Encourage your child to try a variety of activities, such as jumping by taking off and landing on both feet, galloping, skipping, bending, twisting, stretching, pushing and pulling, balancing (such as by walking on a line), and rolling, tossing and bouncing a ball. Practice hand-eye coordination by catching and throwing a handkerchief or balloon. Adapt activities as needed.
- Dance to music, play follow-the-leader and go on make believe walks (through the snow, jungle or other adventurous places).

### Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)

- Keep paper, markers or crayons around the house for your child to write letters or words, or draw a picture about the day.
- Set up games for your child to use the fingers, such as moving cotton balls from one container to another, or picking up small items and putting them in a jar.
- Remind your child that learning to do new things well takes practice. Stay close to your child when he or she is trying something difficult.

### Using the senses (sensorimotor skills)

- Name the five senses and their functions with your child.



*“I am always asking my grandson what he wants to be when he grows up. Driving to Toppenish one day we saw a train, so he got all excited and said, ‘Grandma, I want to be a Ninjaneer!’ We said, ‘No, an Engineer.’ He said, ‘No, I want to be a Ninja and work with trains too.’ ”*

Dalia Diaz Villarreal

Model and encourage healthy eating habits that include fruits and vegetables.



## 4. Growing up healthy

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Continue to use practices to be safe and healthy, with minimal adult help.
- Understand the importance of taking care of self and growing strong.

#### Nutrition and health

- Make good decisions about health habits.
- Help prepare meals and snacks.

#### Safety

- Be able to explain the reasons for safety rules.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Daily living skills (personal health and hygiene)

- Try to keep as consistent routine for your child as you can.
- Make sure your child gets enough sleep.
- Support your child in brushing teeth at least twice daily.
- Have your child practice effective hand washing.
- Encourage your child to sneeze or cough in his/her sleeve or elbow.
- Read stories and talk about good health habits (e.g., going to bed on time helps children be ready to learn at school).

#### Nutrition and health

- Model and encourage healthy eating habits that include fruits and vegetables.
- Encourage your child to drink water throughout the day.
- Take your child for regular dental, health, vision and hearing checkups, including immunizations.
- Limit screen time (television, DVDs, computers, tablets, games). Consider following the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation not to have a television in the child's bedroom. (See <http://aappolicy.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/pediatrics;126/5/1012>)

#### Safety

- Educate your child about safety in the community, including locating safe walking and biking routes.
- Talk with your child about unsafe environments, such as choking hazards, poisons, electrical outlets and air pollutants, such as smoke and mold.
- Make sure your child uses sunscreen outdoors and wears a bike helmet.
- Talk with your child about what unsafe touching is, and how to say “no” and tell a trusted adult.

# 5. Communicating (literacy)

Note: Communication skills begin before birth. Language is an important part of cultural identity. Language skills begin in the child's home language(s). Tribal children may be learning their tribal language at the same time as a home language. Bilingual and bicultural families may speak more than one language at home.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Listen attentively and observe carefully.
- Understand, remember and follow multistep directions.
- Share own ideas.
- Speak clearly in complete sentences.
- Retell familiar stories.
- Take part in classroom conversations and follow rules for discussions (e.g., learning to listen to others and taking turns when speaking).
- Speak clearly to express thoughts, feelings and ideas, including descriptions of familiar people, places, things and events.
- Ask and answer questions about key details in stories or other information read or presented aloud.
- Understand and use question words (e.g., who, what, where, when, why, how) in discussions.
- Take turns speaking and listening in conversations. Remember and respond to what is said.
- Have a hard time, when excited, waiting for a turn in a conversation or staying with someone else's topic.
- Increase vocabulary.

### Reading

- Understand and apply concepts of print (such as in English, reading from left to right and top to bottom).
- Show awareness of language sounds (e.g., rhyming, hearing beginning and ending sounds of words).
- Associate the letters with their sounds.
- Understand that signs and labels convey information.
- Recognize some names and words in context.
- Begin to read own writing.
- Memorize or participate in reading poems and familiar books.
- Make personal connections with books and stories.
- Show interest in a variety of books.
- Retell familiar stories using beginning, middle and end.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Recognize value of communication skills, in the home language and in English.
- Play word games, sing songs, dance and make rhymes together.
- Have conversations with your child throughout the day. Listen to and respond to what your child says, and expect your child to do the same with you.
- Give your child opportunities as you are walking through the neighborhood, riding on a bus or in a car, or visiting familiar places to talk about how the child feels and what he/she sees.
- Share examples from your life, or tell or read stories, then ask questions.
- Ask your child to share thoughts, ideas, wishes and feelings.
- Encourage positive communication with friends and family (e.g., if you say "please" when asking for help, people may be more willing to help).

### Reading

- Read with your child every day as often as possible. Ask questions and talk with your child about what you've read.
- Encourage all attempts at reading.
- Provide reading that reflects your child's life and interests.
- Help your child understand the difference between what is real and what is make-believe, when reading.
- Ask your child to participate in daily activities that involve reading (e.g., cooking, reading a calendar, etc.).
- Ask your child to identify and spell his/her name.
- Visit a library together, if available.
- Help your child practice saying the alphabet in English and in home language.
- Help your child practice identifying letters in magazines or newspapers.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Writing

- Use illustrations to tell stories or convey meaning.
- Understand that we can communicate ideas and thoughts with symbols.
- Form letters, and show increasing knowledge of letters and sounds.
- Name upper- and lower-case letters, matching those letters with their sounds and printing them.
- Copy signs, labels, names and words. Talk about what they mean.
- Write simple sentences. Write lists, cards, letters, etc.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Writing

- Provide lots of opportunities to draw and write pictures, letters and words.
- Encourage all attempts at writing.
- Ask for your child's help in daily activities that involve writing (e.g., making a grocery lists, writing a note, etc.)

# 6. Learning about my world

## ↓ Children may ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

- Learn best through active exploration of concrete materials (blocks, paint, etc.). Make plans for this exploration. Talk about what he/she has learned from the activity and would like to do next.
- Understand that things are not always what they appear to be (for example, a sponge may look like a rock).
- Explore different environments inside and outside.

### Math

- Count to 100.
- Count up to 20 objects to understand how many objects there are.
- Recognize by sight and name the number of items in a group, up to five.
- Compare two groups of objects to decide which is more or less, or if they are equal.
- Remember and write numbers to 20.
- Add and subtract numbers up to 10 using objects or drawings.
- Name shapes and recognize shapes in the environment.
- Sort and classify objects by more than one factor (such as shape and color, or size and shape, etc.).
- Correctly use position words (such as beside, inside, under, etc.) to describe objects.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

- Provide opportunities for your child to explore a variety of objects in different environments inside and outside (such as rocks, sand, shells, moss, tree bark, nuts, etc.). Ask your child to tell you what he/she is doing and why. Ask what he/she is learning.
- Have a variety of items for your child to use and explore.
- Encourage your child to try new activities.

### Math

- Help your child rote count to 100.
- Look for math problems in real life. Some kindergarten examples might include:
  - Play "Write the next number." You write a number, and your child writes the next number.
  - Ask your child questions that require comparing numbers of items. (Your child might use matching or counting to find the answer, or answer in his/her home language.)
  - Ask your child to solve simple addition and subtraction problems in the environment, such as, "You have two shoes and I have two shoes. How many shoes do we have together?"
  - Practice counting cars of a certain color as you drive.
  - Practice adding and/or subtracting using food items, such as raisins.
  - Create a bag of shapes using household items, and practice naming and sorting them. Find common shapes in the environment.
  - Play a game with your child to match the months to the season of the year.
- Compare two objects and ask your child which object is larger, shorter, heavier, etc.
- Play card games and board games with your child.

## ↓ Children may ...

### Science

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- Make observations and ask questions. Identify ways to find answers. Try out these activities and think about what to do next to learn more.
- Recognize landmarks in the local environment (lakes, rivers, rock formations, etc.).
- Name many of the basic needs of animals and people (habitat).
- Identify what different animals eat. Begin to understand that some animals eat other animals, and some eat plants.
- Begin to understand how the things people do may change the environment. Recognize that the child's own actions have an effect on the environment for the better (such as watering plants) or worse (such as stomping on plants).
- Begin to tell the difference between materials that are natural and those made by humans.

### Social Studies

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- Learn concepts of fairness and respect for the rights and opinions of others.
- Know the people who carry out the rules at school and in the community (principal, teacher, crossing guards, bus drivers, fire fighters, etc.).
- Enjoy comparing past and present events, such as holidays.

Note: Many social studies skills are included above under: *About me and my family and culture*; and *Building relationships*.

### Arts

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- Learn ways to create artwork.
- Share ideas and explain own artwork to others. Talk about what was done and why.
- Explore the voice, body and instruments.
- Be attracted to different kinds of music.
- Start to develop singing and playing skills and techniques.
- Develop skills for movement.
- Join in creative dramatics, storytelling, puppetry and pretend play.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Science

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- Help your child name different parts of a whole object, plant or animal.
- Help your child measure.
- Encourage your child to count, measure or classify (e.g., Is that box big enough for a pet to stand up in? What types of food can it eat? How much food should I give it?).
- Observe patterns in nature, such as shapes of clouds, phases of the moon, and leaves changing color.
- Compare, with your child, how different animals obtain food and water (e.g., a squirrel hunts for nuts; many birds and insects find nectar in flowers, which contain food and water; people may grow food in gardens or shop for food in stores).
- Encourage your child to observe and describe nature.

### Social Studies

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- Help your child understand where he/she was born and where he/she lives now.
- Encourage your child to share how he or she feels about classroom and playground behavior guidelines, and if the guidelines feel fair.

### Arts

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- Have your child express him/herself by using various materials (such as chalk, crayons, finger paints, pencils, paints, pens, markers, fabric, shells, dried pasta, digital tools, glue, tape, string).
- Sing folk, nursery rhymes and children's songs with your child in English or home language.
- Encourage your child to move in response to music.
- Encourage your child to use finger and hand puppets to tell stories, share and create.
- Take your child to cultural and arts opportunities in your community.

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See also Parent Help 123 on child development and school readiness, <http://www.parenthelp123.org/families/child-development>, and more in the Information Resources section.

# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

Every child grows and develops at his or her own rate. However, there may be some signs in your child's development that you'll want to check with a doctor, nurse, health department or your child's teacher.

If you believe your child may be highly capable, talk with your school district about the resources that may be available.

If you have concerns about your child's learning or development, you may wish to request a special education evaluation. Support services may be available through your local school district. Call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800 322-2588 to get connected to your local school district.

## Steps for Requesting a Special Education Evaluation

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- Talk with your child's teacher first. The teacher or another staff member may be able to help you through the request process.
- A request for an evaluation to determine if your child qualifies to receive support services **must be made in writing**. It is a good idea to direct your request both to a district staff member at the building level (school psychologist or special education teacher) and to your district's special education director at the administrative level. Keep a copy of your written request for your files.
- The school district will determine if an evaluation is needed, based on information you provide, existing classroom assessments, and observations by teachers or related service providers (speech therapist or occupational therapist). There is no cost for the evaluation.
- The evaluation will be conducted by qualified professionals such as a school psychologist, speech therapist or special education teacher. The evaluation should include all area(s) of suspected disability. You will be asked to share information about your child's development, health and medical history.
- Following the evaluation, a meeting with you will be scheduled to discuss the evaluation results and determine if your child is eligible for free special education services.

## For more information:

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Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# First Grade

## Approximately 6 Years



*“To name only one thing I love most about my job as a 1st grade teacher would be impossible. Every day my students put me in awe. I hear little voices saying, ‘Miss Merryman, I’m a reader! I read a book to my mom!’ Or, ‘Miss Merryman, we forgot to read our learning target.’ My kids are never shy to tell me when I have forgotten something. There is no other job in the world that allows you to learn from children, and I think that’s amazing!”*

Ashley Merryman, 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Teacher, Harriet Thompson Elementary, Grandview School District

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND HERE

First there are some questions for families to reflect on. They offer a springboard for families, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers to talk together about fostering each child's growth and learning.

Next under each area of development, the Guidelines are in two columns. "Children may . . ." provides examples of things that children this age are learning to be, do and know. "Ideas to try with children . . ." offers examples of things families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and other caring adults can do to help children learn and develop in healthy ways. Different families may encourage learning and development in different ways.

The Washington State K-12 Learning Standards for all subjects, including the recently adopted Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, continue to be the core for instruction that children receive in their classrooms. The Guidelines were created to be in harmony with these state learning standards, but do not try to repeat their content. For more information on the Washington State Learning Standards, see [http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR\\_GLE.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR_GLE.aspx)

These Guidelines are a resource. They are not an exhaustive guide to child development, and are not intended to be an assessment tool, a curriculum or a tool to collect data on children.

# What families already know about their children

## Five questions to reflect on

1. What has your child done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“What I have learned as both an early childhood educator and a parent of elementary-age children is that there isn’t a box large enough to fit all of the diverse ways that children learn. While textbooks and teachers can provide a basic overview of a ‘typical’ child, the realm of normalcy and acceptability is vast. Relish the differences before raising too much concern about how a child ‘should’ be.”*

Sylvia LeRahl, Director of Education and Disabilities,  
Denise Louie Education Center, Seattle



**Note:** Child continues the growth and learning from the prior age.

# 1. About me and my family and culture

## ↓ Children may ...

### Family and culture

- Tell friends or adults about a family or cultural tradition.
- Bond with family and friends who share their time and talents with the child.

### Self management

- Calm down own strong emotions and avoid acting on impulse.
- Understand how the body and face show different emotions.
- Describe ways to cope with and manage stress. For example, if a friend doesn’t want to play any more (stress), invite someone else to play with you (cope).

### Learning to learn

- Focus attention on a task/topic and ignore distractions.
- Start to be able to stay focused on tasks assigned by others.
- Listen with attention.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Family and culture

- Include your child in family and cultural traditions, rituals, routines and activities.
- Involve your child in preparing meals, household chores, gardening, shopping and other daily tasks.
- Build community with other families through activities such as coffees, celebrations, field trips, etc.

### Self management

- Teach your child calming techniques: such as counting to 10, taking a walk or singing a favorite song. Remind your child of these skills when he or she is upset.

### Learning to learn

- Together with your child, explore Web sites or books with pictures of animals, foods or things that interest the child. Talk about what you see.
- Turn off television and video games while doing homework or chores to help the child stay focused.
- Have your child practice retelling/repeating instructions.

## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### **Interactions with peers and others**

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- Think about how his/her behavior impacts other people.
- Has increased awareness of interpersonal behavior and communication.
- Expand skills to connect and interact with peers and others.
- Play more cooperatively with others.

#### **Problem solving, conflict resolution**

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- Able to say what someone else's actions were and how they affected the child or others.
- Think about the best approach to a problem before reacting.
- Work together with peers and brainstorm to come up with solutions to their own problems.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### **Interactions with peers and others**

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- Attend community activities where the child has an opportunity to interact with others.

#### **Problem solving, conflict resolution**

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- Help your child develop his/her problem solving skills. Practice ways to resolve conflicts. Talk with your child about how it worked.

## 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

### ↓ Children may ...

#### **Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)**

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- Refine skills for moving from one place to another (locomotor skills).
- Develop skills for moving in place (non-locomotor skills), such as bending and twisting.
- Gain strength, endurance and flexibility.
- Notice and correct own mistakes in activities that require attention to form, such as yoga, karate, sports or gymnastics.

#### **Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)**

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- Improve skills for moving the hands and fingers (manipulative skills) to do a task such as write a note, tie shoes, etc.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### **Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)**

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- Give your child the opportunity to play outdoors safely and be physically active every day.
- Play games with your child that involve running, such as tag, or bending, twisting and stretching, such as using your bodies to form letters of the alphabet.
- Let your child roll, toss and bounce a ball, and use various body parts (hand, head, knee, etc.) to strike a balloon.
- Encourage your child to try new physical activities (e.g., school or community sports). Help him/her develop new skills.
- Encourage limited television time and engaging in physical activity during commercials.

#### **Using the small muscles (fine motor skills)**

---

- Involve your child in doing things that require controlled use of the hands and fingers, such as measuring ingredients for baking, or cutting out snowflakes or pieces of paper to make a collage.

# 4. Growing up healthy

## ↓ Children may ...

### Nutrition and health

- Begin to understand how own decisions can impact health and wellness now and in the future.
- Show interest in learning about body systems and a variety of health topics.

### Safety

- Understand that some game rules are for safety.
- Recognize risky situations and explain how to avoid them.
- Recognize what an unwanted touch is.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Nutrition and health

- Make sure your child gets adequate sleep.
- Take your child for regular dental, vision and health checkups, including immunizations.
- Take your child grocery shopping, and show healthy food choices (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat dairy, lean proteins).
- Talk with your child about how healthy food choices can help you stay healthy.
- Teach your child appropriate food portion size. Ask about nutrition information at your local health department or see [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).
- Encourage your child to identify signs of a cold or flu (e.g., chills, running nose and coughing), and whom to tell.

### Safety

- Talk about risky situations and how to avoid them (e.g., “If you find a needle, don’t touch it. Tell a trusted adult.”).
- Explain the importance of following game and safety rules. Talk about safety for the activities your child enjoys, such as keeping a safe space when using a jump rope.
- Talk about not giving out personal information, such as over the phone or Internet.
- Tell your child that an unwanted touch is when someone touches parts of the body that are normally covered by a bathing suit or asking your child to touch their body parts normally covered by a bathing suit. Repeat discussion about how to say “no” and to tell a trusted adult.
- Explain steps in case of an emergency (e.g., duck and cover are rules for an earthquake). Help your child learn and recite his/her full name, address and phone number.

First graders may understand that some game rules are for safety.



# 5. Communicating (literacy)

## ↓ Children may ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Develop listening and observation skills.
- Follow directions, retell stories, and explain visual information.
- Start a conversation about a topic of interest. Respond to the comments of others, ask and answer questions. Notice whether others understand.
- Describe characters, settings and major events in a story, using details.
- Describe people, places, things and events using complete sentences.
- Use new words.

### Reading

- Understand that written letters make sounds that create words.
- Match letters and sounds (phonics), using clues from pictures and sounding out words to figure out unfamiliar words. Begin to self-correct.
- Expand reading vocabulary.
- Learn and share information from reading.
- Choose and read a variety of books.
- Identify text features: title, author, table of contents, glossary.
- Identify and explain story elements—character, setting, events.
- Read and follow simple written directions with guidance.

### Writing

- Develop an idea or piece of information beyond one sentence, adding some description or explanation.
- Spell many simple words accurately.
- Start using simple correct letter formation, spacing and punctuation.
- Write about ideas and feelings, using complete sentences.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Read a story together then ask your child what happened first, next, and last.
- Find opportunities to talk with and listen to your child about a variety of topics, such as:
  - Favorite books, television shows and movies. Ask if the child were writing the story/show/movie, how he or she would make it different.
  - Places the child sees. Ask what the child likes or doesn't like about them.
- Encourage your child in group conversations to take turns speaking, listening and responding to others.

### Reading

- Encourage your child to read books to you, both fiction and nonfiction. Help sound out difficult words.
- Read aloud to your child, choosing books that are above his/her own reading level.
- Talk about words that your child may not understand and ways to find out their meaning.
- Ask your child to think of different ways to describe the same action.
- Ask questions that require finding information from what is being read. Model how to find answers in the book.

### Writing

- Pick a “word of the day.” Have your child write the word and look for other things beginning with the same letter.
- Ask your child to write his/her complete name and address.
- If your child has access to a computer, encourage him/her to use it for writing stories.
- Encourage your child to write stories. Ask your child talk through a story idea before writing. Ask your child to read the story out loud. Then ask questions about it.
- Encourage noticing details/characteristics (“How many things can you tell me about your favorite toy?”).
- Write notes to your child and encourage him/her to write back.



*“As a teacher, I’ve embraced a whole-child approach to learning, with that learning embedded in social studies, arts, and sciences. These Guidelines will help me share strategies with teachers, parents, and providers. The work is done! I don’t have to reinvent the wheel!”*

Kristi Thurston, Director Student Support Services, Cheney

*“My son had a positive experience entering school. The teachers and administrators at his elementary school do a wonderful job to ensure that all children and families feel welcome, including a home visit from the kindergarten teacher. My son was fortunate to have had two years of preschool, which prepared him to be successful in kindergarten and contributed to his positive performance as a 1st grader. When a solid foundation is established early on and the transition into school is handled with care, children are set up for success in life.”*

Mamie Barboza, Parent of first grader at  
Adams Elementary, Yakima School District



## 6. Learning about my world

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Knowledge (cognition)

- Enjoy learning through discovery.
- Ask many questions.

#### Math

- Count, read and write to 120.
- Solve addition and subtraction word problems, between 1 and 20. (“Five apples were on the table. I ate some apples. Then there were three apples. How many apples did I eat?”)
- Add and subtract numbers up to 20.
- Know and talk about different ways to solve math problems, and when you might use each one.
- Understand place value in two-digit numbers.
- Measure lengths of objects by using a shorter object.
- Make composite shapes by joining shapes together.
- Divide circles and rectangles into halves or fourths to develop understanding of part/whole.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Knowledge (cognition)

- Take your child on “field trips” and talk about what you saw and learned.

#### Math

- Practice with your child counting to 120 from any number. Ask your child the number before or after a given number.
- Have your child write and read numbers to 120 and compare any two of these numbers to say which is greater or less than the other.
- Help your child learn addition and subtraction facts up to 10.
- Look for “word problems” in real life. Some 1st grade examples might include:
  - If you open a new carton of a dozen eggs, and you use four eggs to cook dinner, close the carton and ask your child how many eggs are left.
  - While putting away toys into bins, count the number of toys in two bins and ask your child how many more are in one bin compared to the other.
  - Using a pencil or a piece of spaghetti, have child measure length of bed, refrigerator, television, etc.
  - Whenever you eat pizza, talk about how to cut it so everyone gets an equal amount.
- Play number games with your child where you might say:
  - “I’m thinking of a number that is 20 more than 34. What is the number?”
  - “I am thinking of a number that makes 11 when added to 8. What is the number?”

## ↓ Children may ...

### Science

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- Develop skills with sorting, describing, comparing and recording observations.
- Find patterns in his/her observations and start to think about what they mean.
- Identify which animals belong in which habitats, and match characteristics of animals with their physical environment.
- Begin making independent choices to create a healthy environment and community, such as disposing of waste properly, recycling and/or thinking of ways to reuse items.

### Social Studies

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- Understand how families in the community are the same and different.
- Talk about families and the ways families live and work together in a neighborhood.
- Begin to use globes and maps.

### Arts

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- Create and respond to arts.
- Become aware of skills needed to dance around the room.
- Choose to join in creative dramatics, storytelling or puppetry.
- Create spontaneous drama, music and dance, with other children or alone.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Science

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- Explore a question with your child by making observations or trying things out.
- Explore with your child in an area near home or school, and describe the different plants and animals that live there. Help your child identify plants and animals.
- Encourage your child to sketch or make a representation of life cycles (birds, plants, moths, etc.).
- Plan time to observe the night sky together.

### Social Studies

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- Talk together about different kinds of families you know—big, small, extended, single, etc.
- Talk about how families around the world celebrate holidays.
- Talk about where the child's family lives and where ancestors came from.
- Explore a globe or map together.
- Talk about how the climate and physical features of an area determine the type of home in which people live.
- Talk about different kinds of recreation people enjoy.

### Arts

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- Provide options for your child to explore by using a variety of materials (e.g., chalk, crayons, finger paints, pencils, paints, pens, markers, etc.) and to draw lines (in the air, on paper, on clay, etc.).
- Expose your child to various musical styles.
- Dance with your child, using various body parts, rhythms and speeds.
- Encourage your child to share his/her ideas and feelings after viewing/experiencing a dance.

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For more information, see the Information Resources section.

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# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

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If you believe your child may be highly capable, talk with your school district about the resources that may be available.

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Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# Second Grade

## Approximately 7 Years



*“Grade 2 marks a real turning point for children. A new confidence in what they know and can do has taken over. Self-expectation is high—lots of careful drawing and much erasing going on to get the writing just so. At the same time, they exhibit a deep sensitivity and love to help a struggling classmate. At this grade level, we can really see the creation of well-rounded young learners get underway.”*

Anne Banks, former 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Teacher and current Program Supervisor for The Arts, OSPI

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# What families already know about their children

## Five questions to reflect on

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2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“The importance of Early Childhood Education can’t be overstated. Simply put – it’s EVERYTHING! It’s the foundation for everything a child will do both academically and socially. It can mean the difference between a productive career and a lifetime of struggling. It is the foundation for freedom for a child to become anything they want to be. Establishing those critical building blocks early gives a child a much more solid foundation to stand on as they grow and develop. That’s what a quality Early Childhood Education can mean to a child— simply EVERYTHING!”*

Paul A. Stoot, Sr., Executive Director, Greater Trinity Academy, Everett



**Note:** Child continues the growth and learning from the prior age.

# 1. About me and my family and culture

## ↓ Children may ...

### Family and culture

- Share a family or cultural tradition, dance, song or practice with classmates, friends and family.
- Ask questions about own family history and culture.

### Self management

- Be confident in own decisions.
- Understand and explain the impact of different emotions on others. For example, being happy might help others feel happy, while being grumpy might make others grumpy.

### Learning to learn

- Remember and apply directions.
- Stay focused on a task for longer periods of time.
- Make and follow multi-step plans for completing a task.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Family and culture

- Include your child in family and cultural traditions and activities. Help your child learn about the customs of your community, faith tradition and/or culture.
- Promote understanding of different cultures and backgrounds, especially those represented in the child’s classroom and community.

### Self management

- Ask your child what distracts him/her from focusing on a task. Share ways to ignore distractions.

### Learning to learn

- Have your child tell you directions for a task he or she is about to do.

## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Interactions with peers and others

- Participate in group activities.
- Invite others to join a group.
- Listen to others and begin to understand their perspectives.
- Take these into account when identifying possible solutions.

#### Social behavior

- Show consideration and respect for others.
- Show compassion for others.
- Speak up about an injustice the child sees and take action with peers.

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

- Work in a group cooperatively.
- Show constructive ways to negotiate a solution to conflicts.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Interactions with peers and others

- Help your child identify group activities that interest him/her, and find out how to join.

#### Social behavior

- Talk about the importance of showing consideration and respect for others, and ways different cultures show respect.
- Include your child in volunteer or community service activities where appropriate.
- Visit a sick relative or friend and bring a gift (e.g., a drawing child has done).

#### Problem solving, conflict resolution

- Share with your child how your family resolves conflict.
- Talk about how it feels when conflict is and is not resolved.
- Talk about problems that come up and identify together a few different solutions to them.

## 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Be skillful in moving from one place to another (locomotor).
- Show skills in catching and tossing.
- Enjoy improving skills at activities that require attention to form, such as sports, yoga, karate or gymnastics.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills)

- Practice walking, jogging and kicking skills together. For example, using your feet, pass a soccer ball with your child.
- Have fun catching and tossing different objects with your child, such as scarves or bean bags.
- Encourage your child to try new physical activities and improve his/her skills.
- Dance together to rhythmic music.
- Ask your child to invent a new dance to a favorite song.

# 4. Growing up healthy

## ↓ Children may ...

### Nutrition and health

- Understand health-related fitness concepts and the benefits of physical activity.
- Begin to understand the consequences of health behaviors and choices, such as ways to prevent illness.

### Safety

- Begin to understand basic first aid (such as washing a scrape with soap and water).
- Learn about the harmful effects of drugs.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Nutrition and health

- Make outdoor exploration part of your child's routine. Explain the benefits of spending time outdoors.
- Take your child for regular dental, vision and health checkups, including immunizations.
- Talk about the importance of eating a variety of healthy foods and how this can reduce health risks.
- Talk about ways to prevent the spread of colds and flu.
- Share with your child that advertising aims to convince you to buy something, even if it's not a healthy choice (e.g., soft drinks).

### Safety

- Talk with your child about how drugs can be helpful, and if misused can be harmful.
- Talk about harmful effects of caffeine, alcohol and tobacco. Explain the effects of caffeine and what products contain it (e.g., chocolate, energy drinks, coffee and tea).
- Talk with your child about not touching their friend's cuts or open wounds.
- Discuss with your child the difference between good and bad touching, and how to say "no" and tell a trusted adult about bad touching.

Make outdoor exploration part of your child's routine. Explain the benefits of spending time outdoors.





*“I came across a quote the other day:  
‘The best gift students can receive is a year  
with a teacher who truly believes in them.’  
I’m a believer!”*

Dianna Miller, 2nd Grade Teacher, Harriet Thompson  
Elementary, Grandview School District

## 5. Communicating (literacy)

### ↓ Children may ...

#### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Able to listen carefully and focus on the speaker.
- Show understanding of information heard.
- Take part in conversations by linking his or her comments to the remarks of others, and asking and answering questions to gather additional information or deepen understanding of the topic.
- Show respect for others in choice of language and in nonverbal behavior.
- Retell key information or ideas from media or books read aloud.

#### Reading

- Read with more ease and expression.
- Choose and read a variety of materials at the appropriate level, with guidance.
- Read silently for increasingly longer periods of time.
- Follow written directions.
- Show understanding of reading by joining in discussions. Talk about the characters, events and ideas in the reading.
- Determine a lesson or moral from stories, fables and folktales.
- Use text features (e.g., captions, bold print, indexes) to locate key facts or information efficiently.
- Determine the meaning of the new word formed when a known prefix or suffix is added to a known word (happy/unhappy; pain/painful/painless).

#### Writing

- Start writing with more detail and organization. Often include more than one event or description.
- Experiment writing in a variety of forms (e.g., stories, poems, letters, nonfiction). Talk about the choice of form.
- Notice mistakes or missing words while rereading own writing.
- Write an opinion about a book he or she has read, using details.
- Write stories that include a short sequence of events and include a clear beginning, middle and end.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### Speaking and listening (language development)

- Talk with your child about the details of his/her day.
- Explore with your child the ways people communicate without words.

#### Reading

- Set aside a time each day for reading. Model reading by getting a book and reading too.
- Share reading aloud by asking your child to read every other paragraph. Encourage your child to read to younger children.
- Ask a librarian to suggest books about people or places that are important to your child or family that you can read together. Encourage your child to explain what he or she has just read.
- Ask your child questions about reading (such as who, what, where, when, why and how). Model how to find answers in the text.
- Talk with your child about the intended message in a story or movie. (“What is the author trying to tell us?”)
- Encourage your child to identify a question and gather information to answer it. Share facts after reading nonfiction.

#### Writing

- Ask your child to write a thank-you note, email or letter to a family member or friend.
- Encourage your child to write stories. Help brainstorm ideas.
- Listen to your child read his/her story aloud.
- Leave notes for your child (e.g., in his/her lunch box, school bag, around the house, etc.) and ask your child to leave notes for you.
- Ask your child about the decisions he or she made when writing. Why use that particular word? Which ideas make sense to come first?

# 6. Learning about my world

## ↓ Children may ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

- Discover more about how things work.
- Show more interest in having his/her finished work look the way he/she wants it to look.

### Math

- Solve challenging addition and subtraction word (story) problems.
- Know the addition and subtraction facts to 20.
- Accurately add and subtract with sums to 20.
- Understand place value in three-digit numbers.
- Be able to add and subtract two- and three-digit numbers.
- Describe thinking when solving a math problem and discuss why he or she solved the problem in a particular way.
- Measure and estimate length.
- Begin to understand how math is used in everyday life.
- Tell time to the nearest five minutes on different types of clocks.

### Science

- Be more observant of the environment, including observing shadows and changes in the position of the sun.
- Begin to make predictions based on observation.
- Plan ways to test predictions, put these plans into action and evaluate the results.
- Identify the characteristics of things in the natural world.
- Use tools with more skill.
- Attempt to design solutions to a common problem.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

- Have a special place to display your child's work.
- Do word and math puzzles, and play board games together.

### Math

- Practice math concepts with the child:
  - Count by fives, tens and hundreds, and multiples of hundreds and tens.
  - Compare numbers up to 1000 and explain why one number is larger or smaller than another.
- Look for "word problems" in real life. Some 2nd grade examples might include:
  - When saving for a purchase, compare the cost of the item to the amount of money you have; then ask your child to determine how much more money he or she needs to buy the item.
  - When measuring your child's height, ask how many inches he or she has grown since the very first measurement.
  - Ask questions about time.
- Divide cookies or fruit into halves, quarters and thirds, and ask how many parts make a whole.
- Help your child read a calendar.

### Science

- Give your child time to make observations outdoors, and talk about what he/she sees.
- With your child, use simple instruments (such as rulers and thermometers) to observe and make measurements (e.g., use a ruler to see how much snow fell).
- Give your child opportunities to explore the characteristics of common objects using magnets, water, temperature change, etc.
- Talk with your child about how humans can create a healthy environment.
- Continue to provide opportunities for your child to understand simple life cycles of plants and animals.
- Help your child learn the directions of north, south, east and west.
- Encourage your child to build something out of common materials (e.g., a cardboard ramp for toy cars).

Second graders may identify the characteristics of things in the natural world.





# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

Every child grows and develops at his or her own rate. However, there may be some signs in your child's development that you'll want to check with a doctor, nurse, health department or your child's teacher.

If you believe your child may be highly capable, talk with your school district about the resources that may be available.

If you have concerns about your child's learning or development, you may wish to request a special education evaluation. Support services may be available through your local school district. Call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800 322-2588 to get connected to your local school district.

## Steps for Requesting a Special Education Evaluation

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- Talk with your child's teacher first. The teacher or another staff member may be able to help you through the request process.
- A request for an evaluation to determine if your child qualifies to receive support services **must be made in writing**. It is a good idea to direct your request both to a district staff member at the building level (school psychologist or special education teacher) and to your district's special education director at the administrative level. Keep a copy of your written request for your files.
- The school district will determine if an evaluation is needed, based on information you provide, existing classroom assessments, and observations by teachers or related service providers (speech therapist or occupational therapist). There is no cost for the evaluation.
- The evaluation will be conducted by qualified professionals such as a school psychologist, speech therapist or special education teacher. The evaluation should include all area(s) of suspected disability. You will be asked to share information about your child's development, health and medical history.
- Following the evaluation, a meeting will be scheduled with you to discuss the evaluation results and determine if your child is eligible for free special education services.

## For more information:

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Visit the special education webpage of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction website at <http://www.k12.wa.us/SpecialEd/Families/default.aspx>. This website contains information for families on a wide range of special education topics.

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For information on children with special health care needs, see the state Department of Health's web page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/cshcnhome2.htm>



Early Learning and Development Guidelines

# Third Grade

## Approximately 8 Years



*"I can really see how my son is putting skills that he learned at earlier ages all together in 3rd Grade. He knows who he is as a person and is able to set goals for himself. He is able to play team sports and negotiate problems with friends. He is reading chapter books, learning how the government works, and doing fractions. Wow! Growth and development at this age is so amazing."*

Maryanne Barnes, Executive Director, Birth to Three Developmental Center  
and proud mother of a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader

## WHAT YOU'LL FIND HERE

First there are some questions for families to reflect on. They offer a springboard for families, caregivers, child care professionals and teachers to talk together about fostering each child's growth and learning.

Next under each area of development, the Guidelines are in two columns. "Children may . . ." provides examples of things that children this age are learning to be, do and know. "Ideas to try with children . . ." offers examples of things families, caregivers, child care professionals, teachers and other caring adults can do to help children learn and develop in healthy ways. Different families may encourage learning and development in different ways.

The Washington State K-12 Learning Standards for all subjects, including the recently adopted Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, continue to be the core for instruction that children receive in their classrooms. The Guidelines were created to be in harmony with these state learning standards, but do not try to repeat their content. For more information on the Washington State Learning Standards, see [http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR\\_GLE.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR_GLE.aspx)

These Guidelines are a resource. They are not an exhaustive guide to child development, and are not intended to be an assessment tool, a curriculum or a tool to collect data on children.

# What families already know about their children

## Five questions to reflect on

1. What has your child done that surprised you with a new ability, skill or understanding?
2. How does your child go about trying something new?
3. What does your child really enjoy doing?
4. How does your child respond to new situations or challenges?
5. Who among your family and friends does your child enjoy spending time with? What are some of the things that person does with or teaches your child?

*“Your children believe they are who you make them believe they are . . . can be . . . and will be. As their parent, teacher, educational leader you must also BELIEVE in them. We serve as role models for all of the children we may encounter in our lives. There is no greater reward than hearing a past student or your child say: ‘. . . and I came to be because you believed in me.’”*

Lucy Prieto, District Administrator for Migrant & Bilingual Programs,  
Grandview School District



**Note:** Child continues the growth and learning from the prior age.

# 1. About me and my family and culture

## ↓ Children may ...

### Family and culture

- Write a story about himself/herself in the context of the child's family, culture and environment.

### Self management

- Know and use strategies to deal with different emotions, such as using self-control when angry.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Family and culture

- Include your child in family and cultural traditions and activities, and in community celebrations.
- Explore a variety of community events with your child, listen to music from many cultures, or look at an online virtual tour of a museum.

### Self concept

- Talk about what your child feels he or she does well and what he or she would like to do better. Talk about ways to develop new skills.

### Self management

- Help your child develop ways to cope with strong emotions (e.g., journaling, reading, talking or playing). Remind him or her of these strategies when strong emotions arise.
- Show support and provide guidance as your child works through a problem situation and explores possible solutions.
- Share with your child ways to practice healthy habits (such as building strong friendships).

## 2. Building relationships

### ↓ Children may ...

#### **Interactions with peers and others**

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- Work cooperatively with peers in small and large group activities. Understand there are differences in skill and ability among peers.
- Understand that there are different points of view among peers and others.
- Work independently and in a group.
- Have a better understanding of others' feelings.

#### **Social behavior**

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- Understand respectful ways to communicate with others and respect personal space.
- Help self and others make responsible decisions.
- Be willing to stand up for others.

#### **Problem solving, conflict resolution**

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- Understand and use basic steps for resolving conflict.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

#### **Interactions with peers and others**

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- Give child opportunities to practice working alone on a task, with someone else or with a group.

#### **Social behavior**

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- Share examples of how friends can help each other make responsible decisions (e.g., encourage a friend not to cheat on homework).

#### **Problem solving, conflict resolution**

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- Talk about using respectful communication (e.g., use appropriate words and respect others' space).
- Role-play positive ways to resolve conflict.



*“The thing I enjoy most in working with kids is providing them with a challenge and helping them identify strategies for reaching that challenge. Then, of course, I love seeing them reach those challenges and feel so capable.”*

Dr. Greg Borgerding, Principal, Glacier Middle School,  
White River School District

# 3. Touching, seeing, hearing and moving around

## ↓ Children may ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills) and small muscles (fine motor skills)

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- Show good form in basic movement (locomotor skills) and in skills with the hands (manipulative skills), even when participating in fast-moving games.
- Begin to learn game strategies, rules and etiquette.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Using the large muscles (gross motor skills) and small muscles (fine motor skills)

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- Play a modified game of soccer with your child to practice walking, running, bending and kicking to punt the ball.
- Explain the rules of sport games, strategies of offense and defense, and etiquette while participating in games.
- Help your child develop and expand skills in physical activities.
- Role model good practices for using equipment (such as a bike or jump rope).

# 4. Growing up healthy

## ↓ Children may ...

### Nutrition and health

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- Brush teeth at least twice daily and floss once a day.
- Understand how health habits impact growth and development.
- Take responsibility for making healthy life choices.

### Safety

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- Know and use ways to stay safe from strangers.
- Know appropriate responses to harassment, bullying, intimidation and abuse.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Nutrition and health

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- Share information about the importance of keeping active. For example, see the activities suggested for Let's Move, [www.letsmove.gov](http://www.letsmove.gov).
- Take your child for regular dental, vision and health checkups, including immunizations.
- Encourage your child to choose water over soda.
- Allow your child to be the chef to create healthy snacks from fruits and vegetables (e.g., smoothies, fruit leathers and vegetable "art").
- Go food shopping together, and encourage your child to read food labels about calories and nutrients. Let your child select healthy choices for meals.

### Safety

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- Explain the importance of using a secure password to protect the privacy of information online.
- Discuss with your child the difference between good and bad touching, and how to say "no" and tell a trusted adult about bad touching.



*“Third grade is an important milestone in every child’s school career. Children transition from learning to read to reading to learn. They master basic math facts and concepts that they will soon use to solve complex mathematical problems. Peer relationships become increasingly more important and children desire more independence. So much of what we do in the early years of a child’s life is designed to ensure that students are readers, writers and mathematicians at third grade and have the confidence to take on the world.”*

Stacey Drake, Director of Early Learning,  
Yakima School District

## 5. Communicating (literacy)

### ↓ Children may . . .

#### **Speaking and listening (language development)**

- Use listening skills to interpret information heard.
- Want to have more in-depth or extended conversations and seek clarification when needed.

#### **Reading**

- Use nonfiction texts and reference resources to locate information.
- Increase vocabulary by reading and discovering the meanings of new words.
- Recognize the difference between fact and opinion.
- Follow multi-step written directions independently.
- Compare two books on the same topic.
- Read stories and poems aloud, without pausing to figure out what each word means.
- Distinguish literal and nonliteral meanings, such as of the phrases “something’s fishy” and “cold shoulder.”
- Understand how to read a variety of documents (such as directions, phone book, menu, etc.).

#### **Writing**

- Write longer stories. Organize writing around a central idea.
- Put ideas in a time and place. Develop characters through details and dialogue.
- Start to consider suggestions from others about own writing.
- Be more interested in spelling correctly and using dictionaries and other tools.

### ↓ Ideas to try with children . . .

#### **Speaking and listening (language development)**

- Start a family vocabulary box or jar. Have everyone write down new words, add them to the box and use the words in conversation. Talk about why you chose to use a particular word.
- Engage your child in conversations on a variety of topics. Ask for more information to clarify or extend your child’s point. Encourage your child to listen and ask similar questions.

#### **Reading**

- Encourage reading as a part of your child’s daily routine. Set aside quiet time, with no distractions.
- Ask your child about an author’s point of view and how it might be the same as or different from the child’s point of view.
- Encourage your child to tell you about the characteristics of characters in a story.
- Encourage use of new vocabulary.
- Help your child research something he/she is interested in.

#### **Writing**

- Encourage your child to write stories and add more details.
- Encourage your child write about events or activities he or she has enjoyed.

# 6. Learning about my world

## ↓ Children may ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

- Work at an activity until it is complete.
- Choose to conduct research to find out more about something of interest.

### Math

- Build skills to multiply and divide up to  $10 \times 10$  accurately.
- Solve word (story) problems using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.
- Begin to multiply numbers with more than one digit (e.g., multiplying  $9 \times 80$ ).
- Develop an understanding fractions (e.g.  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{1}{4}$ , etc.).
- Determine the perimeter and area of rectangles.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Knowledge (cognition)

- Play games involving memory with your child.
- Listen to your child's ideas and thoughts.
- Work on a project with your child. Plan it together. As you go, talk about how the project is going and what needs to be changed. Be sure to complete the project.

### Math

- Practice multiplication and division facts from 1 to 100 with your child.
- Provide opportunities for the child to work with fractional parts of household objects including:
  - Measuring amounts for cooking.
  - Comparing halves of two different items (e.g. half an apple and half a pizza) and asking which is more and why.
  - Comparing the size of different fractions of the same item (e.g.,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of an apple and a  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an apple).
- Encourage your child to talk about why he or she solved a problem in a particular way and if there were any other ways it could have been done.
- Point out examples of perimeter in the house (e.g., frame of windows or pictures), and measure and calculate some together.
- Have child determine how long events are by giving starting and finishing times.

*“Young kids are fascinated by hands-on activities, the kind of direct experiences that make them observe, talk about what they see, and sort and organize. But what we have them do and think about must be real—that’s how they really connect to something they learn.”*

Diane Adams, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher, Michael T. Simmons Elementary, Tumwater School District



## ↓ Children may ...

### Science

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- Start to understand systems (e.g., solar system, digestive system). Identify individual parts and how they work together.
- Start to understand how ecosystems can change quickly (a storm) or slowly (a pond becoming a meadow).
- Understand how people are part of the environment and how he/she can help create a healthy environment.

### Social Studies

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- Show interest in learning about the different people living in his/her community and state.
- Look at issues and events from more than one perspective.

### Arts

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- Explain own artwork to others.
- Show an interest in developing musical skills.
- Create and perform movement, showing balance through concentration and muscle control.
- Show interest in developing skills in visual arts, dance, music and/or drama.

## ↓ Ideas to try with children ...

### Science

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- Help your child compare different plants and animals by their characteristics.
- Have fun with shadows, noting how they change with the time of day.
- Help your child measure and record changes in weather (e.g., inches of rain using a cup, depth of snow using a ruler, and temperature using a thermometer).
- Ask your child to observe the natural world, and to write down and/or draw what he/she observes.

### Social Studies

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- Talk with your child about the benefits of diversity for a community, including the increased range of viewpoints, ideas, customs and choices available.
- Pick a region with your child and find out about its language, food, customs, religion, stories, music and art.
- Look for information with your child about the history and contributions American Indians, people from Mexico, Canada or other countries made in your community in science, art, food, music, sports or other areas that interest your child.

### Arts

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- Provide opportunities to explore different art forms.
- Sing together in unison and in harmony.
- Dance with your child, trying different kinds of movement, tempos and styles.

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For more information, see the Information Resources section.

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# DIFFERENCES IN DEVELOPMENT

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For information on children with special health care needs, see the state Department of Health's web page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/cshcnhome2.htm>



# Abbreviations

- ASK:** Answers for Special Kids
- CDC:** Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- CSHEL:** Coalition for Safety and Health in Early Learning
- DEL:** Washington State Department of Early Learning
- DVD:** digital video disk
- ECEAP:** Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program
- ELL:** English language learners
- ESEA:** Elementary and Secondary Education Act
- ESIT:** Early Support for Infants and Toddlers
- FRC:** Family Resources Coordinator
- IDEA:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- IFSP:** Individualized Family Service Plan
- LEP:** limited English proficient
- NAEYC:** National Association for the Education of Young Children
- OSPI:** Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- PAVE:** Partnerships for Action Voices for Empowerment
- PTA:** Parent Teachers Association
- WaKIDS:** Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills
- WIN:** Washington Information Network

# Glossary

**Caregiver:** In these Guidelines, “caregiver” includes anyone who takes care of a child on a regular basis who is not the parent or in a parental role. This may include child care providers, nannies, school-age program professionals, family members, friends and neighbors, and may be paid or unpaid.

**Cognition:** The act or process of knowing, including awareness, judgment, logic and reasoning. In some work on early learning, the area of cognition also includes mathematics, science, social studies, community and culture, and creative arts. In these Guidelines, these areas are listed separately, along with cognition, under the heading of Learning About My World.

**Culture:** The unique collection of beliefs, practices, traditions, values, world views and histories that characterize a group of people. Culture is expressed in patterns of language, behavior, customs, attitudes and practices. Members of a group absorb cultural knowledge by observing their elders and participating in activities of the group. Individuals and families may self-identify as part of a particular culture but may not follow all the practices and beliefs of that culture.

**Development:** The process in which a child grows in such areas as social, emotional, cognitive, speech, physical growth and motor skills.

**Developmental screening:** A brief, standardized and validated tool used to determine a child’s level of development and growth, and to identify possible delays in development. Screening includes questions to see how the child learns, speaks, behaves and moves.

**Dramatic play:** Engaging in pretend play or acting out a scene.

**Dual language learners:** Children who are learning two or more languages at the same time. This term includes children who learn two or more languages from birth, and children who are still mastering their home language when they are introduced to and start learning a second language. This term

includes several other terms: bilingual, English language learners (ELL), limited English proficient (LEP), and tribal language learners.

**Early intervention:** Programs or services designed to meet the developmental needs of infants and toddlers (birth to age 3) with disabilities and/or developmental delays, and their families, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part C.

**Empathy:** The capacity to experience the same emotion that someone else is experiencing.

**English language learners:** Children whose home language is other than English who are learning to become proficient in English. This instruction may take place in a variety of settings, including Sheltered English, bilingual or dual language.

**Executive function:** The skills that help us remember and work with information, manage our impulses, plan, and respond appropriately to new and changing situations.

**Family:** In these Guidelines, “family” includes children’s parents and siblings, *and* all other relatives (grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.).

**Fine motor skills:** The skill and ability to use the smaller muscles in the arms, hands and fingers. Examples include cutting with scissors, writing, painting, buttoning, molding clay, stirring, stacking blocks, using tools, using a pinching motion, etc.

**Gross motor skills:** The skill and ability in moving and controlling large muscles to move the entire body or large portions the body. Examples include rolling over, walking, running, jumping and throwing a ball.

**Home language:** The language a child acquires first in life or identifies with as a member of an ethnic group. It is sometimes called the first, native or primary language of the child.

**Literacy:** In the Guidelines, the ability to read and understand written or printed materials and symbols, and to write, communicate and comprehend. These Guidelines also use “literacy” to refer to skills and behaviors that lead toward being able to read and write, such as awareness of print and under-

standing that it has meaning, matching rhyming words, turning book pages one at a time, and recognizing signs and symbols and their meanings.

**Locomotor skills:** The skill and ability to move from one place to another, such as in walking or dancing. Includes the ability to learn from movement itself.

**Non-locomotor skills:** The skill and ability to move while staying in one place, such as bending and twisting. Includes the ability to learn from movement itself.

**Parent:** In these Guidelines, “parent” includes anyone in a parental role with a child: mother, father, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents and other relatives who are responsible for raising a child, and guardians.

**Sensorimotor skills:** The ability to use the senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch) alone or in combination to guide motions. For example, an important sensorimotor skill is eye-hand coordination.

**Special education:** Instruction, at no cost to the parents, that is specially designed to meet the unique needs of a student eligible because of disabilities, delays or other special needs. It includes instruction conducted in the classroom, in the home, in hospitals and institutions, and in other settings, along with instruction in physical education.

**Teacher:** In these Guidelines, “teacher” includes anyone paid to teach children, whether in a child care center, child care home, preschool, kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classroom, after-school setting, or special education setting.

**Trusted adult:** A caring, attentive parent or caregiver who has a constant eye out for a child’s welfare. This person is someone a child should feel comfortable telling anything to, especially inappropriate behavior from another child or adult.

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- Washington State K-12 Social Studies Learning Standards, <http://www.k12.wa.us/SocialStudies/EALRs-GLEs.aspx>
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# Information Resources

## CHILD HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

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### Birth to Six Growth and Development Chart

This chart offers a quick, organized way of helping to recognize possible problem areas in a child's vision, hearing, and development. It can help parents, caregivers and teachers recognize areas that deserve a second look by a professional who can do further screening and evaluation. See [http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart\\_English.pdf](http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/esit/docs/PrescreenChart_English.pdf)

### CHILD Profile

The "Watch & Help Me Grow" brochures show what children are learning at different ages from birth to 5 years, and ways adults can support that learning. The brochures are part of CHILD Profile mailings sent periodically to every family with a child under age 6 years who was born in Washington. The mailings also include information on health topics and immunizations. To get on the mailing list or download the brochures, see <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/childprofile/>, or call the Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.

Child Profile also offers a **Childhood Health Record** (<http://here.doh.wa.gov/materials/child-health-record>) and a **Lifetime Immunization Record** (<http://here.doh.wa.gov/materials/lifetime-immunization-record>) to help parents keep track of their child's health.

### Family Health Hotline, 1-800-322-2588

Provides a toll-free phone line to help families learn about child development and what to do if they have concerns about their child. The staff can connect families with their local early intervention program. Also see the web site of the Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT) program, <http://www.del.wa.gov/development/esit/Default.aspx>

### Healthy Children (American Academy of Pediatrics)

Web site with information for parents and caregivers. Sections on Ages and Stages, Healthy Living, Safety & Prevention, Family Life, Health Issues. See <http://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx>

### Learn the Signs. Act Early.

Web site and publications of the national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Help parents follow their child's development and learn signs that a parent may want a health care provider to review. See <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html> or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.

### Special Health Care Needs Program

Support is available for children with special health care needs and their families. Call the Answers for Special Kids (ASK) Line, a toll-free information service (1-800-322-2588 or 1-800-883-6388/TTY) that is a part of the Family Health Hotline. See the Washington State Health Department at <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/mch/cshcnhome2.htm> or Parent Help 123 at <http://www.parenthelp123.org/families/children-with-special-needs> Resources also are available for children with autism. See <http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/autism/default.htm>

### Department of Early Learning

The department's web site offers information for parents and families on child development, child care, school readiness, and a variety of services in Washington. See <http://www.del.wa.gov/parents-family/>

### Department of Health

Offers information about child health, nutrition, well-being and immunizations.

See <http://www.doh.wa.gov/>

### Department of Social and Health Services

Offers information on child support, health insurance and child safety.

See <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/children.shtml>

### Let's Move, and Choose My Plate

Provides information for parents, schools and communities on physical activity and nutrition for children and families.

See <http://www.letsmove.gov/eat-healthy>

For more on healthy nutrition, see **Choose My Plate** <http://www.choosemyplate.gov> and Public Health – Seattle & King County's **Healthy Eating for Children** page, <http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/nutrition/kids.aspx>

### Love Talk Play

An information program from Thrive by Five Washington for parents of children birth to age 3. Offers easy-to-use tips on three key things all parents can and need to be doing with their children every day: love, talk and play.

See <http://www.lovetalkplay.org/index.html>

### Office of Education Ombudsman

Resolves complaints, disputes and problems between families and elementary and secondary public schools in all areas that affect student learning. Offers information for parents about getting involved in children's learning and in the schools.

See <http://www.governor.wa.gov/oeo/>

### Parent Help 1 2 3

An online service of WithinReach, provides information on healthy pregnancy, parenting, child development, children with special health care needs, immunizations and family health. The web site also helps families apply for state-sponsored health insurance and food stamps. It includes a "resource finder" to search for community services by city or zip code. See <http://www.parenthelp123.org/>

### Parent Trust for Washington's Children, and Family Helpline: 1-800-932-HOPE (4673)

Connects parents to free and low-cost classes, workshops and coaching. See <http://www.parenttrust.org/>

### Parents' Guide to School Success

Guides by grade, kindergarten through high school, produced by the National Parent Teachers Association. Keyed to the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics, the guides include what children should be learning, related activities parents can do at home with their children, and ways for parents to build stronger relationships with their child's teacher. See <http://www.pta.org/4446.htm>

### Partnerships for Action Voices for Empowerment (PAVE)

Provides information, training and support for individuals with disabilities, parents and professionals. Offers workshops, materials, and information about local services and support groups.

See <http://www.wapave.org/>

### Speech and Language Development

The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association offers information for families about typical speech and hearing development, and learning two languages. See <http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/>

### Strengthening Families Washington

Offers resources and support for parents, caregivers and others who work with children to help them ensure that children receive the best support in life.

Works to engage parents, build social networks and promote parent leadership to help create a culture of mutual support and weave a strong web of protective factors around the children and families in their care. See <http://www.ccf.wa.gov/sfece/home.htm>

### **WithinReach**

Toll-free hotlines give families access to health and food resources. Specialists can help families access services in any language using interpreter services. Bilingual specialists are available to help Spanish speaking families. (Also see Parent Help 1 2 3, above.) See <http://withinreachwa.org/>

- Family Health Hotline 1-800-322-2588
- Apple Health for Kids Hotline 1-877-543-7669
- Family Food Hotline 1-888-4-FOOD-WA

### **Washington Connection**

Helps families find and apply for the benefits and services they need. These include food, financial,

housing, utilities, health care, mental health, domestic violence, education, employment, child welfare, legal help, and resources for veterans. See <https://www.washingtonconnection.org/home/home.go>

### **Washington Information Network 211 (WIN 211)**

A comprehensive database of health and human services in Washington. Fast way to find assistance with such needs as rent/mortgage payments, in-home care services, low-cost mental health or chemical dependency counseling or legal aid. Call 2-1-1 from anywhere in Washington, or see <http://www.win211.org/>

### **Zero to Three**

National nonprofit that works to promote the health and development of infants and toddlers. Their materials for parents and caregivers answer many common questions about behavior, development and early education. They also provide information on child maltreatment and trauma.

See <http://www.zerotothree.org/>

## **INFORMATION FOR CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS AND TEACHERS**

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### **21st Century Community Learning Centers Program**

Supports the creation of community learning centers that provide academic enrichment opportunities during nonschool hours for children, particularly students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. See <http://www.k12.wa.us/21stCenturyLearning/default.aspx>

### **Child Care Center Licensing Guidebook**

The Department of Early Learning's guide for child care providers.

See <http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/licensing/docs/ChildCareCenterLicensingGuide.pdf>

### **Coalition for Safety and Health in Early Learning (CSHEL), Washington State**

A voluntary information exchange on health and safety in child care in Washington.

See <http://www.cshelwa.org/index.php>

### **Department of Early Learning**

The department's web site offers information for early learning providers and educators on licensing, child care subsidies, professional development, child development, ECEAP, Head Start and related topics.

See <http://www.del.wa.gov/providers-educators/>

### **Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Center**

A service of the federal Office of Head Start, with information on Head Start, Early Head Start, family and community partnerships, and quality teaching and learning. See <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>

### **Even Start Family Literacy Program**

A federally funded education program for the nation's low-income families that is designed to improve the academic achievement of young children and their parents, especially in the area of reading.

See <http://www.k12.wa.us/EvenStart/default.aspx>

### **Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework**

Provides Head Start and other early childhood programs with a description of the building blocks of a child's development (ages 3 to 5 years) that are important for school readiness and long-term success. See [http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eeed/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS\\_Revised\\_Child\\_Outcomes\\_Framework.pdf](http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/eeed/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework.pdf)

### **Healthy Child Care America**

A collaboration of health professionals and early learning professionals to provide health information and professional development. See <http://www.healthychildcare.org/>

### **Homeless Education Office**

OSPI office overseeing the federal McKinney Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, also known as "McKinney-Vento." The program provides federal funding to states for the purpose of supporting district programs that serve homeless students. See <http://www.k12.wa.us/HomelessEd/default.aspx>

### **Institutional Education**

Provides K-12 basic education services to incarcerated and previously incarcerated juveniles in Washington state. The goal is to provide these youth the opportunity to meet the same challenging state academic content standards and student academic achievement standards that all children in the state are expected to meet. See <http://www.k12.wa.us/InstitutionalEd/default.aspx>

### **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)**

Offers a wide range of information, materials and training for early learning professionals. See <http://www.naeyc.org/>

### **National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness**

Part of the Office of Head Start, the National Center provides culturally responsive, user-friendly materials and training for staff and families to use to promote strong language and literacy skills in children's home language and in English. See <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic>

### **National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education**

Offers *Caring for Our Children*, national best practice standards in health and safety from the American Academy of Pediatrics and American Public Health Association. See <http://nrckids.org/CFOC3/index.html>

### **Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction**

The Early Learning (birth through third grade) section of the OSPI web site has information about alignment, the Starting Strong Institute, full-day kindergarten, the WaKIDS pilot and other topics. See <http://www.k12.wa.us/EarlyLearning/default.aspx> OSPI's web site also includes the state learning standards by subject and grade level. See [http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR\\_GLE.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/CurriculumInstruct/EALR_GLE.aspx)

### **Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**

Provides financial assistance to states and school districts to meet the needs of educationally at-risk students. The goal of Title I is to provide extra instructional services and activities that support students identified as failing or most at risk of failing the state's challenging performance standards in mathematics, reading and writing. See <http://www.k12.wa.us/TitleI/default.aspx> and <http://www.k12.wa.us/TitleI/TitleI/pubdocs/PreschoolNon-RegulatoryGuidance.pdf>



# Examples of Materials To Help Your Child Play and Learn

**Safety notes:** The materials you offer children need to be safe for their age level. Be especially careful of small toys or parts that could be swallowed, sharp edges or points, loud noises, cords or strings that might wrap around a child’s neck, and toys used to shoot or throw objects. In buying toys, pay attention to the age level rating on the item.

## Young Infants (Birth to 11 Months)

**Important: Make sure materials are not small enough to swallow** (One test is: If the item would fit inside a toilet paper tube, it is too small.)

- Soft toys, blankets
- Bath toys
- Nesting cups, stackable rings, small boxes or plastic containers of various sizes and shapes
- Plastic container with handle (such as a small bucket) to use as a carrying container
- Safe things to play with that you might have around the house that have a variety of shapes, colors, textures, sounds and smells
- Different sizes of cardboard boxes to climb into, or put things in, or nest, or stack
- Objects with different textures, such as fuzzy, bumpy or smooth
- A basket or floor-height cupboard with items such as small plastic bowls, measuring cups, pans with lids, wooden spoons, plastic containers with lids, empty spools, cardboard tubes, etc.
- Rattle, bell, drum or other safe objects to shake or bang
- Blocks or magnets with letters and numbers
- Mobiles, balls
- Stuffed animals, dolls
- Crayons, washable markers, paint, play dough, clay
- Cloth, board and plastic books
- Books about animals, sounds, nature, shapes and colors, numbers and counting, people from various cultures
- Pictures, photos

## Older Infants (9 to 18 Months)

**Important: Make sure materials are not small enough to swallow.**

Above, plus:

- Songs, rhymes, poems
- Finger paints or shaving cream; chalk and chalk board
- Unbreakable mirrors
- Magnet boards with magnets in different shapes
- Sturdy, low table or stool to climb onto and under
- Alphabet, picture and story books in the home language and English

## Toddlers (16 to 36 Months)

**Important: Make sure materials are not small enough to swallow.**

Above, plus:

- Music for movement, games and dancing
- Dress-up clothes, hats, dolls, stuffed animals, boxes, or other props for pretend play
- Soft puppets, finger puppets
- Large balls and bean bags to toss
- Large beads to string with yarn
- Alphabet blocks or cookie cutters
- Blocks, items that connect, such as plastic “bricks”
- Plastic or metal measuring cups
- Large dishpans to fill with water or sand, and cups, funnels, pitchers, etc. to fill and dump

- Stories, poems, songs (in the home language and English) about a variety of people, places, families, workers, healthy meals, physical activity
- Photos of the child and the family

## Ages 3 to 4 Years

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**Important: Make sure materials are not small enough to swallow.**

Above, plus:

- Items to sort by shape and color
- Rhythm instruments using household items: pots and wooden spoons for drums, blocks to clap together, beans in a sealed jar to shake, tin can with lid for a drum, etc.
- Materials to explore and use, such as blocks, cups, small boxes, sand, clay, yarn, cloth
- Plastic, wooden or wax fruits and vegetables
- Puzzles with up to five pieces
- Pictures and stories (in the home language and English) about families, different cultural themes

## Ages 4 to 5 Years

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**Important: Make sure materials are not small enough to swallow.**

Above, plus:

- Materials with different textures – such as wet clay, dry sand, smooth cloth, rough sandpaper, etc.
- Containers of different sizes with different kinds of lids and latches
- Items of different shape, size and color to sort (such as blocks, plastic cups, balls, etc.)
- Jump rope, hoop to roll or jump through
- Scooter, wagon, wheelbarrow
- Chopsticks, tongs, turkey baster, wooden clothes pins
- Blunt scissors
- Pictures cut out of magazines, glue stick and large sheets of paper to fold into books or make collages
- Yarn or shoelaces to tie, or lacing cards

- Card or board games that use counting
- Magnifying glass, ruler, measuring cups, measuring spoons, eye dropper
- Jigsaw puzzles with up to 10 pieces
- Picture books, story books, poetry books, magazines
- Activities that require following clear directions, such as cooking, planting seeds or simple science experiments

## Age 5 and Kindergarten

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Above, plus:

- Stories about people working together to solve problems
- Jump rope, hula hoop
- Paper and pencil for writing
- Magazines, newspapers or other printed materials with pictures to cut out, scissors, paste or glue stick, sheets of paper to staple or fold together into a “book”
- Items from nature: leaves, stones, flower petals, etc.
- Different shapes cut out of heavy paper or cookie cutters in various shapes
- Playing cards
- Sock puppets, finger puppets
- Balloons
- Materials to create art work, such as crayons, paper, fabric, yarn, dried pasta, cotton balls, pipe cleaners, glue or paste, etc.

## 1<sup>st</sup> Grade

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Above, plus:

- Maps of the local area
- Board games
- Puzzles of 100 to 500 pieces
- Books about topics of interest to the child (fiction and nonfiction)



# Acknowledgements

Many people have given generously of their time, expertise and on-the-ground experience to help develop these Guidelines. A committee to redesign the 2005 Benchmarks was formed in the fall of 2010 by the Department of Early Learning (DEL), in partnership with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), and Thrive by Five Washington. The Guidelines Development Committee began meeting in October 2010 to explore what parents, caregivers and teachers need from guidelines, and how to make sure the guidelines are culturally relevant for Washington's increasingly diverse population, provide meaningful connection to the state's learning standards (beginning with kindergarten), and reflect the most up-to-date knowledge about how children grow and learn. This group developed principles and purposes for the document, with public review providing more than 75 sets of comments.

The committee reviewed guidelines developed by other states and used a variety of sources to create a new set of guidelines. They sent an initial draft for public review, and conducted extensive public outreach to groups across the state in the fall of 2011. There were opportunities to comment online, by e-mail and mail, and at group presentations. A final draft went out for public review in January 2012. All told more than 400 sets of comments were sent in.

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**Additional photography sources:** Tint Photography, iStock Photo

**Staff:** Kaelyn Bristol and Jennifer Jennings-Shaffer (HSSCO-DEL)

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# Please Comment

The Washington State *Early Learning and Development Guidelines (2012)* is a revision of the *Early Learning and Development Benchmarks*, published in 2005. The Department of Early Learning (DEL), Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and Thrive by Five Washington expect to review and consider revising the *Guidelines* again in approximately five years.

Your comments and reflections on the *Guidelines* as you use them will help to inform the next revision. Please provide your feedback by:

- E-mailing your comments to [communications@del.wa.gov](mailto:communications@del.wa.gov) with the subject line “Guidelines comments”; or
- Using the form below, and mailing or faxing it to DEL.

Thank you very much for your help!

## Comments:

1. Do the Guidelines help you as a parent or support your work with children and families? If so, how?

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2. Is there additional information that would better help you?

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3. Is there anything you suggest removing or adding?

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## Please help us understand your comments better by responding to the following:

4. What is your primary role with children birth through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade?

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5. How have you used the Guidelines?

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### Please mail this form to:

Department of Early Learning  
Head Start State Collaboration Office  
P.O. Box 40970,  
Olympia, WA 98504-0970

### Or fax to:

360-725-4939





