



Early Childhood Standards of Quality

for Birth to Kindergarten



Produced by the Michigan
Department of Education
Office of Great Start

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Introduction

Purpose of the Standards

As early as 1971, the Michigan State Board of Education (SBE) approved “Preprimary Objectives” as a step toward the effective implementation of early childhood education programs. Over the decades, expectations for young children’s learning and development have been refined and reorganized to reflect current research, knowledge, and best practice. The purpose of those expectations, as adopted by the SBE, was to emphasize developmental and programmatic content appropriate for preschoolers. As of 2006, those expectations expanded to include infants and toddlers. In addition to expectations, the importance of children’s learning environments has become understood as vital to their growth and development.

The purpose of these *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten* is to support the growth and development of all children throughout the state, birth to kindergarten; to support early childhood professionals in recognizing individual developmental trajectories and expressions of learning; and to guide programs toward the highest quality in their operations.

These standards are structured into two categories. The Early Learning and Development Standards are composed of nine domains that define a cohesive and research-based foundation for early childhood professionals to meet the individual and collective needs of all young children throughout the state. High-quality relationships and learning environments are critical to young children’s development and learning; the Program Quality Standards are organized into eight sections that outline a quality framework for all settings serving young children throughout the state.

The *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten* will guide early childhood educators’ and caregivers’ expectations, instructional strategies, and learning environments, as well as their communication with families. The standards will be used as a coaching and professional learning tool. Each Early Learning and Development Standards goal includes self-reflection questions to aid early childhood professionals in improving and refining their practices, and each indicator includes examples of children’s observable behaviors and support strategies. In the Program Quality Standards, each indicator includes a examples of the standards “in action” and reflection questions to support program improvement. In addition, these standards will guide and inform the development of early childhood courses and programs within higher education.

Development of the Standards

In alignment with Michigan's [Top 10 Strategic Education Plan](#), these standards strive to support the growth and development of all children throughout the state, birth to kindergarten; to support early childhood professionals in recognizing individual developmental trajectories and expressions of learning; and to guide programs toward the highest quality in their operations.

In February 2020, State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice approved a staff proposal to convene a stakeholder committee to review the existing early childhood standards of quality for infant and toddler programs and prekindergarten and to determine if revisions were necessary. The last set of standards were approved by the Michigan State Board of Education in March 2013.

A departmental process was used to ensure a stakeholder group of writers and reviewers representing each region of the state with diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. Participating stakeholders include practicing early childhood educators, professors from educator preparation institutions, parents, and experts from the fields of special education and multilingual learners, as well as individuals with experience in a variety of programs and settings, including Head Start, Early Head Start, Great Start Readiness Program, home-based and center-based childcare, and tribal childcare.

The stakeholder committee was divided into two subsections: a writing workgroup and a review panel. Through this structure, the project ensured participatory decision-making among the writing workgroup members, and detailed feedback from the valuable and unique perspectives of the review panelists.

Within the scope of the review and revision project, the writers reflected on national trends and examples from other states and agreed to combine the previously separate standards for a single, aligned set of standards following the progression of growth, learning, and development from birth to kindergarten.

Development of the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten* was informed by and maintains alignment with the following state and national policies and standards relevant to the birth to kindergarten field:

- [Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers](#)
- [Licensing Rules for Family and Group Child Care Homes](#)
- [MiFamily: Michigan's Family Engagement Framework](#)
- [Michigan Integrated Technology Competencies for Students](#)
- [Michigan Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for the Early Care and Education Workforce](#)
- [Key Elements of High-Quality Early Childhood Learning Environments: Preschool](#)
- [Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: Prekindergarten](#)
- [Essential Instructional Practices in Language and Emergent Literacy: Birth to Age 3](#)
- [Essential Instructional Practices in Early Mathematics: Prekindergarten to Grade 3](#)
- [Standards for the Preparation of Teachers of Early Childhood General and Special Education \(Birth-Kindergarten\)](#)
- [Standards for the Preparation of Teachers of Lower Elementary \(PK-3\) Education](#)
- [Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood to Grade 12 Social and Emotional Learning \(SEL\) Competencies and Indicators](#)
- [DEC Recommended Practices](#)
- [Head Start Program Performance Standards](#)
- [Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework](#)
- [NSTA Position Statement: Early Childhood Science Education](#)
- [NAEYC Advancing Equity in Early Childhood Education](#)
- [NAEYC Early Learning Program Accreditation Standards and Assessment Items](#)

- [NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators](#)
- [WIDA Early Years Guiding Principles of Language Development](#)

Each section of the draft document was shared with an external review team for feedback. The responses were compiled, reviewed by the writing team, and revisions were made to the document accordingly.

Key edits:

- Combined the standards to define children’s growth and development as a continuous progression beginning at birth, ensuring that all sections of the standards reflect that progression.
- Embedded support for multilingual children, children with individual needs, and other children across the full range of backgrounds and experiences.
- Combined, re-ordered, and revised goals and emerging indicators to reflect current research into how children learn.
- Aligned with the *Standards for the Preparation of Teachers of Early Childhood General and Special Education (Birth-Kindergarten)* and the *Standards for the Preparation of Teachers of Lower Elementary (PK-3) Education*.
- Emphasized children’s developing understanding of technology and the arts as tools and methods for accomplishing goals such as problem-solving, communication, and self-expression.
- Divided the “Social, Emotional and Physical Health and Development” into “Social and Emotional Development” and “Physical Health and Development.” This division included updates to both sections to align with current research on the importance of physical and mental health, social skills, and self-regulation to promote success in school and in life.
- Substantially revised the “Language and Early Literacy Development” section to align with current research on how children learn to communicate, read, and write. This section is now “Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development.”
- Excised guidelines already covered by the *Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers* and the *Licensing Rules for Family and Group Child Care Homes* to limit redundancies, avoid confusion, and extend the lifespan of the document.
- Clarified and updated standards to apply to a broader range of programs and settings.

In addition, the writers have delineated a set of supports to embed within the standards, including:

- Examples of observable behaviors demonstrating the goals and emerging indicators;
- Examples of strategies and materials included in the learning environment to support the development of the goals and indicators; and
- Self-reflection prompts to aid caregiving adults in ensuring their own practice is in alignment with the standards.

To collect public comment, the draft document was widely communicated through a variety of outlets, alongside an open survey. Each of these comments was reviewed and discussed with a subcommittee from the overall stakeholder committee using a participatory decision-making process. The draft was then revised to reflect the subcommittee’s discussions and decisions based on each comment. Key edits include:

- Notation of the alignment of each Goal to relevant *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework* and *National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Early Learning Program Accreditation Standards and Assessment Items* standards, as well as to relevant *Michigan Standards for the Preparation of Teachers of Early Childhood General and Special Education (Birth-Kindergarten)*.
- Links between connected Indicators throughout the standards.
- Revision of the “0-8 months” age range heading to “Birth-8 months” for clarity.
- Revision of Indicators and Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors subheadings for clarification: “Indicator 1a” and “What might this look like? The child *may*...”
- Revisions to the Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors content for clarity and alignment to child development.

- Revision of Physical Development and Health Indicators 1f, 4b, and 5c for clarity and to better align with the development of young children.
- Revision of Engineering and Technology Indicator 1a for clarity and to better align with the development of young children.
- Merge Physical Development and Health Indicator 5d with Indicators 5a and 5c; Engineering and Technology Indicator 1a with Indicator 1b; and Engineering and Technology Indicator 3a with Indicator 3b for conciseness and clarity.

On November 15, 2022, the Michigan State Board of Education voted to approve the proposed draft of the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten*.

Support for All Learners

Early in the process of developing the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten* (ECSQ B-K), the Review and Revision Committee decided to form two subcommittees to focus specifically on the needs of diverse learners. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Subcommittee was formed to develop a set of recommendations focused ensuring that the standards are equitable and inclusive of learners with diverse backgrounds and abilities, while the Multilingual Learner (MLL) Subcommittee was formed to develop a set of recommendations focused on support for multilingual learners.

Support for Multilingual Learners

The MLL Subcommittee chose to use the term Multilingual Learner (MLL) rather than Dual-Language Learner (DLL) to be inclusive of all children who speak or are exposed to more than one language. Michigan, like the rest of the nation, has seen a rise in the number of MLL children in early learning and care environments.

According to WIDA (2021), multilingual learners thrive in early childhood spaces where they feel their languages and cultural practices are valued. Thus, a primary goal of the MLL Subcommittee was to provide support for educators in recognizing and promoting multilingual learners' home languages and cultures as assets to their growth, learning, and development. The ECSQ B-K guides educators to strengthen and build on children's linguistic and cultural foundations, partner with families, and support all children in becoming productive learners and citizens.

While previous early childhood standards included a separate section for dual-language learners, the MLL Subcommittee recommended that the standards reflect multilingual and monolingual children's parallel learning process: children learn language in the context of acquiring content knowledge and life skills. Thus, MLL support has been embedded throughout the standards.

Inclusion of Children with Differing Abilities

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children (DEC) (2009), the ideal result of early childhood inclusive experiences is threefold: a sense of belonging, positive social relationships, and for children to reach their full potential of learning and development. Thus, a primary goal of the DEI Subcommittee was to provide support for educators in individualizing the support, care, and education they provide.

The ECSQ B-K provides standards, examples of observable behaviors, as well as strategies and practices for educators along a continuum from birth to kindergarten. This allows educators to easily adjust their plans, approaches, and expectations based on each child's unique developmental needs and abilities. The examples of children's observable behaviors in the ECSQ B-K also specifically include children with differing abilities, such as those who use American Sign Language (ASL) or mobility devices.

Additionally, the ECSQ B-K Program Quality Standards recommend a variety of supports for inclusion, such as administrative supervision of any Individualized Educational Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) requirements, room arrangements that take into account children and families with mobility devices, and professional learning focused on inclusion, inclusive supports, and children’s mental, social, and emotional health.

Addressing Equity in Early Childhood

According to NAEYC, the goal of equity in early childhood is to “eliminate differences in educational outcomes as a result of who children are, where they live, and what resources their families have,” which impact children’s ability to “achieve their full potential as engaged learners and valued members of society” (2019).

Through the recommendations of the MLL and DEI subcommittees, the standards are built upon a framework of awareness and responsiveness to these issues, and seek to support the individual and collective needs of all children across the full range of backgrounds and experiences, including culture, family structure, language, racial identity, gender, abilities and disabilities, religious beliefs, or economic class.

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How to Read and Use the Standards

The *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten* are divided into two major components: the **Early Learning and Development Standards** and the **Program Quality Standards**. These are then separated into **domains** or **sections**.

Early Learning and Development Standards

- Approaches to Play and Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development and Health
- Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development
- Creative and Expressive Arts
- Mathematics
- Engineering and Technology
- Science
- Social Studies

Program Quality Standards

- Program Philosophy
- Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning
- Program Evaluation
- Family Partnerships
- Environment of Care and Learning
- Child Assessment
- Physical and Mental Health
- Community Collaboration

Within each domain, the Early Learning and Development and Program Quality **goals** are broken down into specific **indicators** of development or quality.

Each indicator provides details for different aspects of the overall goal. For example:

Goal 5 Measurement: Children show a growing understanding of the concepts of quantifying and comparing. (HS-ELQF: P-MATH 4; P-MATH 8; P-SCI 3) (MLPTEC-BK: M.17; M.18; M.19; M.20) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.F)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to support children as they begin to understand how to compare and quantify objects? What materials will I provide in the learning environment to support children's growing understanding of comparison and measurement? What activities and routines will I plan to engage children in the process of comparing and measuring?

Indicator 5a. Notice and recognize that things in their environment can be measured (length/height, weight, area, volume, temperature, time).

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 3b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 4b](#), and [Science Indicator 1a](#).)

Indicator 5b. Compare things in their environment and use the language of measurement (lighter, darker, long, longer, big, bigger, etc.) to describe them.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1c](#), [Mathematics Indicator 2c](#), [Mathematics Indicator 4b](#), [Science Indicator 2a](#), and [Science Indicator 4c](#).)

Indicator 5c. Use non-standard and standard tools and units of measurement.

(See also: [Mathematics Indicator 2a](#) and [Mathematics Indicator 2c](#).)

The **Early Learning and Development Standards** define children’s growth and development as a continuous progression beginning at birth.

All goals and indicators of these standards reflect that progression through the **Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors**, which provide details around some behaviors children may display as they develop in a particular indicator.

Indicator 3a. Express and share their own interests, ideas, or opinions freely. (See also: Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 4a, Social and Emotional Development Indicator 2a, Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4d, and Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 3b.)		
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child may...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional can...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocalize their excitement when playing with a favorite toy. Show preferences in different kinds of foods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge when a child shows a preference. For example, saying, “You really like the rattle! Shake, shake, shake!” “Oh, boy, that taste was a big surprise, wasn’t it? Let’s try again and find out if you like it when it’s not such a surprise, okay?” or “Oh, you’re wearing your green shirt! Is that one
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dump a container of toys. Tip a wippy cup upside down and watch to see what happens. Smack their hands into the water table to see what happens. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for a favorite story to be read or told. Choose a favorite shirt to wear. Carry toys from one interest area to another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer multiple options, and read during story
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetitively ask for the same story to be read. Ask to use alphabet stamps from the writing area so they can finish their painting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children to share their thoughts, opinions, and experiences, such as what they’re looking forward to today or what they did over the weekend. Allow children to help decide what new dramatic play experiences they would enjoy, and invite them to help create props to support those experiences. Ask questions to encourage children to make decisions and express their preferences, such as saying, “What will you do next?” and “Tell me about the choices you made in your artwork?”
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a favorite book or toy from home to show others. Save a seat for a friend. Show a preference for where to sit during large group time. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read a story they wrote aloud to familiar adults and children. Choose a math activity over an art activity. Begin mixing ingredients to make playdough independently. 	

And when there are no expected behaviors that would show development for a particular age group.

Indicator 5c. Develop an awareness of how foods look, feel, taste, and smell different; how different foods affect their bodies; and how foods are sorted into food groups. (See also: Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b, Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a, Physical Development and Health Indicator 4a, Mathematics Indicator 5a, Engineering and Technology Indicator 1b, and Science Indicator 1c.)		
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child may...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional can...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit with children during mealtimes and describe the tastes, smells, and textures of their own meal. Offer new foods many times. Provide sensory boxes that allow children to smell different scents or feel different textures without seeing the objects inside.
9-23 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use utensils and closed cup to feed themselves, allowing them to make their own choices about what to eat in which order. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express preferences about foods based on taste, texture, and sometimes color. Refuse foods that make their bodies feel uncomfortable. Identify some foods, such as fruits and vegetables, are grown on farms, sometimes. 	

Each goal includes **Self-Reflection Questions** to support early childhood professionals in thoughtfully considering and refining their own practices.

Goal 1 Scientific Thinking: Children explore and demonstrate curiosity about the world around them.
(HS-ELOF: IT-C 1; IT-C 2; IT-C 3; IT-C 4; IT-C 5; IT-C 6; IT-C 7; IT-C 10; P-LC 6; P-SCI 1; P-SCI 2; P-SCI 3; P-SCI 4; P-SCI 5; P-SCI 6) (MI-PTCE-BK: IT2; S.1; S.2; S.4; S.6; S.7) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.G)

Self-Reflection Questions

What materials and experiences can I provide to encourage children to explore and express their curiosity about the world? How will I model curiosity, observation, investigation, and exploration? In what ways will my interactions with children support the development of their scientific thinking skills?

Alongside the Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors, **Examples of Supportive Strategies** highlight instructional practices early childhood professionals can incorporate into their own practice to support specific indicators, segmented into “Birth to 36 months” and “3 to 5 years” age clusters.

These examples are powerful coaching and professional learning tools to support educators in more deeply understanding the variety of behaviors that demonstrate children’s development, and in thoughtfully considering their practice in support of children’s development as they grow in their roles as educators and caregivers.

Indicator 2a. Explore and develop increasing control over fine motor and large motor movements. (See also: Physical Development and Health Indicator 2b, Physical Development and Health Indicator 3a, Physical Development and Health Indicator 3b, Physical Development and Health Indicator 3c, and Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a.)		
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child may...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional can...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to intentionally move their hands and fingers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer children finger foods such as crackers, cheese cubes, or dry cereal for them to feed themselves. Provide paint brushes, large crayons, markers, and finger paints for children to make marks on paper. Provide playdough and tools for children to roll, squeeze, pound, and manipulate the dough. Use wedges, pillows, floor mats, and other soft materials to create safe areas for children to pull up and to climb. Play movement games and fingerplays, such as If You’re Happy and You Know It, Itsy Bitsy Spider, and Hokey Pokey.
9-23 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Squish and roll playdough into balls and snakes. Attempt to mimic a familiar adult’s clapping rhythm. Draw straight and curved lines to create pictures. Use scissors to cut paper. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dance to the (approximate) beat of different kinds of music. Match and repeat a rhythm demonstrated by a familiar adult stomping their feet back and forth (left-right, left-right) to. Draw and combine shapes into more complex figures. Use scissors with more precision, cutting along dotted or of the time. Show more control in making intentional marks, such as lines. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite children to set the table with napkins, plates, and flatware. Provide children with opportunities to serve themselves food and to pour their own drinks. Provide child-size tweezers and clothes pins to pick up small objects, such as pompoms, cotton balls, and manipulatives. Provide pencils, crayons, markers, paints and brushes, and other fine motor art materials. Play Red Rover, Hokey Pokey, Freeze Dance and other movement games. Play music with various tempos and moods to encourage different kinds of movements and dancing. Model galloping, skipping, and other complex large motor movements.
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dance to the (approximate) beat of different kinds of music. Match and repeat a rhythm demonstrated by a familiar adult stomping their feet back and forth (left-right, left-right) to. Draw and combine shapes into more complex figures. Use scissors with more precision, cutting along dotted or of the time. Show more control in making intentional marks, such as lines. 	
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imitate a familiar adult’s movements when trying to learn of the time. Match the beat of a song when playing an instrument. Use fine motor skills to pinch, push, and form playdough. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Imitate a familiar adult’s movements when trying to learn of the time. Match the beat of a song when playing an instrument. Use fine motor skills to pinch, push, and form playdough. 	

The **Program Quality Standards** define key aspects of high-quality programs and settings.

All goals and indicators outline components of these standards and highlight a variety of ways a program may demonstrate or work toward a specific indicator through a set of **Strategies and Questions to Consider**.

Indicator 3b. Annually evaluates early childhood professionals and support staff performance according to program philosophy and policies based on local, state, and national standards and/or competencies using a variety of tools and techniques (e.g., observation, self-evaluation). (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 1d.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Use evaluation tools and techniques that reflect the specific role of the person being evaluated. For example, a program might use the Michigan Home Visiting Core Knowledge Areas to evaluate home visiting staff members' professional competencies.
- Are program staff expected to perform their duties in alignment with the program philosophy?
- Refer to the program philosophy to ensure evaluation tools reflect the goals of the program.

Like the Examples of Observable Behaviors and Examples of Supportive Strategies in the Early Learning Development Standards, these strategies and questions are a support tool for early childhood administrators, as well as educators, caregivers, and coaches.



Early Learning and Development Standards

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Approaches to Play and Learning

The **Approaches to Play and Learning** domain focuses on the dynamics of learning *how to learn* on one's own and in the company of others. This is demonstrated through the relationship between thinking, learning, and acting, as well as the interaction between learners and their environment.

Children are naturally curious, creative, and playful. The drive to explore, experiment, discover, and learn is present from birth. As young children grow, they acquire and refine strategies for learning, and strengthen their ability to concentrate, persist, problem-solve, make choices, and regulate their impulses, among other needed skills. Each of these is crucial to their ability to gather, process, and master more and more sophisticated skills, and to acquire greater knowledge.

Goals and indicators in the **Approaches to Play and Learning** domain are expressions of positive attitudes, skills, and learning processes that (combined with wide-ranging content knowledge) build foundations for lifelong learning and responsible living in a continuously changing world. An important focus of **Approaches to Play and Learning** is on using the attributes of being literate and educated for the betterment of self, eventually living as a positive member of society.

The goals of the Approaches to Play and Learning domain are:

Goal 1 Curiosity and Flexibility: Children learn about themselves and the world around them through purposeful play.

Goal 2 Play and Imagination: Children demonstrate increasingly complex play styles.

Goal 3 Initiative, Persistence, and Problem-Solving: Children engage in explorations and interactions with confidence.

Goal 4 Self-Regulation: Children develop an increasing ability to manage their emotions and behaviors.

Goal 1 Curiosity and Flexibility: Children learn about themselves and the world around them through purposeful play. ([HS-ELOF](#): IT-ATL 5; IT-ATL 7; IT-ATL 8; P-ATL 8; P-ATL 9; P-ATL 11)

Self-Reflection Questions

What kinds of open-ended materials can I include in my learning environment for children to use in their play? What questions can I ask to help children think about what things are, what they're used for, and how they work? How will I encourage sensory play and other open-ended exploration?

Indicator 1a. Use play to interpret and understand the world around them.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 1a](#), and [Science Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover their fingers and toes. Examine a toy. Reach out to a familiar adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a variety of sensory objects and materials to engage the senses (touch, smell, taste, etc.). Play interactive games, such as Peek-a-Boo and This Little Piggy. Narrate and engage with children's play. For example, saying, "What do you see in the mirror? It's you! Can you see me in the mirror, too? Let's wave to our reflections!" Use puppets and toys to illustrate actions or tell a story.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play Peek-a-Boo with familiar adults. Use a spoon to eat, and then later as a drumstick. Watch themselves in a mirror. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tap a toy on the floor or bang on the bottom of a bowl to make noise. "Drive" a toy car around the playground. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rock a baby doll and tuck it in with a blanket. Crawl around on the floor, pretending to be a puppy. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use felt pieces to recreate a story told by an adult. Play "house" or other pretend games alongside other children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk about the connections between stories and children's lives, such as, "In the story, Kai has a new baby brother. Who here has a new baby at home?" Provide a variety of props and other open-ended materials for dramatic play. Join children's pretend play and extend their thinking by asking questions, such as, "What pets are here to adopt?" and "What food do they need?"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pretend to be a firefighter when playing with dramatic play props. Ask other children to join them in pretend play. Use props as part of pretend play. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use interactive technology and/or other materials to create a story with other children. Assign roles as part of pretend play. 	

Indicator 1b. Explore, investigate, and ask questions about the world around them.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 5b](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 1a](#), and [Science Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Smile at an adult or older child making funny faces at them. ■ Turn their head toward voices or other sounds. ■ Put objects in their mouth. ■ Reach for a favorite toy. ■ Open their mouth to try a new food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of sensory objects and materials to engage the senses (touch, smell, taste, etc.) ■ Voice an interpretation of what children might be thinking, such as "That car rolls fast on the hard floor, doesn't it? It's a lot faster than when you push it on the carpet..." ■ Engage with children's play, asking questions and modeling new ways to use the toys. For example, when a child is banging a block on the floor, asking, "Oh, do you want to make noise?" and modeling how to tap their hand on a drum.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Move or reach toward preferred toys. ■ Turn their head away from a food they haven't enjoyed in the past. ■ Shake, bang, or throw a toy. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn a toy over in their hands to explore how it works. ■ Pull and push a toy car on a hard floor to watch it roll. ■ Ask simple "why" questions. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When a familiar adult or family member leaves, ask when they will come back. ■ Pick up leaves on the playground and squeeze to feel the different textures (crunchy brown leaves, soft yellow leaves, etc.). 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch the ants move around in an ant farm. ■ Throw a ball straight down at the sidewalk to see how high it will bounce. ■ Mix colors together when painting and notice how the colors change. ■ Ask a familiar adult why another child is crying. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of materials that encourage exploration and experimentation. ■ Plan opportunities to explore the natural world, such as nature walks, classroom pets, or observing insects. ■ "Wonder" aloud and model the process of experimenting or gathering information to find answers.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try using blocks of different sizes to balance a scale. ■ Use twigs and rocks to build a small structure. ■ Ask questions about their observations, and other things that interest them, such as "Why are the leaves yellow?" and "Why don't you like to eat oranges?" 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use digital technology and/or books to find information about astronauts and space. ■ Use a magnifying glass to look at varying leaf patterns. ■ Pull a toy car backward across the floor to find out if it will roll forward on its own. 	

Indicator 1c. Reconstruct their ideas about the world around them based on new thoughts and information.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 4b](#) and [Engineering and Technology Indicator 1b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reach for a favorite caregiver or family member when being held by someone else. ■ Open their mouth to try a new food. ■ Look for a toy that has rolled behind a shelf (object permanence). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of interactive toys and materials. ■ Watch for opportunities to interact and engage with children during their play. For example, modeling how to use a new toy or engaging in pretend play by “galloping” a toy horse across the floor and making “neigh” sounds. ■ Model hello/goodbye interactions, as well as exaggerated facial expressions to show various emotions, such as a big smile, clapping hands, and saying “Yay!” when a child pulls up for the first time.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pass a toy to a familiar adult as if asking for help figuring it out. ■ Try to imitate adults winking or making funny faces. ■ Watch an adult wave “bye-bye” and mimic the adult’s actions. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Move to “Head Shoulders Knees and Toes” and try to point to the correct body parts. ■ Based on their own experiences, begin to make connections between animals and the sounds they make—“woof” for a dog, “neigh” for a horse, etc. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch a familiar adult manipulate a toy, and then try to use the toy the same way. ■ Pour water into a container until it overflows. ■ Create more detailed “definitions” of objects as they have broader experiences with the world around them, such as being able to tell the difference between a cow and a dog. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Repeat or copy friends' words and actions. ■ Notice that someone has changed their hair cut or color and tell others about it. ■ Try a new food they're hesitant about it and discover they like it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ "Wonder" aloud and narrate new experiences, such as trying a new food or touching a child's pet rabbit. ■ Plan and encourage opportunities for children to notice and talk about similarities and differences, such as charting and discussing the types of pets, favorite foods, or number of siblings the children have. ■ Clearly and accurately label the materials in the learning environment. ■ Use correct terms for whatever subject is being discussed, such as pointing out the head, thorax, and abdomen of an insect, or koala instead of "koala bear."
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Discuss and compare the ways their family is the same as and different from others. "I have two sisters, but you only have one." ■ Watch seeds grow into plants. ■ When looking at pictures of everyone's families, ask another child, "Is that your dad in that picture? This is a picture of my mom!" ■ Adapt their behaviors based on the setting and situation – such as being quiet in a library or running on the playground. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Read and request stories about people going camping after their family plans a camping trip. ■ Use the correct names of different types of dinosaurs—identifying something as "a stegosaurus" rather than "a dinosaur." ■ Recognize that each child has their own likes and dislikes. For example: "Sierra doesn't like peas, but I do!" 	

Goal 2 Play and Imagination: Children demonstrate increasingly complex play styles. ([HS-ELOF](#): IT-ATL 6; IT ATL 8; IT-ATL 9; P-ATL 12; P-ATL 13)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I engage with children to encourage them to explore and experiment in their play? What questions can I ask to help children think about the different ways things can be used? How will I encourage sensory and pretend play and other open-ended exploration?

Indicator 2a. Initiate, join, and take turns in play with others.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4b](#) and [Communication, Language and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coo and babble to engage with others. ■ Watch a spoon with food as it comes toward their mouth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to children about their play, particularly when a child seems interested in what someone else is doing. For example, "Did you see that Sascha is playing with the drum? Bang, bang! Do you want to play with a drum too?" ■ Engage children in turn-taking and mimicry games. For example, Peek-a-Boo, "I clap, you clap!", mimicking children's noises back to them, or saying, "When I get to the part of the story with the clock, I'll say, 'tick tock', and then you say, 'tick tock'!" ■ Model hello/goodbye and other interactions. ■ Provide a variety of toys and materials, and enough of each type that multiple children can play.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play Peek-a-Boo and other turn-taking "serve and return" games, with familiar adults. ■ Imitate the simple gestures of others, such as waving bye-bye. ■ Make a sound to get a new adult's attention. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mimic other children's noises and movements. ■ Focus on their own play without noticing the play of others around them. ■ Participate in simple adult-guided turn-taking games alongside other children. For example: "I clap, you clap!" 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond to another child running by also beginning to run. ■ Watch others as they engage in play. ■ Play alongside others engaged in the same activity, such as building a block tower next to another child who is doing the same thing. ■ With adult support and guidance, take turns with a toy. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play with blocks “with” another child, but without coordinating what they are each building. ■ Wait for their turn in a line to go down the slide. ■ Begin to show preferences in who they play with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model sharing and interacting with others during play. For example: “Edison is waiting by the table. Let’s invite her to draw pictures with us. Edison, do you want some paper to draw on?” ■ Provide a variety of materials, and enough of each type that multiple children can play. ■ Read stories about children playing together. ■ Encourage extended play and find ways for children to save their in-progress creations from day to day. ■ Encourage children to help and support each other, such as by sharing limited materials and coming up with ideas to include them in play. ■ Engage with children’s pretend play and extend their thinking with open-ended questions and suggestions for how to include others, such as “We’re playing restaurant. You’re the cook and I’m the waiter. Maybe Aaliyah could be our first customer!”
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Invite other children to join in pretend play or games. ■ Accept invitations from other children to join in their games and pretend play. ■ Play a simple board game with other children. ■ Wait until a timer goes off to signal their turn at the computer. ■ Pass dishes during a family-style meal and wait for another child to pour the juice. ■ Follow a suggestion that they will pretend to be superheroes rescuing someone in their outdoor play. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Suggest that a child joining the play can be “the uncle” or “another superhero.” ■ Listen to other children share their journal entries. ■ During interactive and shared writing experiences, contribute to the group story without speaking over other children. ■ Propose ideas to expand a block city by adding a fire station. ■ Collaborate with other children to develop, share, and follow rules or expectations in their play together. 	

Indicator 2b. Demonstrate imagination and creativity in their play.

(See also: [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose a favorite toy from a collection of toys. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a variety of toys and materials for children to explore and manipulate. Model actions and encourage children to repeat them, such as playing Peek-a-Boo. Join in children's pretend play and extend their thinking through modeling, such as pretending to burp a doll or miming eating a plate of food with an invisible fork.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look for hidden toys. Use spoons, bowls, and other "household objects" for play. Wave bye-bye to a toy they have been playing with. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push a doll in a stroller. Use a necktie or boa as a snake. Use a hat as a container to carry toys. Use a toy brick as a phone to "talk" into. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pretend that small blocks or crayons are ingredients in their pretend soup. Pretend to be a puppy. Put on a baseball cap and pretend to be an older sibling. Make "dinner" with playdough. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compete 3- or 4-piece puzzles. Use yellow and orange paint to paint a picture of how sunny it was yesterday. Sing a song they made up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage children to use their bodies creatively, such as inviting children to fly like airplanes or hop like frogs. Engage with children's pretend play by asking questions, such as what food they're making in the kitchen, how a doll is feeling, or what role they're playing. Use dramatic play props to retell stories. Regularly rotate materials in the dramatic play area so children can act out a variety of real-life experiences, such as veterinarian, grocery store, or restaurant.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make up stories, songs, and dances. Use a stuffed animal as a "baby" in pretend play. Build a crib out of blocks to use in pretend play. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a puzzle independently. Set up chairs and other props to represent an experience they've had, such as being on an airplane, and ask other children to pretend to be characters like the flight attendant, pilot, and passengers. 	

Indicator 2c. Propose and explore possibilities for how things work, what they might do, or what they might be.

(See also: [Engineering and Technology Indicator 1a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover their hands and fingers by moving them into view and wiggling their fingers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide mirrors for children to look at themselves. Provide a variety of sensory objects and interactive materials to explore and experiment with. Interact and engage with children during their play. For example, modeling different ways to use a toy. Provide ample opportunities for children to explore and experiment, such as water or sensory play, paint and playdough, and time outdoors.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drop or throw a block and watch to see what happens. Tip a sippy cup upside down and watch to see what happens. Smack their hands into the water table to see what happens. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pull stringed toys behind them. Drop a toy from a highchair and then look over the side to see it on the floor. Put toys into a container and take them back out. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put things into and take things out of containers. Put toys into a hat to carry them to another area. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stack blocks to make a tower. Take a connecting-block construction apart and put it back together in a new way. With adult support, predict that a car going down a ramp will go faster than one rolling across a flat floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage children to try different ways to think about or do things, and reassure them that there is more than one "right way" to do something. Provide a variety of materials that encourage exploration and experimentation. "Wonder" aloud and model the process of experimenting or gathering information to find answers. Allow children to move materials from one learning area to another. Listen and engage in conversations with children as they share their thoughts and ideas.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Suggest that two friends arguing over a toy can take turns with it. Capture a caterpillar to have as a pet. Participate in a discussion about what plants need to grow and draw pictures of the way the seed they planted is growing. Suggest a new ending to a familiar story. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use art scraps to build a bridge. Guess how long it will take for a snowball to melt after they bring it inside, and then set a timer to test their prediction. 	

Goal 3 Initiative, Persistence, and Problem-Solving: Children engage in explorations and interactions with confidence. ([HS-ELOF](#): IT-ATL 3; IT-ATL 4; IT-ATL 6; IT-ATL 7; P-ATL 6; P-ATL 7; P-ATL 10)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to encourage children to express their own ideas with confidence? How will I support children in trying something new or continuing a task they don't succeed with the first time? How will I ensure children see me as a trusted adult they can ask for help?

Indicator 3a. Express and share their own interests, ideas, or opinions freely.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 4a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 2a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4d](#), and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vocalize their excitement when playing with a favorite toy. Show preferences in different kinds of foods. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge when a child shows a preference. For example, saying, "You really like the rattle! Shake, shake, shake!", "Oh, boy, that taste was a big surprise, wasn't it? Let's try again and find out if you like it when it's not such a surprise, okay?", or "Oh, you're wearing your green shirt! Is that one your favorite?" Invite children to choose between multiple options, such as between two books to be read during story time.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dump a container of toys. Tip a sippy cup upside down and watch to see what happens. Smack their hands into the water table to see what happens. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to show others something they think is interesting. Play with a favorite toy consistently. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask for a favorite story to be read or told. Choose a favorite shirt to wear. Carry toys from one interest area to another. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share stories about what their family did over the weekend. Repeatedly ask for the same story to be read. Ask to use alphabet stamps from the writing area so they can finish their painting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan opportunities during gathering times for children to share their thoughts, opinions, and experiences, such as what they're looking forward to today or what they did over the weekend. Allow children to help decide what new dramatic play experiences they would enjoy, and invite them to help create props to support those experiences. Ask questions to encourage children to make decisions and express their preferences, such as saying, "What will you do next?" and "Tell me about the choices you made in your artwork?"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a favorite book or toy from home to show others. Save a seat for a friend. Show a preference for where to sit during large group time. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read a story they wrote aloud to familiar adults and children. Choose a math activity over an art activity. Begin mixing ingredients to make playdough independently. 	

Indicator 3b. Show an increasing ability to maintain concentration, persist in, and complete a variety of tasks.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 2b](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 4d](#), and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sustain eye contact with a familiar adult. ■ Ignore noises to focus on engaging with a familiar adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Arrange the environment strategically to create smaller “spaces within the space” that offer children opportunity to concentrate and engage with materials more deeply. ■ Encourage children's efforts to repeatedly try stacking blocks or interacting with a toy to get the desired effect.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Repeatedly push a button on a pop-up toy to watch what happens. ■ Continue to focus on a snack while someone is reading aloud. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to focus on eating while another child is crying. ■ Quietly look through the pages of a book while activity continues around them. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listen to a story being read aloud while another child is wiggling on the carpet nearby. ■ Stay engaged in high interest play for several (10-15) minutes, such as sand/water table play, playdough, or fingerpaint. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Persist in trying to zip their coat. ■ With adult support, work on a puzzle for a short time while other children work on other puzzles. ■ Look for a missing piece in a puzzle and then return to working on the puzzle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support children's problem-solving through encouragement, strategic observations, and questions such as, "Have you noticed that this (puzzle) piece is flat along one side?" or "What would happen if you turned that piece? Would that help it to fit into that space?" ■ Acknowledge children's frustrations with reflective language and empathy, providing support and encouragement to continue their efforts. ■ Allow ample time in the daily schedule for children to enter into deep, concentrated periods of work and play. Provide cues and notice when transitions are coming up to allow children time to finish their work and save projects still in progress. ■ Provide space for children to save projects in progress. ■ Model the cycle of activity during work/choice time. Coach children to consider available choices, select activities, then complete and clean-up materials when finished to further reinforce the cycle of activity.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Persist in trying to tie their shoe. ■ Continue working on a painting until they are satisfied with the results. ■ Ask an adult to save an activity or project so they can continue working on it later. ■ Retry or attempt a new strategy to rebuild a fallen block tower. ■ Continue working on a puzzle until they are finished, while other children move on to another activity. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Return to a drawing, story, or journal entry over a period of days to add more content or detail. ■ Begin to explore longer books that may be read over a period of several days. ■ Respond "I'll come play as soon as I'm done" when another child invites them to play. ■ Keep working on an activity even after another child interrupts to show them something. ■ Complete a cycle of activity (select materials, work to their satisfaction, clean up, return materials), such as choosing a glitter pen and butterfly paper, writing a brief letter to their grandparents, putting the letter into their backpack, and returning the pen and extra paper to the shelf. 	

Indicator 3c. Set aside fear of failure when beginning a new or challenging task.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 1b](#) and [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1e](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create spaces where children can safely take risks and test their bodies, including walking, running, jumping, and climbing as their large motor development progresses.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Let go of furniture to take a step. ■ Begin to feed themselves. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to climb stairs by turning backward to go down on their knees. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to climb stairs to slide down a "big" play structure. ■ Insist on putting on their own coat. "I do it!" 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to buckle their own car seat. ■ Try to zip their coat or tie their shoe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Allow sufficient time during transitions for children to practice dressing for the outdoors independently. ■ Model various attempts at trying a solution to a problem. Acknowledge and talk about when something hasn't worked as expected and model trying again. ■ Encourage children to try their own solutions to problems.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Climb the rock wall on a play structure. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Write using invented spelling. 	

Indicator 3d. Identify when to seek support with a challenging task.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 1a](#) and [Social Studies Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	■ Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe their actions as they assist a child, which helps to confirm that they're there to support the child. E.g., "I can see/hear that you are uncomfortable. I'm glad you've shown/told me that. Let's check your diaper. I can help you into a dry diaper that will feel much better." ■ Make themselves available to help children if needed, and ensure children understand this by sharing verbally, such as saying, "Let's get our coats on to go outside. Bring your coat to me if you need help to put it on."
6-14 months	■ Emerging.	
12-26 months	■ Bring their shoes to a familiar adult for help.	
24-36 months	■ Bring a marker to a familiar adult for help opening the cap.	
3 years	■ Ask a familiar adult to write their name on their artwork.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure they are available and approachable when children are engaged in work/choice time. ■ Model asking others for help when needed and point out situations when help might be needed, such as holding papers together while someone else sticks tape on them to hold them in place.
4 years	■ Ask a familiar adult to start a new program on the computer.	
5 years	■ Ask a familiar adult or another child to hold the top of a block structure as they build the "tallest" tower.	

Indicator 3e. Demonstrate a growing capacity to make meaning, find a solution, or figure something out.

(See also: [Mathematics Indicator 1c](#) and [Engineering and Technology 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to self-soothe by sucking their thumb. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage children's repeated efforts to find solutions, such as stacking blocks, moving a bead through a bead maze, or turning the pages of a board book. ■ Narrate or describe children's efforts aloud, such as saying, "Oh, that one fell off the stack. Will you try again?"
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to reach for their pacifier or blanket to soothe them when they are upset. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to make the American Sign Language (ASL) signs for "more" or "milk" when their sippy cup is empty. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a sponge to paint instead of putting the paint on their hands. ■ Help move pillows to make space to read a story in the cozy corner. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with other children to complete a floor puzzle. ■ Use a ruler or wand to reach a toy that slid underneath a shelf. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model thinking when trying to solve a problem or find an answer, "thinking aloud" about their ideas and thought process. ■ Support children's problem-solving through encouragement, strategic observations, and questions such as, "Have you noticed that this (puzzle) piece is flat along one side?" or "What would happen if you turned that piece? Would that help it to fit into that space?" ■ Acknowledge children's frustrations with reflective language and empathy, providing support and encouragement to continue their efforts. ■ Allow ample time in the daily schedule for children to enter into deep, concentrated periods of work and play. Provide cues and notice when transitions are coming up to allow children time to finish their work and save projects still in progress.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Actively participate in a large group discussion to create a list of expectations for the learning environment. ■ Begin to use specific strategies to remember and find matches in a memory card game. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Figure out how many snacks are needed for the whole group. ■ Negotiate with other children to decide who goes first in a game. ■ Discuss who will take which role during pretend play. 	

Goal 4 Self-Regulation: Children develop an increasing ability to manage their emotions and behaviors.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-ATL 1; IT-ATL 2; IT-ATL 5; P-ATL 1; P-ATL 2; P-ATL 3; P-ATL 4; P-ATL 5)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I support children in expressing and managing their emotions? What strategies can I use, model, teach, and reteach that will help children express their emotions in safe and meaningful ways?

Indicator 4a. Manage the ways they express difficult or strong emotions.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 2a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4d](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2a](#), and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cry when distressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ “Think aloud” about what children might be feeling and what they are noticing that makes them think so. For example, “You’re smiling so big! I think you must be having a lot of fun!” ■ Model exaggerated facial expressions to show various emotions, such as wide eyes and mouth formed in a big ‘O’ shape to show surprise when something exciting happens. ■ Provide mirrors for children to look at themselves and see their own expressions of emotion.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put their thumb or pacifier into their mouth when distressed. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hold a favorite comfort item when distressed. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seek out a familiar adult for comfort. ■ When another child reaches for a toy they’re playing with, say, “Mine!” 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask a familiar adult for help in handling another child’s actions, such as asking another child to stop doing something. ■ Tell someone to “Stop!” ■ With adult guidance, take deep breaths to calm themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure they are available for children when they need help safely expressing their big emotions. ■ Support children in talking about how they feel. ■ Model and guide children in taking slow, deep breaths when they are upset or frustrated, until they can make choices about how to handle challenges and express their emotions.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Walk away from an upsetting situation. ■ Express frustration by stomping their feet or making a growling sound. ■ Tell someone they are being “mean” or doing something upsetting. ■ With adult reminders, take deep breaths and/or talk through their emotions. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explain why they are angry, sad, frustrated, etc. ■ Use self-talk and breathing techniques to help them manage strong emotions. 	

Indicator 4b. Manage their actions and the ways they communicate, increasingly referring to their previous experiences.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1c](#) and [Engineering and Technology Indicator 1b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to self-sooth when waiting for attention or to be picked up. ■ Put their thumb or pacifier into their mouth when distressed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond to children's individual needs and schedules. ■ Post a picture schedule at children's eye-level and refer to it when talking to children about what will come next.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Move across the floor to get a favorite comfort item. ■ Seek out a familiar adult for comfort, attention, or reassurance. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When the toy car they want to play with is in use, allow a familiar adult to redirect them to the dump truck. ■ Hold up an empty cup to ask for more water or milk. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listen to the story a familiar adult is already reading while holding their choice of book in their lap. ■ With adult support, begin to use words or signs to express their wants and needs. ■ With adult support, wait for their turn on the slide. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage in a new activity for a short time before returning to a favorite toy or activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Post a picture schedule at children's eye-level and refer to it when talking to children about what will come next. ■ Establish, teach, model, and reteach routines and processes for the learning environment, such as what to do when finished eating lunch and where materials belong on the shelves. ■ Model and "think aloud" about past experiences when making decisions, such as saying, "I remember that my ears were cold when we went outside this morning, so I'm going to wear my hat when we go out this afternoon," and "I remember tasting this food the last time it was served, and I liked it a lot, so I'm going to ask for it again."
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in a group cooking experience, helping to measure the ingredients and then wait for the food to be ready before getting to taste it. ■ Use a paintbrush for an art project because they remember not liking the texture of the paint on their hands. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wait to eat dessert until the end of their meal. ■ Try not to tell someone about a surprise gift or event 	

Indicator 4c. Consider another’s perspective in their learning and interactions.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 3c.](#))

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Touch to explore others’ faces as they develop a growing awareness of themselves as separate from others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Speak respectfully to children about other children’s likes, dislikes, similarities, and differences, such as, “Look, Nathan has red hair just like you!”
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond positively to a variety of familiar adults. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show preferences for which activities they do with different caregivers, such as gravitating toward one person for stories and songs, but another for active play. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize that their preferences may be different from others’, such as “I like ranch, Mama likes ketchup.” 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice and ask questions about differences in physical characteristics. For example: “My skin is dark. Why is Liana’s skin so light?” and “Joy has black hair but mine is yellow.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Speak respectfully to children about other children’s likes, dislikes, similarities, and differences, such as saying, “Tovah really likes playing with the dump trucks. Do you want to play with her?” ■ Chart children’s favorites, likes and dislikes, and other opinions and characteristics, and discuss the results respectfully. For example, saying, “Camila’s favorite color is yellow, and three people like green the best, and – wow! – red is six people’s favorite color! That is a very popular color!” ■ Model considering others’ thoughts and feelings when making choices. For example, explaining, “I decided to serve baby carrots instead of cheese and crackers for snack, because Daunis is allergic to milk. I thought it might make her sad to not be able to join us for snack.”
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell about their own family and cultural traditions and notice differences and similarities when others share their stories. “I have Hanukkah and Devon has Christmas, but we both get presents!” 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice and discuss differences between families’ beliefs, structures, and expectations. ■ During mealtime, point out that “Zeinab can only eat halal meat,” and another child answers, “Well, my family doesn’t eat any meat!” ■ Imitate or reiterate things family members have said, such as “My mom says...” 	



Social and Emotional Development

The **Social and Emotional Development** domain focuses on the dynamics of how children understand and relate to themselves and others. Children's social and emotional development is at the core of their ability to learn and grow. As children develop confidence in their own abilities and begin to understand that they are unique individuals, they become more confident, competent learners.

When children feel emotionally secure, they are better able to learn and thrive. Goals and indicators in the **Social and Emotional Development** domain demonstrate children's growing ability to have positive interactions with others, to control and understand their emotions, and to express themselves safely.

The goals of the Social and Emotional Development domain are:

Goal 1 Self-Awareness: Children recognize and value their own individuality, emotions, and strengths.

Goal 2 Self-Management: Children recognize the connections between their emotions and reactions and begin to control their impulses in different situations.

Goal 3 Social Awareness: Children demonstrate a growing ability to show care and understanding for the way other people feel, and begin to recognize that people may think, feel, and experience things differently from each other.

Goal 4 Relationship Skills: Children interact and communicate to form deep, caring connections, friendships, and other relationships, and to manage conflict.

Goal 5 Responsible Decision-Making: Children demonstrate an awareness of the ways their choices and actions may impact the emotional and physical well-being of themselves and others.

Goal 1 Self-Awareness: Children recognize and value their own individuality, emotions, and strengths.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-SE 10; IT-SE 11; IT-SE 12; P-ATL 11; P-SE 6; P-SE 9; P-SE 10) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I encourage children to explore their individuality and express themselves? What activities will I plan to support children's individuality?

What materials can I provide and what questions can I ask to support children in valuing themselves?

Indicator 1a. Demonstrate awareness of and recognize the value of their personal traits, including their strengths and interests.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3d](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at themselves in a mirror and then point and smile or laugh. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide unbreakable mirrors at children's eye-level. Play fingerplay games like <i>Viré viré koşê</i> and <i>This Little Piggy</i>. Describe children's actions, characteristics, and preferences. For example, saying, "I think you really like the green drum!" or "Your hair is curly, just like your mom's!" Provide dolls and other materials that represent children of different skin colors, cultures, and abilities.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeatedly pull themselves up to standing, laughing, and smiling each time they are successful. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pretend to brush their own hair with dramatic play props for a salon. Laugh and say, "Me!" when looking at themselves in a mirror. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeatedly choose to play with the tricycles during outdoor time. Show their artwork to a familiar adult. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choose picture books from the library that have main characters who look like them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite children to draw themselves after looking in a mirror. Plan opportunities for children to create books about themselves, including their self-portraits, drawings of their family, and information about their preferences at that time. Graph children's favorite colors or foods, their pets, etc. and prompt respectful conversations about the results. Provide materials and plan activities that incorporate children's interests.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Announce successes and accomplishments, such as "Look, I can climb to the top of the slide!" Point out, while a familiar adult reads the book <i>Abuela</i> to the group, that the Spanish words in the story are the same language they speak at home with their family. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare their drawing of a tree to the illustration in a book. Volunteer to explain what the Spanish words in <i>Abuela</i> mean while a familiar adult reads the story. 	

Indicator 1b. Demonstrate willingness to explore independently and try new things.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3c](#) and [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1e](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reach for a new toy or object that is offered to them. ■ Respond with interest, intense attention, or excitement to new objects and experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create spaces where children can safely take risks and test their bodies, including walking, running, jumping, and climbing as their large motor development progresses. ■ Provide opportunities to explore new materials, as well as new textures, colors, and sounds.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Crawl away from a familiar adult to play with a toy. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make a choice between two or more play options (blocks, finger painting). 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to do things for themselves, such as putting on a coat or putting away a blanket into a cubby. "I do it!" 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch other children's play with interest. ■ With encouragement, "join in" with play by sitting down nearby to play with the same objects (such as building their own tower near someone else's construction). ■ Explore new materials or experiences (like a playground structure) with a familiar child or adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model attempts at trying new things. ■ Acknowledge and talk about when something hasn't worked as expected and model trying again. ■ Gently encourage children to try new experiences.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Join a group of familiar children in playing a new game. ■ With encouragement, introduce themselves to an unfamiliar child and go play with them. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch other children play for a moment or two to get a sense of what's happening and then go to join in. ■ Be reluctant to try new things that may require skills they haven't mastered. ■ May resist repeating experiences they were not previously successful with. 	

Goal 2 Self-Management: Children recognize the connections between their emotions and reactions and begin to control their impulses in different situations.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-ATL 1; IT-ATL 2; IT-ATL 4; IT-ATL 5; IT-SE 6; IT-SE 9; P-ATL 1; P-ATL 4; P-ATL 5; P-SE 6; P-SE 8) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions will I ask to encourage children to express their thoughts and emotions safely? What routines and processes will I establish to support children’s developing ability to manage their reactions and emotions?

Indicator 2a. Express their emotions freely, and begin to identify and manage those emotions, with support from familiar adults.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3a](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 4a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4d](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2a](#), and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ React to a familiar adult’s actions or tone of voice. ■ Laugh at an “over the top” silly face. ■ Relax or calm down when a familiar adult pats them gently or sings quietly to them. ■ Turn away when they don’t want something. ■ Cry to express emotion. ■ Smile and laugh when discovering their toes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Acknowledge children’s expressions of emotion. For example, saying, “He’s funny, isn’t he?” when a child laughs at a puppet, or “Oh, you’re not so sure about that, are you?” when a child pulls away from something. ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Comfort children and acknowledge their emotions. ■ Provide mirrors at children’s eye-level so they can watch their own expressions of emotion.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to initiate interactions, such as seeking out a familiar adult for comfort. ■ Begin to more consciously understand that expressing their emotions will prompt a response from caregiving adults, such as clapping and laughing and then looking at a caregiving adult to check for their response. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Find physical ways to communicate their feelings, such as clapping, throwing, and biting or hitting themselves or others. ■ Seek out a comfort item (stuffy, blanket) when they are feeling sad or anxious. ■ Cry or yell when sad, angry, frustrated, or overwhelmed. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to label their own emotions. For example, knocking down a block tower, stomping a foot, and announcing, “Mad! Mad, mad, mad!” ■ Shout “No!” and stomp their foot to disagree with a request. ■ Move to a familiar adult when seeking comfort. ■ Use a combination of verbal and non-verbal communication to express their feelings, such as laughing and calling out, “Whee!” when playing on a slide. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to express emotions physically or in big ways, such as squealing and twirling in a circle, throwing a toy, or shouting "No!" With adult support, practice using words or signs to express their emotions, needs, and wants. Announce that "He's funny" when laughing at an adult being silly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure they are available for children when they need help safely expressing their big emotions. Encourage and support children in talking about how they feel. Acknowledge children's emotions and comfort them when needed. For example, offering a hug when a child is sad or angry, and assuring them that these emotions are normal and okay. Offer options for how to handle situations that prompt big emotions, such as encouraging a child to jump in place to express their excitement about a visitor, rather than screaming; or to run as fast as they can on the playground to express their anger, instead of yelling, hitting, or throwing toys. Model and guide children in taking slow breaths, draw a picture of how they feel, or other calming methods when they are upset or frustrated, until they can make choices about how to handle challenges and express their emotions.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek out a familiar adult to explain their interpretations of what is happening to cause their emotions. "Billy is being mean to me!" Continue to sometimes express emotions physically, such as knocking down another child's block tower because that child wouldn't let them play. Verbally express what they are feeling. Say, "That was fun!" or "I don't like that," after trying a new activity. With adult support, identify their emotions and use breathing techniques to manage them. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express disappointment by crumpling a paper they made a mistake on. Express themselves through words or signs and attempt to explain the whole story of why they feel the way they do. Use "belly breathing," "bunny breathing," or other techniques to manage their own emotions. Verbally express what they are feeling using a bigger and more detailed vocabulary, such as saying, "I'm excited because my mom is taking me to gymnastics today," or "I'm proud of me and Josie because we built the tallest tower." Tell a familiar adult that they are mad, angry, or sad because another child took the toy they were playing with. 	

Indicator 2b. Demonstrate flexibility and an increasing ability to adapt to changes and setbacks.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3b](#) and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cry to express their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Arrange the environment strategically to create smaller “spaces within the space” that offer children opportunity to concentrate and engage with materials more deeply. ■ Ensure ample time for children to engage deeply in their play. ■ Encourage children's efforts to repeatedly try stacking blocks or interacting with a toy to get the desired effect.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn to a favorite comfort item to calm and comfort themselves. ■ Demonstrate anticipation for what they expect to come next based on consistent, predictable routines. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to do things for themselves beyond their own skill level and get frustrated with their mistakes and difficulties. ■ With adult support, participate in the transition to the playground. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attempt to do things for themselves or others, sometimes insistently. ■ Have more or less comfort with changes in routine or with attempting new tasks than another child. ■ Make choices from a limited selection of options, such as “Do you want to play with the cars and the blocks, or do you want to fingerpaint?” 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Readily cooperate with routines and tasks when provided with the opportunity to make choices throughout their day. ■ Demonstrate an understanding that different settings have different routines and expectations, such as home and school. ■ Show understanding that they can run on the playground but not indoors. ■ Tolerate and enjoy a moderate degree of change, surprises, uncertainty, and potentially puzzling events. ■ Manage transitions and follow routines most of the time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Allow ample time for children to engage deeply in their work and play. ■ Model “thinking aloud” about what can be learned from a setback, such as wondering if a wider base will make a block tower more stable. ■ Prepare children for changes to the regular daily routine by referring to the picture schedule and explaining clearly what will change and why, as well as what will stay the same. ■ Model and “think aloud” about how to handle changes and disappointment, such as saying, “I was looking forward to reading a story together after choice time, but I know we will have fun with the Music Lady.” ■ Offer children control over parts of the changing schedule, when possible, such as saying, “I was looking forward to reading a story together after choice time, but I know we will have fun with the Music Lady. Will you help me choose which story we should read after lunch time?”
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With support, retry a difficult task. ■ When a paint stroke spatters across the paper, look to a familiar adult for reassurance, and then with that support, incorporate the spatters into the painting as stars or something else. ■ When it is time to transition from learning centers to lunch, help carry the transition sign around to inform their peers. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish and maintain a familiar goodbye routine for separating from a family member at school, such as turning around at the door to blow a kiss goodbye. ■ Follow routines with little prompting, such as going to put a coat on when a familiar adult says, “It’s time to go outside.” ■ Notice that a chosen activity is “full” and make a different choice. ■ Persist in a challenging task, such as putting together a puzzle and working through trying a puzzle piece in different spots until it fits. 	

Goal 3 Social Awareness: Children demonstrate a growing ability to show care and understanding for the way other people feel, and begin to recognize that people may think, feel, and experience things differently from each other.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-SE 7; IT-SE 8; IT-SE 11; P-SE 6; P-SE 7) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B; 2.L)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I model caring for others' feelings and thoughts to support children's developing empathy? What experiences will I offer that provide children with opportunities to recognize others' thoughts and feelings? What questions will I ask to encourage children to consider others' perspectives?

Indicator 3a. Recognize other people's emotions and respond with care, sensitivity, and later empathy.		
Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mimic or imitate others' facial expressions. ■ Notice and show interest in others' facial expressions, tones of voice, or actions. ■ Respond to another child crying by beginning to cry. ■ Begin to show awareness of and interest in other babies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Acknowledge children's expressions of emotion. For example, saying, "He's being funny, isn't he?" when a child laughs at a puppet, or "Oh, you're not so sure about that, are you?" when a child pulls away from something. ■ Comfort children and acknowledge their emotions. ■ Provide mirrors at children's eye-level so they can watch their own expressions of emotion. ■ Model exaggerated facial expressions to show various emotions, such as wide eyes and mouth formed in a big 'O' shape to show surprise when something exciting happens.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to anticipate others' facial expressions, such as looking to a familiar adult and smiling when a favorite song is played. ■ Respond to a familiar adult's emotional expression, such as laughing when the adult laughs, or crying when the adult is upset. ■ Imitate others' actions, such as bouncing or wiggling when others dance. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow older children as they move around. ■ Interact briefly with other children and show enjoyment of that interaction through gestures, vocalizations, and facial expressions. ■ Notice when others are upset and show concern. ■ Offer a pat on the back or a hug when they notice someone crying. ■ Clap, smile, bounce, or dance when someone else is laughing or showing joy. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to label their own and others' emotions with increasing accuracy, such as "Papa sad" when their father is crying. ■ Ask questions about others' emotions, such as "Why crying?" ■ Try to help someone who is upset, such as by offering a hug or a stuffed animal. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize and respond to other children's expression of strong feelings, such as laughing when other children are laughing. ■ Notice and label, with increasing accuracy, non-verbal indicators of others' strong feelings, such as "Jalen's mad!" when another child stomps their foot. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Speak respectfully to children about other children's likes, dislikes, similarities, and differences, such as saying, "Tovah really likes playing with the dump trucks. Do you want to play with her?"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to predict and identify the cause and/or consequence of others' emotions, such as "My puppy loves me. He barks and wags his tail and licks me when I come home!" ■ Briefly try to help someone who is upset by thinking about that person's specific needs. For example, Donetta is sad, and Francesca gets Donetta's blanket from her cubby to help or goes to tell an adult that Donetta needs help. ■ Notice more subtle expressions of emotion from others, such as recognizing that a child who is standing outside a group of children playing a game might be shy or nervous to join in. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model considering others' thoughts and feelings when making choices. For example, explaining, "I decided to serve baby carrots instead of cheese and crackers for snack, because Daunis is allergic to milk. I thought it might make her sad to not be able to join us for snack." ■ Ensure that children are able to see them as a trusted adult, a safe person to show their emotions. ■ Model responding to the perception of others' emotions with care and concern. For example, saying, "I see that Jerome has his arms crossed and he's frowning at his painting. I'm going to offer him a hug and ask what's wrong. Maybe I can help him feel better."
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to predict and identify the cause and/or consequence of others' emotions in stories, such as "I think the pigs are scared of the wolf, even though they're acting brave when they say, 'not by the hair of my chinny chin chin.'" or "I think the wolf is getting angry because the pigs are teasing him." ■ Begin to respond to others with empathy – "I'm sorry your grandma couldn't come to the lunch today, Jordan. You can sit with me and my grandma!" ■ Accurately recognize and label the emotions of others with increasing consistency, especially those who are familiar, but also growing to include strangers and those in stories and other media. 	

Indicator 3b. Recognize and respond to social cues.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Literacy Development Indicator 1a](#) and [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn their head in response to a familiar adult's voice or presence. ■ Begin to smile and engage in serve and return responses with familiar adults. ■ Look attentively at, touch, or explore another person's face. ■ Wave hello or goodbye. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Model hello/goodbye and other interactions. ■ Talk to children about their play, particularly when a child seems interested in what someone else is doing. For example, "Did you see that Sascha is playing with the drum? Bang, bang! Do you want to play with a drum too?" ■ Plan opportunities for children to interact with supervision, to play near and with each other, and support their growing awareness of social cues. For example, saying, "I see that Sonya is reaching for the fire truck. I think she wants to play with us. Yes, Sonya, you can play trucks with us! Here, you can have the fire truck to play with," and "Look, Jackson is waving bye-bye over his dad's shoulder. We should wave back to him!"
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mimic others' emotions, such as smiling or giggling in response to another's smile or giggle or crying in response to another infant's cry. ■ Participate in simple back and forth with another child or familiar adult. ■ Begin to imitate others' actions: clapping when they clap or dancing when others move. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to imitate others' action in a wider variety of situations: notice another child rolling a toy car down a ramp and then do the same, or watch another child run and laugh and then start to run and laugh themselves. ■ Begin to seek out adult reactions to their actions to help them decide whether or not to do it again (fall down and laugh, then check to see if the adult is laughing before standing up and falling down laughing again). 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond verbally when interacting with peers (e.g., laughing or babbling). ■ Seek out other children for social interaction, including initiating contact and responding to others. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interact with another child who is playing in the block corner alongside them. ■ Understand facial expressions, vocal tone, and physical tension as cues to engage or not engage with another person. ■ Wave someone "toward them" to show them something or seek help. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk about the social situations in stories, point out and/or ask questions about the cues that characters are responding to. For example, saying, "Oh, the baby is holding out her arms toward her grandma. What do you think she wants?" ■ Talk to families about the cues common in their home or culture, as well as cues that may be misunderstood. For example, in some cultures, pointing at people with a forefinger is considered rude, and so may be confusing to some children. Many cultures have widely varying expectations around eye contact, as well. For example, avoiding eye contact shows respect in some Native American and Asian cultures. ■ Model social cues and responses and support children from all home cultures in understanding cues from the children and adults around them.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Comment on what another child is doing. ■ Give a hug to a child who is crying. ■ Begin to play with friends, for example playing games or building together. ■ Talk with other children during snack or mealtime. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand the difference between helpful and hurtful ways to get something or meet a need. ■ Move a toy or chair out of the path of a child in a wheelchair or walking with leg braces. ■ Notice when there is space in a play area for them to join, and recognize non-verbal cues, such as the other children looking up and smiling at them when they approach, as a tool to help them decide if they will ask to join. 	

Indicator 3c. Demonstrate an understanding that the diverse community of people around them have unique strengths and experiences to share and should be treated with respect.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 1a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4c](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1f](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to recognize their own body parts – find their hands and fingers. ■ Begin to respond to others' actions, facial expressions, and speech through their own vocalizations, movements, and facial expressions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide mirrors for children to look at themselves. ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Respond to children's individual needs. ■ Speak respectfully to children about similarities and differences between people, such as pointing out that a character in a story wears glasses "just like Ms. Letitia." ■ Provide dolls and other materials that represent children of different skin colors, cultures, and abilities.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show a growing awareness of their own physical characteristics – seeing themselves in the mirror and in pictures, touching their own nose when asked. ■ Show interest in pictures of themselves and their own families, as well as pictures of other young children. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to recognize their own belongings in contrast to the belongings of others (such as shoes, clothing, comfort items, etc.). ■ Continue to show interest in pictures of themselves and their own families, as well as pictures of other young children. ■ 24-36 months ■ Notice the similarities and differences between their own and others' physical characteristics, such as commenting on their hair being a different color than a friend's. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond verbally when interacting with peers (e.g., laughing or babbling). ■ Seek out other children for social interaction, including initiating contact and responding to others. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show increased understanding of their own strengths and interests in contrast to others'. "I'm a good climber!" and "You like purple, but I like green." ■ Describe their interests, ideas, and likes and dislikes when prompted. For example, responding with a color name when a familiar adult asks which colors, they want to play with, or answering a question about their favorite animal. ■ Draw pictures of their family or share a special object related to their family traditions or cultural heritage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Speak respectfully to children about similarities and differences between people, such as saying, "I noticed that your grampa brought you here today, Nora. Did you know that Sonali's grampa brought her today too?" or mentioning that two children in the group both speak Spanish at home just like Mia's Abuela in Mango, Abuela, and Me. ■ Invite children to draw themselves after looking in a mirror. ■ Plan opportunities for children to create books about themselves, including their self-portraits, drawings of their family, and information about their preferences at that time. ■ Provide materials and plan activities that incorporate children's interests and identities. ■ Work with families to learn more about children's personal cultural identities, such as their family traditions, culture, and language.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show increased understanding that others have differing interests, thoughts, beliefs, ideas, feelings, and strengths. "Seanan is fast when she runs!" "Miguel likes to play in the kitchen." ■ Begin to differentiate themselves more clearly from others. "My dad doesn't like to fish, but me and my grandpa do." ■ Share a story about a family gathering or otherwise describe their connections to their family and community. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify themselves as being part of various groups, such as their family, their neighborhood community, their faith, their school community, as well as their racial, cultural, linguistic, and gender identities. ■ Ask for help with something from another child because they recognize it is a strength of the other child. ■ Describe themselves and others using multiple characteristics, including physical features, talents, culture, and interests. ■ Share stories about being part of a different group than the one they're talking to. "When I was at the family reunion..." ■ Recognize and name similarities and differences in their roles, expectations, and behaviors across different groups and settings. 	

Goal 4 Relationship Skills: Children interact and communicate to form deep, caring connections, friendships, and other relationships, and to manage conflict.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-SE 1; IT-SE 2; IT-SE 3; IT-SE 4; IT-SE 5; IT-SE 10; IT-SE 13; P-SE 1; P-SE 2; P-SE 3; P-SE 4; P-SE 5; P-SE 11) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B; 2.L)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I ensure that children are able to see me as a trusted adult? How will I ensure that our learning environment is a safe space for children's developing relationship and conflict management skills? What will I do to support children in developing caring relationships with others in the group? What routines will I establish to support children in developing conflict management skills?

Indicator 4a. Demonstrate healthy attachment to and trust in familiar adults in their lives.

(See also: [Social Studies Indicator 1b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Calm when comforted by a familiar adult. ■ 6-14 months ■ Look for or reach out to a familiar adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish and maintain primary care groups that allow children to develop trusting relationships with the adults who are consistently caring for them. ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Make themselves available to help children if needed, and ensure children understand this by sharing verbally, such as saying, "Let's get our coats on to go outside. Bring your coat to me if you need help to put it on." ■ Provide mirrors at children's eye-level so they can watch their own expressions of emotion.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Check in for comfort when needed and begin to show confidence in exploring and expressing emotions. ■ Begin to tolerate increasing intervals of separation from a familiar adult. ■ Look back at a familiar adult to reassure themselves that the adult is still present and attentive. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pretend to brush their own hair with dramatic play props for a salon. ■ Laugh and say, "Me!" when looking at themselves in a mirror. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Periodically return to a familiar adult for a cuddle or hug during their play. ■ Express emotion (sadness, upset) if they realize that a familiar adult has moved on to other activities and is no longer nearby or where they last saw them. "Where did Mama go?" 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to comfortably interact with an increasing number of significant people in their lives beyond families and primary caregivers. ■ Glance back at familiar adults to reassure themselves they are not "alone." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure they are available for children when they need help safely expressing their big emotions. ■ Acknowledge children's emotions with reflective language and empathy, providing support and encouragement whenever needed. ■ Ensure that children are able to see them as a trusted adult, a safe person to show their emotions.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Look to or ask adults for comfort and help when needed. ■ Seek out affection from familiar adults. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show comfort and confidence in expressing themselves to familiar adults. ■ Be eager to share their accomplishments with familiar adults. ■ Sit near or lean against a trusted familiar adult. 	

Indicator 4b. Demonstrate an ability to initiate and sustain interactions and communication with others, primarily in their home language.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 2a](#) and [Communication, Language and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicate their needs to familiar adults with a variety of behaviors, including crying or looking at the adult or the object of interest, smiling, and later dropping or banging objects, reaching, or pointing. ■ Show interest in peers: watch or reach out to a peer, imitate a peer's sounds/actions, respond to a peer playing with a toy by watching, touching the peer, or reaching for the toy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Imitate children in respectful ways during play and encourage them to continue the repetition. ■ Ensure children have opportunities to play and interact with each other while being closely supervised, such as by providing activities that require two participants. ■ Model and "think aloud" about their own thoughts and actions during interactions with children. ■ Respectfully point out and describe what others are doing or might be feeling, such as saying, "I think Jeremiah likes fingerpainting. Every time he puts his hand in the paint, he laughs!" ■ Provide duplicates of toys. ■ Read stories about children playing together.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engages in back-and-forth interactions with familiar adults (Peek-a-Boo, making vocalizations in response to adult interaction, imitating facial expressions). ■ Play simple imitation games, such as mimicking another child's sounds or running after another child when that child runs. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to communicate their needs to familiar adults with a variety of behaviors, including smiling, reaching, or pointing, dropping, or banging objects, and later leading the adult by the hand. ■ Begin to participate in parallel play (playing next to another child with similar toys). ■ Shake/nod their head or say yes/no to indicate their needs and wants. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to engage in play with other children: participate independently in the same activity and occasionally talk or share toys; sometimes play together with a common goal such as building with blocks or playing pretend. ■ Sometimes take turns when playing with other children. ■ Show increasing interest in interacting with other children. ■ Sometimes engage with adults by saying hello or goodbye without prompting and respond to requests or directions. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show preference for certain children and greet them by name. ■ Communicate their own ideas and ask for help when needed. ■ Begin engaging in social play by mimicking other children's play, such as when other children are playing a running game, begin to run and check if they've been noticed and included. ■ Enter play by making suggestions for other children's play, such as holding out a lion toy to children building a zoo and saying, "You could put the lion in that one!" ■ Engage in simple cooperative play with others and begin to extend the length of that play. ■ Engage in longer reciprocal (back-and-forth) interactions with adults to talk about their experiences. For example, a child might tell a familiar adult, "I went to the zoo!" and then answer a series of questions about what they saw at the zoo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model, teach, and reteach how to take turns and play with friends. ■ Provide activities that require two or more participants. ■ Ask supportive questions, such as, "How could you help each other?", "What can you do to help with that?", and "How can you work together on that?" ■ Model and support children in joining others' play by saying things like, "Do you want to play with De'Andre and Min? Let's go ask if you can join them." ■ Build large blocks of time into the daily schedule for children to interact with each other during structured and unstructured activities, both indoors and outside.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play cooperatively with others with increasing intentionality, including making plans with other children about what to play and how (the "rules" of their game or play, for example). ■ Show excitement or relief when they can make themselves understood in their home language. ■ Begin to show interest in the feelings, likes and dislikes, and general wellbeing of familiar adults. ■ Engage in longer interactions with both familiar and new adults, with more back-and-forth communication. ■ Usually respond to requests and directions from familiar adults. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Usually engage with adults by saying hello or goodbye without prompting, respond to requests or directions from familiar adults, and ask or wait for permission from a familiar adult if they are not sure about something. ■ Engage in joint play with others, with increasing intentionality, including making plans for goals, roles, rules, and expectations of their play—and demonstrate willingness to include others' ideas in that planning. ■ Maintain and show enjoyment (smiles, laughter, etc.) of positive interactions with other children. ■ Use new or additional strategies to enter play with others: suggest something to do together ("Do you want to play hide and seek?"), offer to share a toy, and join into existing play ("Can I be the dad in the family?"). ■ Take turns in conversation with other children. 	

Indicator 4c. Develop and maintain deep, caring connections, friendships, and other relationships with people of various cultures, family structures, home languages, racial identities, genders and gender identities, abilities and disabilities, religious beliefs, and socio-economic classes.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 1a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 3c](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn toward a familiar voice. ■ Smile at or reach out to a familiar adult. ■ Quiet when held by a familiar adult. ■ Look at or touch another child's face. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Respond to children's individual needs. ■ Model and "think aloud" about their own thoughts and actions during interactions with children. ■ Respectfully point out and describe what others are doing or might be feeling, such as saying, "I think Jeremiah likes fingerpainting. Every time he puts his hand in the paint, he laughs!" ■ Establish and maintain primary care groups that allow children to develop trusting relationships with the adults who are consistently caring for them. ■ Plan opportunities for children to interact and play near and with each other, with supervision.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reach out to, touch, or smile at familiar children. ■ Respond positively to familiar adults offering comfort or help in stressful moments. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gravitate toward and interact regularly with a small group of other children. ■ Participate in simple interactions with other children, such as passing toys back and forth. ■ Spontaneously hug a familiar adult, family member, or another child they interact with regularly. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to gravitate toward and interact regularly with a small group of other children. ■ Sit with other children to play with the same toys, such as playdough or blocks. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show preferences for playing with specific children. ■ Engage in pretend play that allows them to explore the roles of favorite adults. ■ Spontaneously play alongside or join in play with other children, familiar or unfamiliar. ■ With support and prompting, introduce themselves to unfamiliar children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide materials for children to engage in pretend play with each other, and to explore different roles. ■ Organize the learning environment with ample space for children to interact, play, and work with each other. ■ Respectfully point out and describe what others are doing or might be feeling, such as saying, "Did you notice Bradley on the slide? He's screaming and laughing when he goes around the curve. Do you think he's having fun?" ■ Model and "think aloud" about expressions of and opportunities for friendship, such as by saying, "I noticed that you and Ahmad both really like playing with the firetrucks together, and you were riding bikes together today on the playground. It looks like the two of you are growing to be pretty good friends!"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask other children and familiar adults questions about their families and home lives. ■ Stand on the edge of a group of children they would like to join. ■ Play with the same few children consistently. ■ Engage in play with unfamiliar children and, with reminders, introduce themselves. ■ Ask to play with a new friend again. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify "best friends." ■ Engage in conversation and play with unfamiliar children. ■ Form quick connections with other children who have similar interests or other common ground. 	

Indicator 4d. Express disagreement and begin to manage conflict in safe, developmentally appropriate ways.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3a](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 4a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 2a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2a](#), and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cry to express their needs, discomfort, and/or frustration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond to children's individual needs. ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Comfort children and acknowledge their emotions. ■ Provide mirrors at children's eye-level so they can watch their own expressions of emotion.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seek out a familiar adult for comfort. ■ Continue to cry to express discomfort and frustration. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Find physical ways to communicate their frustration, such as throwing or banging toys, or biting or hitting themselves or others. ■ Seek out a comfort item when they are frustrated. ■ Cry or yell when sad, angry, frustrated, or overwhelmed. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Knock down another child's block tower because they want to play with the blocks themselves. ■ Shout "No!" and stomp their foot to disagree with a request. ■ Move to a familiar adult when seeking comfort. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to express emotions physically or in big ways, such as shouting "No!" when they disagree or don't want to do something. With adult support, practice using words or signs to express their feelings, as well as the reason for a disagreement or conflict, and their ideas for how to resolve the issue. Seek out a familiar adult to help resolve conflicts with other children. Use signs, words and phrases that have been modeled for them, when attempting to resolve conflicts. "I don't like that." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure they are available for children when they need help safely expressing their big emotions. Acknowledge children's emotions, encourage and support them in talking about how they feel, and comfort them when needed. For example, offering a hug when a child is sad or angry, and assuring them that these emotions are normal and okay. Offer options for how to handle conflicts and other situations that prompt big emotions, such as talking about how each person feels, negotiating for compromise, and taking turns with an object both children want.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek out a familiar adult to explain their interpretations of what is happening to cause their emotions. "Billy is being mean to me!" Continue to sometimes express emotions physically, such as knocking down another child's block tower because that child wouldn't let them play. With adult support, identify their big emotions and use breathing techniques to manage them. With adult support and reinforcement, listen to another child's perspective about a conflict, and work together to come up with ideas for a resolution. Suggest ideas to help resolve conflicts. "I'm playing with this doll, but you can have that one." Sometimes take turns or work out other small conflicts with other children. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express disappointment in others by announcing that they "hate" the other person. Express themselves through words or signs and attempt to explain the whole story of a particular conflict and why they feel this way. With reminders, use "belly breathing," "bunny breathing," or other techniques to manage their own emotions during a conflict. Tell a familiar adult that they are mad, angry, or sad because another child took the toy they were playing with. Negotiate with other children to decide who will get the first turn, with adult support. Share, and ask to share, toys with other children, most of the time. Apologize for stepping on another child's toy. Seek out a familiar adult when they need help to resolve a conflict. 	

Goal 5 Responsible Decision-Making: Children demonstrate an awareness of the ways their choices and actions may impact the emotional and physical well-being of themselves and others.

([HS-ELOF](#): P-ATL 2; P-ATL 3) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B; 2.K; 2.L)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to encourage children to recognize and show consideration for the needs, wants, and preferences of others? How will I model fairness, consideration, and positively participating in the community? How will I support children in making choices that reflect their understanding of fairness, consideration, and the expectations of specific situations?

Indicator 5a. Begin to make choices that reflect their understanding of fairness and unfairness, as well as the boundaries and expectations of various situations.

(See also: [Social Studies Indicator 2a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and maintain primary care groups that allow children to develop trusting relationships with the adults who are consistently caring for them. Provide duplicates of toys. Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. Model, teach, and reteach consistent expectations, such as reminding a group of children that they're expected to stop at the doorway before going out onto the playground, acknowledging when a child follows that expectation, or quietly reminding a child who forgot to stop at the doorway what the expectation was.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cry when another child takes the toy they were playing with or wanted to play with. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the boundaries of acceptable behavior or actions in a given situation, such as stepping a few feet past a line they were told to stop at and looking back at a familiar adult. Practice their new climbing skills by continuing to climb on top of a low table repeatedly, even after being taken down and told that it's not safe. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hit another child while saying "ouch!" or touch an off-limits item while saying "no!" Be unsettled by changing expectations or routines, and may express that through tears, or refusal to participate. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out that they are “allowed” to do something or behave a certain way in another situation – “But Papa says I can!” ■ Inform other children of an expectation they’re not following, for example “You can’t climb on that!” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish, model, teach, and reteach consistent and reasonable expectations for the indoor learning environment, outdoor space, and other situations. ■ Ensure they are available to support children with challenging situations and changing expectations. ■ Invite children to help pass out plates, napkins, and utensils for snacks and meals—one for each person. ■ Model and show respect for families’ differing expectations, such as saying, “Yes, you’re right that Salim won’t be having a ham sandwich, but that’s why we have turkey sandwiches and cheese sandwiches too—so everyone can enjoy our picnic lunch.”
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell a familiar adult when other children aren’t following expectations or boundaries, such as “Arisa didn’t put the markers away.” ■ Expect fairness in all situations. ■ Expresses frustration when boundaries or expectations are not applied consistently – “That’s not fair” and “Why can’t I do that too?” ■ Question a familiar adult’s instructions (“Why do I have to do that?”) while another child quietly and immediately complies. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize and express frustration or confusion about the differences between their own families’ expectations and the expectations of other families for their children – “But Salim’s mom lets him do it!” ■ Verbalize or demonstrate their internal debate around whether or not to break a rule or follow expectations – “I want more crackers, but Mr. Taylor told me to wait.” 	

Indicator 5b. Show a desire to positively participate in their community (family, learning environment, school, community) through showing care and consideration for others.

(See also: [Social Studies Indicator 1d](#) and [Social Studies Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Look at others attentively. ■ Touch others' faces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish and maintain primary care groups that allow children to develop trusting relationships with the adults who are consistently caring for them. ■ Focus on the child during feeding and diapering, maintaining eye contact and communication with that child. ■ Model hello/goodbye interactions, as well as exaggerated facial expressions to show various emotions, such as a big smile, clapping hands, and saying "Yay!" when a child pulls up for the first time. ■ Help children with tasks as needed, modeling care and consideration for others, such as by offering to put a soft block on top of a stack that is taller than the child can reach. ■ Talk to children about their play, particularly when a child seems interested in what someone else is doing. For example, "Did you see that Sascha is playing with the drum? Bang, bang! Do you want to play with a drum too?" ■ Plan opportunities for children to interact with supervision, to play near and with each other.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make sounds directed at other children. ■ Recognize familiar adults and other children by their voices, such as turning toward a familiar child when they begin to babble. ■ Smile and reach out when they see their primary caregiver. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage with their environment after drop-off time, being willing to join in with activities and play opportunities. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to attend to and engage with stories, songs, and other activities for increasingly longer periods of time. ■ Begin to engage with day-to-day activities with increasing levels of participation, interest, and responsibility. For example, picking up the toys they played with and later, with adult support, moving throughout the room to help tidy other areas as well. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Express spontaneous affection—running up to give a hug, for example—to the people with whom they spend a lot of time. ■ Engage with their day-to-day routines with increasing levels of interest, participation, and responsibility, such as taking on the role of “gardener” to water the plants or offering their opinion on which of two story choices they should read as a group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Invite children to help decide what new dramatic play experiences they would enjoy, and invite them to help create props to support those experiences. ■ Encourage children to help and support each other, such as by sharing limited materials and coming up with ideas to include them in play. ■ Model asking others for help when needed and point out situations when help might be needed, such as holding papers together while someone else sticks tape on them to hold them in place. ■ Establish, teach, model, and reteach routines and processes for the learning environment, such as what to do when finished eating lunch and where materials belong on the shelves. ■ Model responding to the perception of others' emotions with care and concern. For example, saying, “I see that Jerome has his arms crossed and he's frowning at his painting. I'm going to offer him a hug and ask what's wrong. Maybe I can help him feel better.”
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in a group discussion to decide on expectations in the learning environment. ■ Repeat the language of a particular expectation when they see another child acting outside that boundary. ■ Follow expectations or boundaries set in varying situations, most of the time. ■ Show increasing comfort in taking on different roles in their environment (e.g., helping others, turning off the water, holding the door). ■ Put their own belongings away with prompting. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in a group discussion to decide on expectations for the learning environment and offer detailed suggestions. ■ Continue to follow expectations or boundaries set in varying situations, most of the time. ■ Care for the environment with increasing responsibility and skill (e.g., cleaning up, wiping the table, flushing the toilet, helping others). ■ Offer help to peers when they notice someone is struggling with an activity. ■ Put their own belongings away without prompting, most of the time. 	



Physical Development and Health

The **Physical Development and Health** domain focuses on children's control over and understanding of their bodies and health. Attitudes, understanding, and practices around physical development and health are built over a lifetime, but begin at birth.

Children are naturally curious about their bodies and what they can do. Adults in caregiving roles support, encourage, and extend that curiosity through positive and playful interactions. Celebrating an infant rolling over, using a hand-over-hand technique to help a toddler control a spoon, and playing catch with preschoolers are all part of this process.

Children's developing understanding and habits around nutrition and hygiene are also shaped by the adults who care for them. By encouraging children's curiosity about different foods, caregiving adults reinforce positive attitudes toward healthy eating habits. Similarly, as caregiving adults teach and model hygiene skills and routines, they support children in the process of taking control of their own personal care.

Goals and indicators in the **Physical Development and Health** domain are expressions of positive attitudes and skills that build a foundation for healthy approaches to movement, hygiene, and nutrition, and body image.

The goals of the Physical Development and Health domain are:

Goal 1 Body Awareness: Children begin to understand their bodies and how they function.

Goal 2 Large Motor: Children explore and begin to develop skill in using their large muscles.

Goal 3 Fine Motor: Children explore and begin to develop skill in using their small muscles.

Goal 4 Personal Care and Hygiene: Children recognize and practice the ways they can support and advocate for their own needs and the safety of themselves and others.

Goal 5 Nutrition: Children experience and become aware of the ways foods and drinks affect their bodies.

Goal 1 Body Awareness: Children begin to understand their bodies and how they function.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-PMP 1; IT-PMP 2; IT-PMP 5; P-PMP 2) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.C)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to encourage children to notice the movement and parts of their bodies? What materials can I provide to ensure that children have a wide variety of sensory experiences in the learning environment? What activities will I plan to provide children with opportunities to explore the ways their bodies can move?

Indicator 1a. Use their senses (hearing, vision, taste, touch, smell) and their voices to perceive and respond to the world around them.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 5b](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 1a](#), and [Science Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Startle and then turn toward noises, including voices. (Startle response begins to decrease around 6 weeks through 6 months.) Recognize and respond to smells in the environment – for example, being comforted by smells related to familiar adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a variety of sensory objects and materials to engage the senses (touch, smell, taste, etc.). Provide mirrors for children to look at themselves. Provide dolls and other materials that represent children of different skin colors, cultures, and abilities.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show preferences for specific blankets or toys by moving toward the things they want or away from things they do not want. Show preferences for different tastes and textures in food by leaning toward food they want more of or spitting out something they didn't enjoy. Move toward people they want to interact with. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show interest in new foods based on texture and taste. Interact with toys that make noise (or that represent real-life objects that make noise) and mimic that sound. Put things in their mouth to check how it tastes and if it is edible. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop their food preferences by feeding themselves. Tell a story based on the pictures in a familiar book. Suck their thumb, carry a blanket, or use other self-soothing methods. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Smell smoke from a bonfire outside and tell a familiar adult about it. ■ Take a drink of milk and recognize that it tastes bad and tell a familiar adult. ■ Feel a bump on their arm and tell a familiar adult it is itchy. ■ Identify smells (like spices or familiar smells) from smelling jars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Allow children to move materials from one learning area to another. ■ Provide a variety of materials that encourage exploration and experimentation.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Smell food being delivered for lunch and say, "That smells like chicken!" ■ Taste different foods and decide if they like them or not. ■ Close their eyes and identify different animal noises being played through a speaker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clearly and accurately label the materials in the learning environment. ■ Provide dolls and other materials that represent children of different skin colors, cultures, and abilities.
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe and sort foods based on their senses, such as sorting foods by color or by texture. ■ Participate in a group activity to create a book with lists and/or illustrations of ways they used each of their senses that day. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask children about what they see, hear, smell, taste, and feel, such as comparing the taste of two fruits. ■ Play sensory games, such as The Mystery Box (children can use their senses to make a guess what's hidden inside) and I Spy.

Indicator 1b. Recognize parts of the human body and how their body helps them engage with their environment.

(See also: [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Look closely at their fingers and hands and experiment with moving them. ■ Explore their feet and toes by bringing them to their mouth as they begin to recognize them as part of their own bodies. ■ Begin to show distress when a familiar adult leaves their vision, as they begin to recognize that they are an individual, separate from their caretakers. ■ Attempt to crawl by getting up on their hands and knees to rock back and forth and, with practice, moving backward and/or forward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide mirrors for children to look at themselves. ■ Create spaces where children can safely take risks and test their bodies, including walking, running, jumping, and climbing as their large motor development progresses.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wave bye-bye when someone is leaving. ■ Point to something to demonstrate that they want an object that is out of reach. ■ Understand basic words or signs for their body, such as hands and feet. ■ Use objects in the environment to pull themselves up to standing. ■ Use their hands and arms to help them balance as they eventually begin to walk. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When encouraged to play with a riding toy, push it with their arms or sit on it and push with their legs. ■ With encouragement, point to a doll's nose or hand. ■ Use a pincer grasp or utensils and a cup to feed themselves. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attempt to wash their face with a washcloth. ■ Begin to dress and undress themselves by pulling up their pants and removing socks and shoes. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use their foot to open a garbage can with a foot lever. ■ Use their head and elbows while playing soccer. ■ Point to the correct body parts when dancing to "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage children to use their bodies creatively, such as inviting children to fly like airplanes or hop like frogs. ■ Use specific terms for parts of children's bodies, extending the specificity as children's vocabulary grows, such as the identifying the wrist and the palm of the hand, and later also identifying knuckles or joints, cuticle of the nail, and the ridges and whorls that make up fingerprints. ■ Sing and play games like "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes" and "The Hokey Pokey."
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify their pinky finger while giving a "pinky promise." ■ Wrap a pipe cleaner around their finger to make it spiral. ■ Hold up the correct number of fingers when a familiar adult says, "Show me 5 fingers!" 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use the correct body parts when dancing to "The Hokey Pokey." ■ Demonstrates to a peer how to do the pinch and zoom gestures with their finger and thumb on an iPad. 	

Indicator 1c. Explore and begin to perceive depth, distance, size, and the relationship between their own body and the space around them.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1c](#) and [Mathematics Indicator 3a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn their head from side to side to see a person or something around them. ■ Roll over and reach for objects nearby. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create spaces where children can safely take risks and test their bodies, including walking, running, jumping, and climbing as their large motor development progresses. ■ Play with moving objects, such as by rolling a ball to a child or rolling a toy car back and forth in front of a child. ■ Play with placement and distance, such as by holding out a stuffed animal for a child to reach for, setting objects at different distances and locations within a child's reach, and helping a child stack blocks. ■ Provide a sensory table or tray for children to fill, pour, and dump materials. ■ Provide climbers and boxes for children to climb in and out of.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Move across the floor to get to a favorite toy. ■ Turn backward to crawl down a step more easily. ■ Scoot to sit on the edge of a step. ■ Stack blocks or other objects. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Throw bean bags in a basket. ■ Reach for a familiar adult for help when trying to move over or around a piece of furniture. ■ Push a toy grocery cart or riding toy without running into other objects, most of the time. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fill and dump containers and begin to notice that some containers hold more or less when engaging in sand and water play. ■ Explore the varying boundaries of personal space when playing with other children. ■ Kick or throw a large ball back and forth with a familiar adult. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice that they have grown taller than a toy slide they used to play on. ■ Move through a simple obstacle course without knocking things over. ■ Use distance vocabulary, such as near and far. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a sensory table or tray for children to fill, pour, and dump materials. ■ Model the use of standard and non-standard measurement tools, such as rulers, Unifix cubes, and "inch worm" toys. ■ Compare objects by size, length, and height, such as encouraging children to line up a set of sticks in order from shortest to longest. ■ Talk about differences in size, such as noticing that Helena is taller than D'Andre, or that the photos of Juan's dogs show that his golden retriever is bigger than his corgi. ■ Play movement games, such as Mother May I and Simon Says.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Toss or roll a ball to another child with increasing accuracy. ■ Stretch out on the floor to compare their height to another child's height. ■ Explore how their bodies fit into different spaces, such as whether a tunnel is too small for their shoulders to fit through or if their body will fit into a cardboard box. ■ Dodge around other children when running, most of the time. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adjust their speed and strength when throwing a ball at targets that are closer or farther away. ■ Duck their head when walking under the slide. ■ Move through an obstacle course, most of the time. 	

Indicator 1d. Coordinate movements across and on both sides of the body.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1c](#) and [Mathematics Indicator 3a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reach for a toy being extended to them with the hand on the side of their body closest to the toy. ■ Grasp a rattle or other toys with both hands. ■ Swing their leg across their body to help them roll over. ■ Reach for their foot with the opposite hand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support children in using both sides of their body, such as using their legs to roll over or stacking blocks with both hands. ■ Provide opportunities for children to play with movement and placement of objects, such as holding a stuffed animal to the side for a child to roll or reach for.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Imitate another person clapping their hands. ■ Turn the pages of a board book as an adult reads with them. ■ Transfer an object from one hand to the other. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With reminders and support, pick up toys. ■ Hold a crayon and make marks on paper while holding the paper down with the other hand. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take off their coat and hang it on a hook. ■ Push themselves using their feet on a riding toy. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use both hands to touch their body parts during "Heads Shoulders Knees and Toes." ■ Reach across their body to pick up a crayon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan activities that encourage children to use the large muscles across both sides of their bodies, such as jumping jacks, marching with elbows touching opposite knees, and touching toes with opposite hands. ■ Provide materials that encourage children to use the large muscles on both sides of their bodies, such as tricycles, child-sized rock-climbing walls, stairs, simple obstacle courses, and jump ropes. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to explore using the small muscles on both sides of their bodies, such as drawing with one hand and then the other, kneading with both hands, and working with lacing, tying, and buttoning boards.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attempt to tie their shoes. ■ Ride a tricycle during recess. ■ Begin to show preference for a dominant hand (left/right handedness). 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ March in place while touching their right elbow to their left knee as it rises, and their left elbow to their right knee when it comes up. ■ Copy dance moves from another person or from a video. 	

Indicator 1e. Explore and stretch the boundaries of their current physical abilities.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3c](#) and [Social and Emotional Development 1b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Squirm and stretch their body to look at or reach for objects and people. ■ Keep their head raised during tummy time. ■ "Army crawl" or scoot on their belly across the floor. ■ Swing a leg across their body to roll over. ■ Hold themselves in a sitting position after being placed there. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide opportunities to explore new movements and ways to use their bodies, such as waving a hand to brush the parts of a mobile and make them move or smacking their hands into a tray of water. ■ Create spaces where children can safely take risks and test their bodies, including walking, running, jumping, and climbing as their large motor development progresses. ■ Provide sturdy, stable furniture for children to pull themselves to standing.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sit up on their own and eventually kneel. ■ Use their emerging pincer grasp to pick up small objects. ■ Use a piece of furniture to pull themselves up and shuffle from one end of the furniture to the other. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ See a toy and crawl or walk in that general direction to pick it up. ■ Stack or fill a container with toys. ■ Push themselves on simple riding toys. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Climb stairs or other playground/large motor equipment. ■ Climb on chairs, tables, and other raised furniture. ■ Rotate a knob on a toy and/or twist open the lid of a container. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to walk the length of a balance beam or curb, over and over. ■ Ride a balance bike or scooter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gently encourage children to try new experiences. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to challenge themselves, such as playing hopscotch, throwing a beanbag into baskets at different distances or heights, and balancing on one foot.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ride a bike with training wheels. ■ Climb to a higher spot on a climbing wall. ■ Try to climb monkey bars independently. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ride a bike without training wheels. ■ Ask a familiar adult how long it takes to run around the playground and then try to beat that time. ■ Develop their own challenges, such as putting bean bags on a balance beam and avoiding the bean bags when crossing the balance beam. 	

Indicator 1f. Recognize and show respect for the varying physical skills and abilities of themselves and others.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 3c](#) and [Social Studies Indicator 1a](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch the actions of children and adults around them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Speak respectfully about children's abilities and accomplishments. For example, "Look, Ramon is rocking on his hands and knees! I bet he'll be crawling soon, just like you." ■ Describe their actions as they assist a child, which helps to confirm that they're there to support the child and that needing help is normal. E.g., "I can see/hear that you are uncomfortable. I'm glad you've shown/told me that. Let's check your diaper. I can help you into a dry diaper that will feel much better." ■ Make themselves available to help children if needed, and ensure children understand this by sharing verbally, such as saying, "Let's get our coats on to go outside. Bring your coat to me if you need help to put it on."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mimic the actions of others (i.e., bounce, rock, etc.). 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point or ask simple questions about a new activity. ■ Call attention to new toys in the learning environment by pointing or asking questions. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With encouragement, offer another child one of the fruit toys they have collected from the dramatic play area. ■ With support, share a doll with another child who is watching them. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help another child find their sleeve when putting on their coat. ■ Work with another child to stack blocks into a tower. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Speak respectfully about children's abilities and accomplishments. For example, "Desmond, I noticed you made it all the way to the end of the obstacle course this time. It looked like hard work—did you have fun?" ■ Model asking others for help when needed, which reassures children that needing help is normal, and point out situations when help might be needed, such as helping someone up after they've fallen or showing someone else how to do the "coat flip" or tie their shoes.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help a friend on the swing by pushing their back. ■ Help a classmate zip their coat. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show a classmate how to pedal a bike. ■ High-five a classmate after racing them. ■ Ask a friend for help tying their shoes. 	

Goal 2 Large Motor: Children explore and begin to develop skill in using their large muscles.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-PMP 3; IT-PMP 4; P-PMP 1) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.C)

Self-Reflection Questions

What activities will I plan to encourage children's large motor development? What materials can I provide that allow children to explore using their large muscles in the indoor and outdoor learning environments?

Indicator 2a. Develop strength and stamina in their large muscles through repeated use.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kick at a musical toy that produces noise when struck. ■ Hold up their head during tummy time. ■ Attempt to rock from side to side in an effort to roll over. ■ Begin to roll to their back and later to their belly. ■ Begin to hold their body upright when placed in a seated position. ■ Push themselves to an "all fours" position to crawl and later kneel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide pull-up bars, push and pull toys, riding toys, climbers, boxes, and other large motor materials in safe spaces for children to explore with their bodies. ■ Cheer and show excitement when children make new movements, such as rolling over or pushing up onto hands and knees.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a piece of furniture to pull themselves up and shuffle from one end of the furniture to the other. ■ Hold onto a familiar adult's hands to pull themselves up and take steps. ■ Move through each step of the process from sitting to standing (move to "all fours" and then from knees to feet, then standing). 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Climb up stairs with support, placing one or both feet on each step. ■ Climb and use age-appropriate playground equipment. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in simple exercises, such as marching, touching toes, jumping up and down. ■ Throw or roll and catch a large ball with some accuracy. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Run races with friends. ■ Climb on large motor equipment faster and with more confidence. ■ Pedal a tricycle as fast as they can. ■ Hang from the monkey bars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of climbers, balls, balance and pedal bikes, and other large motor materials. ■ Plan large motor activities, such as obstacle courses, Red Light Green Light, Follow the Leader, soccer, and tag.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pedal a bike faster after using it every day during recess. ■ Throw a ball farther than before. ■ Begin to move across the monkey bars. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Measure the distance they jump and try to jump farther. ■ Practice to increase the number of times they can dribble a basketball or soccer ball. ■ Move all the way across a set of monkey bars. 	

Indicator 2b. Explore and develop more precise control over their large muscle movements, including moving in rhythmic patterns as well as using their muscles to move objects in their environment with increasing coordination.

(See also: [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look and reach for objects, such as, a mobile. Lift their head while on their stomach and look side to side. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide pull-up bars, push and pull toys, riding toys, climbers, boxes, and other large motor materials in safe spaces for children to explore with their bodies. Play If You're Happy and You Know It, Tag, and other movement games. Play with large bouncing balls, rolling or playing catch.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move around in one of many modes of crawling, going longer distances at quicker paces. Balance themselves to take steps and hold toys at the same time. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll or kick a ball back and forth with a familiar adult. Start to move and "dance" to music. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play games like Hokey Pokey or If You're Happy and You Know It. Move or crawl under a chair to reach for toys. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice kicking a ball into a net from varying distances. Shake and turn a parachute to the directions in a song. Move through a simple obstacle course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model skipping, galloping, basketball and soccer dribbling, and other more complex movements for children to try. Encourage children to dance and move to different kinds of music, fast and slow. Plan movement games like obstacle courses, throwing a ball at a target from different distances, Freeze Dance, and Mother May I. Model and encourage children to clap, stomp, drum, or tap along to the beat of a song. Play music and invite children to take turns leading the others in dance moves.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Toss a ball to another child with more accuracy. Follow the directions in a movement song. Tap a pattern with rhythm sticks. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dribble a soccer ball with their feet. Skip with coordination and alternating foot and arm movements. 	

Indicator 2c. Use their large muscles for stationary and traveling movements, such as sitting upright, walking, climbing, rolling a wheelchair or walker, etc.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sit up with support. ■ Roll over and start to crawl. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide pull-up bars, push and pull toys, riding toys, climbers, boxes, and other large motor materials in safe spaces for children to explore with their bodies. ■ Create spaces where children can safely take risks and test their bodies, including walking, running, jumping, and climbing as their large motor development progresses. ■ Cheer and show excitement when children make new movements, such as rolling over or pushing up onto hands and knees
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use furniture and other objects to stand and walk. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shake, wiggle, and turn around. ■ Begin to climb stairs with support. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Climb on outdoor/large motor equipment. ■ Begin to run. ■ Move in, out, and under objects. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Roll themselves up a ramp in their wheelchair. ■ Practice dribbling a basketball. ■ Climb on a short rock wall. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model skipping, galloping, basketball and soccer dribbling, and other more complex movements for children to try. ■ Provide a variety of climbers, balls, scooters, balance and pedal bikes, and other large motor materials. ■ Play with physical challenges, such as hopping on one foot, balancing while walking on a tape line, picking up or stepping over beanbags as they walk along a balance beam, playing hopscotch, and hopping over a line with both feet.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Run across the playground without falling. ■ Balance while sitting on a yoga ball. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Walk across a balance beam. ■ Balance on one foot. 	

Goal 3 Fine Motor: Children explore and begin to develop skill in using their small muscles.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-PMP 6; IT-PMP 7; IT-PMP 8; P-PMP 3) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.C)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I ensure that children have ample opportunities to explore using their small muscles, including their tongues and facial muscles? What activities can I intentionally introduce into my interactions with children that will support their facial and other fine motor development? What materials will I provide to encourage children to use their small muscles?

Indicator 3a. Explore and develop more precise control over the movements of their tongue and facial muscles.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2a](#) and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Start or stop sucking while drinking a bottle. ■ Move from coo to babbling and making sounds that begin with p, b, and m. ■ Begin to smile and frown. ■ Push food out of their mouth with their tongue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model exaggerated facial expressions, such as wide eyes and mouth formed in a big 'O' shape to show surprise when something exciting happens. ■ Provide mirrors for children to look at themselves and see their own facial expressions. ■ Engage children in turn-taking and mimicry games. For example, mimicking children's noises back to them, or saying, "When I get to the part of the story with the clock, I'll say, 'tick tock', and then you say, 'tick tock'!" ■ When developmentally appropriate, provide children with a variety of textures in their food.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Gag less frequently. ■ Chew softer lumps and keep most of the food in their mouth. ■ Try new foods with different textures. ■ Eat harder foods once their teeth have erupted. ■ Begin to babble more and eventually begin to speak their first words. ■ Begin to use a closed cup (sippy cup) for drinking. ■ Imitate the facial expressions of familiar adults. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use many different consonant sounds. ■ Begin to drink from an open cup. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use <i>k</i>, <i>g</i>, <i>f</i>, <i>t</i>, <i>d</i>, and <i>n</i> sounds. ■ Speak in a way that is understood by family members and friends. ■ Cope with most textures and foods that are offered, though their chewing skills are still maturing. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a straw to blow a feather across the table. ■ Use a straw to drink. ■ Make happy, sad, angry, and surprised faces while looking at themselves in a mirror. ■ "Blow" their nose when a familiar adult holds a tissue (both nostrils at once). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide mirrors for children to look at themselves and see their own facial expressions. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to play with breath control, such as blowing bubbles with small and large breaths or using a straw to blow cotton balls across a table. ■ Teach and support children as they learn self-care skills such as blowing their nose and using a straw to drink. ■ Model, teach, and reteach the mouth, tongue, and facial movements to voice specific sounds, such as <i>th</i>, <i>t</i>, and <i>r</i>.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attempt to wink. ■ Try to roll their tongue after seeing someone else do it. ■ Make different faces when a familiar adult asks them "What does mad/sad/happy/etc. look like?" ■ Say most sounds correctly. (<i>l</i>, <i>s</i>, <i>r</i>, <i>v</i>, <i>z</i>, <i>ch</i>, <i>sh</i>, and <i>th</i> may still be challenging.) 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Say more complex sounds (e.g., alveolar sounds – <i>t</i>, <i>d</i>, <i>n</i>). ■ Wink, wiggle their ears, and other facial "tricks." ■ "Blow" their nose independently (one nostril at a time). 	

Indicator 3b. Explore and develop more strength and precise control over their hands and fingers.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 8a](#) and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Grip and squeeze the fingers of other people's hands. ■ Hold on to objects with their hands. ■ Begin to pick up small items. ■ Begin to transfer objects from one hand to another and release their grasp voluntarily. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide children with opportunities to pick up and hold things with their hands and fingers during mealtimes, such as cereal pieces, utensils, bottles, and sippy cups. ■ Provide children with textured manipulatives and interactive toys with buttons and knobs. ■ Hold their hand or fingers out for the child to grasp. ■ Provide thick crayons and markers to hold and make marks with.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to pick items up by pinching them with their index finger and thumb. ■ Coordinate picking up small food items and transferring them to their mouths. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use jumbo crayons for marking and drawing on paper. ■ Hold an object in one hand and transfer it to the other hand. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to make more intentional marks on paper. ■ Turn knobs and unscrew lids. ■ Begin to use one hand more predominantly. ■ Fasten and unfasten clothes. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use scissors to snip paper, and later cut in a line. ■ Squeeze and roll playdough. ■ Unzip their coat and finish zipping when someone else gets it started. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide children with opportunities to use utensils to serve themselves and eat, as well as to pour water or milk at mealtimes. ■ Provide a variety of mark-making and other fine motor tools, such as chalk, child-safe scissors, pens, hole punches, masking tape, lacing boards, measuring tape, tweezers, clothespins, and playdough. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to practice fine motor skills, such as using plastic needles to weave yarn through plastic canvas, using beads and string to create necklaces, sculpting with playdough or pipe cleaners, playing games with dice or spinners, and cutting with child-safe scissors.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manipulate playdough into different shapes. ■ Squeeze a hole puncher until it successfully punches a hole in paper. ■ Cut purposefully with scissors. ■ Begin to follow a predefined path when cutting. ■ Hold a pencil with full control. ■ Begin to zip their coat independently. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tighten nuts onto bolts with their fingers. ■ Stretch small rubber bands around a tongue depressor several times. ■ Stretch rubber bands across a pegboard to make shapes. 	

Indicator 3c. Develop more precise hand-eye coordination.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 8a](#) and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate their head and eyes to move up and down together. Watch their own hands move. Eventually look at an object, then reach for it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide children with opportunities to feed themselves, such as bringing a bottle or sippy cup or bottle to their mouth, picking up and putting cereal pieces into their mouth, and using child-sized utensils. Plan activities that encourage children to practice hand-eye coordination, such as rolling and catching balls and beanbags, playing with toys that have buttons and knobs, and using simple lacing and button boards.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stack blocks or rings. Use a spoon to feed themselves. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll a ball and begin to catch balls returned to them. With support, turn the pages of a book. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put together puzzles with large pieces and knobs. Turn the pages of a book independently. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place small pegs in a pegboard. Sort small rocks by size. Thread a shoelace or thick string through lacing cards. String big wooden beads onto shoelaces or pipe cleaners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide children with opportunities to use utensils to serve themselves and eat, as well as to pour water or milk at mealtimes. Play throwing and catching games, such as gently tossing a ball or beanbag to a child and taking a small step back each time the child successfully catches it. Plan activities that encourage children to practice hand-eye coordination, such as using tweezers to sort manipulatives, using plastic needles to weave yarn through plastic canvas, using beads and string to create necklaces, cutting with child-safe scissors, and using playdough or pipe cleaners to sculpt with intention.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> String smaller beads onto a pipe cleaner. Stacking small cubes in a tower. Use a mouse to control the cursor on a computer screen. Continue to use lacing cards with thinner string and more complex designs. Use child-safe tweezers to move pom-poms from one bowl to another. Follow a magnetic maze with a magnet stick. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catch a ball. Practice tying their shoes. Hit a ball with a paddle or a bat. Color in a circle they have drawn. 	

Goal 4 Personal Care and Hygiene: Children recognize and practice the ways they can support and advocate for their own needs and the safety of themselves and others.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-PMP 9; IT-PMP 10; P-PMP 4; P-PMP 6) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.C; 2.K)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to help children make the connection between what they do with their bodies (movement, food, hygiene) and how they feel physically and emotionally? What routines and processes will I establish to support children’s developing self-care skills? How will I model healthy attitudes toward movement, nutrition, and hygiene? What routines and procedures will I establish to support children’s developing understanding of safety and safe boundaries?

Indicator 4a. Begin to understand the connections between physical activity, hygiene, nutrition, emotional wellness, and physical health.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3d](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Refuse a bottle while crying because they are tired. ■ Allow a familiar adult to wash their hands before and after eating, after outdoor times, and after diaper changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to children during hand washing and toileting routines about what they’re doing. For example, “Now our hands are wet, so we’ll get some soap and scrub, scrub, scrub until our hands are all clean!” ■ Maintain regular mealtime schedules and hand washing routines before and after meals, after toileting, and after outside time. ■ Model, teach, and support children in learning how to wash hands, hold and use utensils, hold and drink from a sippy cup, and other early self care skills.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Push toys away, yell, or cry when they are tired or hungry. ■ Continue to allow a familiar adult to wash their hands before and after eating, after outdoor times, and after diaper changes. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicate basic needs and wants with signs or words in their home language, such as, “Sleepy.” ■ Begin to participate, with support such as hand-over-hand guidance, in handwashing routines before and after meals, after outdoor times, as well as after diaper changes. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicate to a familiar adult when they do not feel well. ■ Participate in handwashing routines with support, including before and after meals, after toileting, and after outdoor times. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pick up a box and announce, "I'm so strong!" ■ Run around the playground after having a disagreement with another child. ■ With prompting, wash their hands independently, before and after meals, after toileting, and after outdoor times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model, teach, and reteach how to wash hands, use utensils, hold and drink from an open cup, and other self care skills. ■ Maintain regular mealtime schedules and hand washing routines before and after meals, after toileting, and after outside time. ■ Talk about what hunger, thirst, and tiredness tell us about what our bodies need, and how being hungry or thirsty can make us feel tired, and that being hungry or tired can make us feel sad or easily frustrated. ■ Model, plan, and provide materials for active large motor play. ■ Model and encourage children to describe how they feel throughout the day, such as saying, "Now that I've eaten, I feel tired" or "Wow, I can really feel my muscles work when we dance!"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask a familiar adult, "Is this healthy for me?" ■ Say, "I'm going to be tired!" after running around at recess. ■ Follow handwashing routines independently and without prompting, sometimes. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Eat the healthy part of lunch first and save dessert for last. ■ Communicate why they are upset and brainstorm solutions with a familiar adult. ■ Follow handwashing routines independently and without prompting, most of the time. 	

Indicator 4b. Become aware of ways they can prevent the spread of germs and illnesses, and begin to identify and manage some symptoms of illness.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to put new objects in their mouths to explore them. Allow a familiar adult to wash their hands before and after eating, after outdoor times, and after diaper changes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to children during hand washing, nose wiping, and toileting routines about what they're doing. For example, "Uh oh, you've got a drippy nose. I'm going to clean that up for you." Maintain regular hand washing routines before and after meals, after toileting, and after outside time. Support children in remembering to keep non-food items out of their mouths. Model, teach, and support children in learning how to wash their hands.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeatedly pull themselves up to standing, laughing, and smiling each time they are successful. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With repeated prompting, support, and redirection, stop putting non-food items in their mouths. Begin to participate, with support such as hand-over-hand guidance, in handwashing routines before and after meals, after outdoor times, as well as after diaper changes. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeatedly choose to play with the tricycles during outdoor time. Show their artwork to a familiar adult. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With reminders, cough, and sneeze into their elbows. Tell a familiar adult they have a runny nose and need a tissue or, sometimes, feel their nose running and grab a tissue on their own. With prompting, wash their hands independently, before and after meals, after toileting, and after outdoor times. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model, teach, and reteach children how to wash their hands and blow their noses. Teach and maintain regular hand washing routines before and after meals, after toileting, and after outside time. Support children in remembering to wash their hands, and to sneeze and cough into their elbows. Keep tissues at children's eye-level and in their reach. Talk about how germs are one of the ways that people can get sick, and that washing their hands, and keeping non-food items out of their mouths can help keep germs out of their bodies. Plan activities that demonstrate how handwashing helps with germs, such as trying to wash glitter "germs" off their hands, and drawing pictures of how they feel when they're sick. Model and encourage children to describe how their body feels when they're sick, such as saying, "Sometimes when I have a cold, the inside of my head feels fuzzy and achy."
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get a tissue for another child with a runny nose. Tell someone not to touch them after seeing them lick their hand. Cough and sneeze into their elbow. Follow handwashing routines independently and without prompting, sometimes. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow handwashing routines independently and without prompting, most of the time. Sing the alphabet song when they wash their hands. Approach a familiar adult to announce that they are sick or "don't feel good" when they are coughing, have a runny nose, or feel feverish. 	

Indicator 4c. Demonstrate increasing awareness of safe boundaries and safety routines.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attempt to crawl or climb on unsafe surfaces until a familiar adult intervenes. ■ Reach for objects of interest, regardless of if it is safe to do so. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Focus attention on children when interacting or caring for them, such as during diapering, toileting, or feeding times. ■ Pay attention to children's cues when holding them. For example, noticing if a child seems to feel unsteady or unsafe and responding by holding them in a position where they feel more secure. ■ Stay nearby and pay attention to children playing on climbers to ensure their safety. ■ Comfort and reassure children with hugs and soothing language when unfamiliar adults approach, when a familiar adult leaves, or when they've been told "No." ■ Model, teach, and reteach safety routines using simple, positive language and redirection toward safe alternatives. For example, "We walk when we're inside," and "When you climb on the shelves, I worry you might fall. If you want to climb, let's go to the soft climber over here."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cling to a familiar adult while being held. ■ Cry and reach out to a familiar adult when a new person approaches them. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cry, show anxiety, or throw a tantrum when a familiar adult leaves. ■ Respond to warnings from a familiar adult, such as "No, no, it's hot." 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With support, hold a familiar adult's hand to cross the street. ■ Approach unfamiliar people but look back to a familiar adult for assurance. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With reminders, line up at the door as the fire alarm is going off. ■ Move away from others at large group time so they have more space. ■ Move away from a child who is kicking blocks over. ■ Say, "look both ways" before crossing the street with an adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model, teach, reteach, and provide ample opportunities for children to practice safety routines, such as how to carry scissors, using a stepstool to reach something stored on a high shelf, or what to do during a fire or tornado drill.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put their hands up to block a child from hitting them. ■ Walk with scissors held in a fist grasp. ■ Participate in a group discussion of how to be safe and give examples such as walking when they are inside, respecting others' bodies and personal space, and staying with their group. ■ Tell other children to come to the door and line up when the fire alarm goes off. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create a safe environment for children to try new things and extend their abilities. For example, placing gymnastics mats on the floor where children may practice tumbling, encouraging children to try climbing across the monkey bars, and responding with both acceptance and gentle encouragement when a child chooses not to do something because they are afraid.
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wait at a sidewalk intersection until the "WALK" signal lights up, then look both ways before continuing. ■ Independently put on a bike helmet before getting on their bike. ■ Ask for help getting down if they are too high on a climber. ■ Identify areas of the playground that are off-limits for children. ■ Explain to another child where to go during fire or tornado drills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explain in age-appropriate terms why certain safety routines and boundaries are necessary, such as not climbing the playground fence because it isn't made for climbing and the space beyond the fence is not part of the playground. ■ Remind children to tell a familiar adult if they see something unsafe or feel uncomfortable.

Indicator 4d. Show increasing ability to perform self-care routines and tasks.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kick arms and legs while a familiar adult bathes them. ■ With support and guidance, hold their hands around a bottle while drinking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish mealtime routines so children know what to expect. ■ Model healthy eating habits. Sit with children during mealtimes and describe their own meal and favorite foods. ■ Engage and talk with children during mealtime, face washing, and handwashing routines. ■ Provide a spoon for infants to hold when feeding. ■ Allow time for and encourage children to try to put on their own socks, shoes, coats, and other self-dressing tasks.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fuss to indicate a wet or soiled diaper. ■ With support, begin to drink from a bottle independently. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hide behind a chair or sit under a table when having a bowel movement. ■ Use utensils and closed cup to feed themselves. ■ Independently use a closed cup. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a toothbrush with adult support. ■ With adult support, drink from an open cup, sometimes. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put the end of their zipper in but not yet pull it up. ■ Start using the bathroom without assistance. ■ Put things in their backpack to go home but forget to close it. ■ Drink independently from an open cup. ■ Pass out cups to each child at snack time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model, teach, reteach, and provide ample opportunities for children to practice personal care skills and routines, such as handwashing, toothbrushing, putting on a coat, zipping, and buttoning. ■ Allow time for and encourage children to try to dress themselves for outside time. ■ Encourage children to help and model for one another before offering adult help. ■ Ask supportive questions, such as, "What comes next in the routine?" and "Is there someone who could help you with that?" ■ Provide visual cues and supports that show the steps in new and frequently used routines, skills, and tasks for children to refer to as they practice, such as handwashing and preparing to go outside. ■ Provide dolls and other materials that have zippers, snaps, ties, and buttons for children to practice with.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask for a bandage when they are bleeding. ■ Attempt to dress themselves for the weather before going outside. ■ Count plates and cups to make sure there is enough for everyone to eat snack. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow routines in the learning environment independently, such as putting library books in a bin, making lunch choices, and hanging up their coat, most of the time. ■ Use scissors to open a package of crackers instead of asking for adult support. 	

Goal 5 Nutrition: Children experience and become aware of the ways foods and drinks affect their bodies.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-PMP 11; P-PMP 5) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.C; 2.K)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to support children in noticing and responding to their feelings of hunger, thirst, and fullness throughout the day? What routines and processes will I establish to support children in responding to hunger, thirst, and fullness? How will I model interest in new or different foods and drinks? What activities can I plan to support children in exploring the sensory experience of a variety of foods?

Indicator 5a. Become aware of and respond to feelings of thirst, hunger, and fullness.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 4a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn their head away from a bottle when their tummy feels full. ■ “Root” with their mouth before breastfeeding or open their mouth when they see a bottle. ■ Whimper to indicate interest in breastmilk or formula. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish mealtime routines so children know what to expect. ■ Model healthy eating habits. Sit with children during mealtimes and describe their own meal and favorite foods. ■ Engage and talk with children during mealtime. ■ Provide a spoon for infants to hold when feeding.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to a cup when thirsty. ■ Begin to drink from a bottle independently. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take food off another child's plate when hungry. ■ Say, “Hungry” when pointing to another child's food. ■ Independently use a closed cup. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicate to a familiar adult when they are hungry, thirsty or have had enough to eat. ■ Tell a familiar adult they are thirsty after playing outside. ■ Drink from an open cup, sometimes. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Get their water bottle when they are thirsty. ■ Ask for their water cup to be refilled for a drink. ■ Make observations during an experiment with plants where one gets water, and one doesn't. ■ Drink independently from an open cup. ■ Forget to drink water when busy with an activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe how they feel when their own bodies are hungry or thirsty. For example, "Wow, my mouth feels dry! All that running around made me thirsty." ■ Encourage children to decide for themselves how much to eat during meals by asking supportive questions, such as, "Does your body feel hungry still, or does it feel full?" and "If you eat more, will your belly feel good, or will it hurt?" ■ Model healthy eating habits, such as taking one bite at a time and chewing slowly until it's time to swallow, sitting with children during mealtimes, and describing their own meal. ■ Provide many opportunities to drink water, and refill cups or water bottles.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Say, "I'm full," before throwing away the trash from their lunch. ■ Tell a familiar adult that their belly is growling. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Independently refill their water bottle. ■ Get their own snack and sit down to eat it. ■ Fill their own water bottle when it is empty. ■ Ask for water with a meal. 	

Indicator 5b. Show interest in new or different tastes, smells, and foods.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Feel the texture of mashed potatoes by squeezing them between their fingers and putting them in their mouth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish mealtime routines so children know what to expect. ■ Model healthy eating habits. Sit with children during mealtimes and describe the tastes, smells, and textures of their own meal. ■ Provide a spoon for infants to hold when feeding. ■ Offer new foods many times.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reach for another child's food. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Taste an apple's stem to test if it is food or not. ■ Point to foods that look different from their own and ask, "...That?" to indicate interest. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask to try what a familiar adult or other children are eating. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sample a variety of apple types. ■ Ask a familiar adult about what someone else is eating, when it is a food, they aren't familiar with. ■ With modeling and guidance, respond to other children eating unfamiliar foods as a normal situation, most of the time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide many opportunities for children to try new foods. ■ Use descriptive language when talking about smells, tastes, and textures. ■ Model healthy eating habits by "thinking aloud" in positive language while smelling and tasting new foods, such as saying, "This rice smells spicy like when I eat tacos. I like tacos, so maybe I'll like this. I'm going to taste it and find out." ■ Invite children to talk about and, if possible, bring in to share the foods they eat at home.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try a new food after watching a familiar adult eat it. ■ With modeling and support, ask another child about the unfamiliar food they are eating—what it tastes like, what's in it, etc.—sometimes. ■ Ask, "What's that smell?" when lunch is delivered. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sort scented markers in groups of smells they like or do not like. ■ Taste test different fruits they have not eaten before. ■ Ask another child about the unfamiliar food they are eating—what it tastes like, what's in it, etc.—most of the time. 	

Indicator 5c. Develop an awareness of how foods look, feel, taste, and smell different; how different foods affect their bodies; and how foods are sorted into food groups.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 4a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6a](#), [Engineering and Technology Indicator 1b](#), and [Science Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sit with children during mealtimes and describe the tastes, smells, and textures of their own meal. ■ Offer new foods many times. ■ Provide sensory boxes that allow children to smell different scents or feel different textures without seeing the objects inside.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Spit out new foods until they have tried them multiple times. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use utensils and closed cup to feed themselves, allowing them to make their own choices about what to eat in which order. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Express preferences about foods based on taste, texture, and sometimes color. ■ Refuse foods that make their bodies feel uncomfortable. ■ Identify some foods, such as fruits and vegetables, are grown on farms, sometimes. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Separate play foods into “anytime foods” and “sometimes foods.” ■ Help a familiar adult pass out cheese and crackers. ■ Say, “I can’t eat strawberries because they make my belly feel yucky.” ■ Remind a familiar adult to also grab the ‘special’ milk for them. ■ Identify a variety of foods and livestock that typically come from farms/ ranches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide many opportunities for children to try new foods. ■ Use descriptive language when talking about smells, tastes, and textures. ■ “Think aloud” in positive language while smelling and tasting new foods, such as saying, “This rice smells spicy like when I eat tacos. I like tacos, so maybe I’ll like this. I’m going to taste it and find out.” ■ Invite children to talk about and, if possible, bring in to share the foods they eat at home. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to think about the ways foods are alike and different, such as sorting plastic foods into fruits/vegetables or soft/crunchy. ■ Read and talk about different kinds of food, what they look, taste, and smell like, and where they come from.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell another child that carrots are good for eyesight. ■ After washing hands, help prepare snack by counting how many people are eating and making sure there is enough for everyone. ■ Ask if a food is a fruit or vegetable. ■ Tell another child or familiar adult that they are allergic to (or “can’t have”) peanuts. ■ Remind a familiar adult that they can’t have pork sausages. ■ Tell a familiar adult that drinking water is good for their bodies and brains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Read and talk about how different foods have different benefits for our bodies, such as donuts and sweet foods providing sugar that gives us lots of immediate energy, or carrots and vegetables providing vitamins our bodies need to be healthy and strong. ■ Plan activities for children to explore different foods, such as simple cooking activities and inviting children and families to bring in foods they eat at home.
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sort food by food groups—fruit, vegetable, grain, protein, and dairy. ■ Help a familiar adult measure and mix to prepare a fruit salad. ■ Ask a familiar adult if their snack or lunch contains something they are allergic to. ■ Point out that yogurt is made from milk, which comes from a cow. ■ Sort photos of foods into a Venn diagram with categories such as “foods that are grown in the ground,” “foods that come from animals,” and “both.” ■ Point out that people need water to live, just like animals and plants. 	



Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development

The **Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development** domain focuses on the dynamics of communication and the relationship between communication, language, and early literacy. This is demonstrated through children's expressions of their needs, emotions, and ideas to others, as well as their understanding, or reception, of others' expressions of needs, emotions, and ideas.

Infants begin to communicate from the moment they are born. Vocalizations, body movements, and facial expressions are all early methods of communication. They also pay close attention to adults and other children, and quickly learn to recognize and imitate verbal and non-verbal signals.

Supportive relationships with familiar adults help young children to build strong receptive and expressive language skills, and to translate these into language and literacy knowledge as they grow. The ability to communicate their own and understand others' expressions of needs, emotions, and ideas are necessary for developing relationships, living in society, and lifelong learning.

The goals of the Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development domain are:

Goal 1 Receptive Language: Children develop an understanding of language, beginning with their home language or dialect.

Goal 2 Expressive Language: Children use language to express themselves to others, beginning with their home language.

Goal 3 Communication Skills: Children use social and conversational skills, beginning with their home language and cultural values.

Goal 4 Concepts of Print: Children construct meaning from text.

Goal 5 Alphabetic Knowledge: Children begin to understand that (in alphabetic languages like English) letters and letter sounds represent the sounds of the spoken language.

Goal 6 Phonological Awareness: Children will build their awareness of, and ability to work with, the sounds of language.

Goal 7 Comprehension: Children will interact with people and materials to increase their understanding of text.

Goal 8 Writing: Children will demonstrate emerging understanding of writing as a way to communicate.

Goal 1 Receptive Language: Children develop an understanding of language, beginning with their home language or dialect.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-LC 1; IT-LC 2; P-LC 1; P-LC 2) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT3; L.18) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.D)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I interact with children to help them begin to understand language and non-verbal cues? What will I do to support children in developing a wide receptive vocabulary? What games, songs, and other activities will I use to support children's receptive language skills?

Indicator 1a. Demonstrate understanding of increasingly complex language, including non-verbal cues.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3a](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn to look when a familiar adult speaks. ■ Exchange smiles and other facial expressions or vocal interactions with a familiar adult. ■ Make eye contact during face-to-face interactions. ■ Change focus or look at a person or object being talked about by a familiar adult, during a face-to-face interaction. ■ Watch a familiar adult's face and hands when they are talking or gesturing. ■ Show interest in songs and stories with repetition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build time into the daily schedule for songs and fingerplays. ■ Point to objects and pictures and name them in children's home language as well as in English. ■ Sing songs and fingerplays during daily routines and to support transitions. ■ Verbally label items in the learning environment as they are used. For example, holding up a clean diaper and saying, "Here's your diaper," during a diaper change or toileting routine. ■ Use eye contact and facial expressions when narrating children's play.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrate their understanding through gestures, language sounds, and facial expressions when a familiar adult communicates nonverbally, or verbally in their home language, such as by bouncing or wiggling when asked if they are hungry or want a bottle. ■ Turn their head when someone calls their name. ■ Mimic the facial expressions of a familiar adult, such as by smiling when a family member smiles at them. ■ Respond to different tones of voice. ■ Recognize familiar songs, fingerplays, and routines. ■ Respond with gestures, signs, sounds, or simple words when a familiar adult asks routine questions in their home language, such as pointing to a picture of a cow when a familiar adult says "¿Dónde está la vaca?" 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at and/or point to a person whose name was said aloud. Point or gesture to that person when a familiar adult is pointing to or naming the person, such as by pointing to or moving toward a family member when a familiar adult asks, "Who do you see?" at pick-up time. Listen and respond to stories, rhymes, and fingerplays. Respond to simple questions, such as by pointing to their choice when a familiar adult holds up a cup of milk and a cup of water and asks, "Do you want water or milk?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build time into the daily schedule for songs and fingerplays. Point to objects and pictures and name them in children's home language as well as in English. Sing songs and fingerplays during daily routines and to support transitions. Verbally label items in the learning environment as they are used. For example, holding up a clean diaper and saying, "Here's your diaper," during a diaper change or toileting routine. Use eye contact and facial expressions when narrating children's play.
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to respond to statements by anticipating next steps, such as by looking at or moving toward the bookshelf when a familiar adult says that it is time to read books together. Recognize some signs, words, phrases, and simple sentences, such as by pointing to the adult cat in a picture of a cat with kittens when a familiar adult asks, "Which one is the mama cat?" Echo repeated sounds and words in a song, chant, or a story being read aloud. Show interest in language play by participating in songs, rhymes, and interactive stories, such as touching their head, shoulders, etc. based on the directions in "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes." 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in conversations by showing attention and acknowledging comments or questions, either spoken or signed. ■ Pick out a book from the bookshelf and bring it to a familiar adult when asked to choose the next story to read. ■ Bring the box of dinosaurs to the carpet when a familiar adult tells them that dinosaurs are one of the choices to play with. ■ Respond yes or no (or nodding/shaking their head) when asked "Do you want to go outside?" ■ Listen as a familiar adult describes an idea or clarifies the meaning of a word. ■ Answers questions or points to objects/people when asked questions such as "Who do you want to play with?" "What colors will you use to color the dinosaur?" "Where is your backpack?" or "What do you want to play with?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use descriptive words when commenting on what children are doing, which supports receptive vocabulary development. ■ Provide opportunities and materials for children to retell familiar or recently read stories using prompts, pictures, puppets, or other tools. ■ Build reading routines and materials into the learning environment. For example, including regular read-alouds in large group gatherings and identifying an area of the environment as the library, with books, magazines, audiobooks, and other reading materials. ■ Respond to children's comments and questions, and pay attention to their conversations with each other for opportunities to expand their receptive vocabulary. ■ Use reflection and questioning as opportunities to expand children's language and critical thinking skills. For example, saying, "It sounds like you're excited about the garbage truck going by. Why do you think it has extra wheels on the back?"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listen to a story about a boy in the rain and respond with reasons from the story when asked "Why did the boy in the story have wet shoes?" ■ Answer when asked questions such as "Why do you think your friend is sad?" "What happened to the block tower when you bumped into it?" "Who can you ask for help with that?" or "Where could we look to find the answer to that question?" ■ Listen attentively to a peer or adult when it is that person's turn to talk during a conversation. ■ Actively listen to short presentations and remember some details. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show attention during longer and more complex conversations, either spoken or signed. ■ Show attention during primarily receptive interactions, such as listening to a book being read aloud, by nodding, gesturing, interrupting to ask a related question, etc. ■ Retell or use picture cards to identify the major events in a story they just listened to. ■ Participate in a group conversation by communicating their own perspective when asked, such as by explaining that the classroom hamster likes yogurt treats during a discussion about making sure their pets have what they need to be healthy and happy. 	

Indicator 1b. Follow increasingly complex directions.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn their head where directed when a familiar adult says, "Oh, look at that!" ■ Opens mouth for spoonful of food when a familiar adult says, "Open wide!" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use self-talk, describing their own actions while the child is watching. ■ Provide visual cues such as gestures or pictures when giving instructions, whenever possible. ■ Repeat directions clearly and model the expectation, working alongside the children as they complete the task. ■ When giving directions to a child, wait for the child to respond verbally or nonverbally before moving on. ■ Celebrate children's attempts to follow directions.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Move toward a familiar adult when asked to "come to Mr. Jerome." ■ Put a toy in a familiar adult's hand when the adult holds out their hand and says, "Can I have the toy?" 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond by waving when a familiar adult waves and says, "Wave bye-bye to Mommy!" ■ Point to characters or other pictures in a story when asked. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow one-step directions such as "Find your blanket," or "Paint with your fingers on the paper." ■ Show understanding by complying with simple instructions. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow one- or two-step directions that involve familiar experiences or objects, such as "Pick up the ball and roll it to me," or "Choose a book and come sit down." ■ Respond to repeated signs, words, and phrases with gestures and body movements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish, model, and follow consistent routines for clean-up, arrival, and other recurring events. ■ Begin by teaching and modeling very simple routines, slowly adding on additional steps. ■ Provide clear, concise, and specific directions, and use memory tools and visual cues such as songs and pictures whenever possible. For example, posting pictures of a coat and a door near children's cubbies and pointing to each picture when saying, "It's time to go outside! First, put on your coat. Then, go to the door." ■ Post a visual daily schedule in the learning environment at children's eye-level. ■ Ensure children have opportunities to practice following multi-step directions during daily routines. ■ Allow wait time following a request (at least 10 seconds) for children to process and respond with language or actions.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow multi-step instructions, such as "Put away your markers, choose a book, and come join us on the carpet." 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow increasingly detailed, multi-step instructions, such as "Please put away your markers and put your picture in your cubby, then choose a book and join us on the carpet." 	

Goal 2 Expressive Language: Children use language to express themselves to others, beginning with their home language.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-LC 7; IT-LC 8; P-LC 3; P-LC 5; P-LC 6; P-LC 7) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT3; L.14; L.18) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.D)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to support children’s developing expressive language? How will I support and encourage children to express themselves through language, including sounds, gestures, signs, words, and language expressed using assistive devices? How will I interact with children to support their developing expressive vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure? What can I provide within the learning environment to support children’s developing expressive language skills and vocabulary?

Indicator 2a. Communicate using increasingly understandable language, including sounds, gestures, signs, words, and language expressed using assistive devices.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 3a](#) and [Physical Development and Health Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use gestures and vocalizations such as cooing or crying to communicate their needs, interests, and emotions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Interact and have conversations with children, building in wait time for their responses (even if they are not yet verbal). ■ Pay attention to children’s visual cues and gestures, and translate them into spoken words and/or signs as clearly as possible. For example, if a child is rubbing their eyes, saying, “You’re rubbing your eyes. I wonder if you are feeling sleepy. Let’s cuddle and rock for a minute.” ■ Incorporate Baby Signs or American Sign Language (ASL) with verbal narration, such as saying, “Zoe, would you like more [sign more] peas?” ■ Encourage children to express themselves by modeling listening behaviors such as sustaining eye contact, smiling, and nodding. ■ Model non-verbal communication such as waving, pointing, and using ASL.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use increasingly complex and/or specific vocalizations and gestures to communicate their needs, interests, and emotions, such as signing “more” to ask for more snacks. ■ Point to a toy they want to play with. ■ Repeat sounds and sometimes words made by familiar adults. ■ Mimic adult speech intonations. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a small number of real and made-up words or signs that can be understood by familiar adults who speak the same language, such as calling the family dog by yelling “Peee!” instead of “puppy.” ■ Wave goodbye when family members and other familiar adults leave. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Speak or sign clearly enough that unfamiliar adults who speak the same language can understand some words. ■ Still mispronounce many words, such as “tuck” for “truck”. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicate clearly enough to be understood by most people. ■ Still mispronounce some words, especially new, unusual, or complex words, such as “buhsggetti” for spaghetti. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage children to engage and talk with each other by providing prompts and commenting on what they are doing. ■ Intentionally engage in give-and-receive style conversations with children, maintaining a single topic for several conversational passes. ■ When a child has shared a story, summarize to make sure they are understood. For example, “Thank you, Jamal. It sounds like you ate spaghetti with your sister at the zoo. Is that right?” ■ Encourage children's input into learning discussions by pausing to allow them to answer questions or fill in the blank. For example, saying, “I wonder what helps birds fly...” and then tapping their chin to indicate thinking.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mispronounce new and/or unusual words. ■ Begin to use some polite gestures that are commonly used in their family and community, such as bowing to indicate respect, lowering their gaze when speaking to adults, or greeting a friend with a hug. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicate clearly, using increasingly detailed signs, words, phrases, and sentences. 	

Indicator 2b. Communicate using an expanding vocabulary.

(See also: [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 1b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 2a](#), [Science Indicator 1a](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experiment with making sounds (e.g., cooing, gurgling, babbling), often repeating consonant sounds (e.g., da da and ba ba) in vocal play. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a variety of high-quality books with rich vocabulary and interesting illustrations for read-alouds to children. ■ Use gestures alongside spoken words to support children in learning the meaning of the words through the context of the gestures. ■ Use “three-peats” (using a word three times, in three different ways) to lay the foundation for new vocabulary. For example, saying, “Oh, you see the dog. That dog is fluffy. Let’s pet the dog.” ■ Provide opportunities for children to make choices. For example, holding up an apple and a banana and, when the child makes a noise or gesture to respond, saying, “You wanted the banana?” while holding the banana closer to verify the child’s choice.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to experiment with making sounds (e.g., cooing, gurgling, babbling), often repeating consonant sounds (e.g., da da and ba ba) in vocal play. ■ Begin to say some simple words in their home language, such as “papá,” “go,” “hi,” “kuku,” and “milk.” ■ Point to an object or person when asked, “Where is Daddy?” or “Where did your bottle go?” ■ Communicate their needs, wants, and feelings through sounds, non-verbal actions, or basic sign language. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Answer yes/no questions verbally or by nodding/shaking their head. ■ Demonstrate a growing expressive vocabulary of 10-50 words or signs. ■ Continue to communicate their needs, wants, and feelings through sounds, non-verbal actions, or basic sign language. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to use two- and three syllable words and name specific people, animals, and toys in their home language. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary to express their needs and describe objects, relationships between objects, emotions, and actions. ■ Use phrases and sentences of 2-3 words. ■ Answer simple questions with words or signs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take time to explain new words while reading stories, such as pointing to the illustration, demonstrating a motion, or providing an explanation within the context of the story. ■ Revisit new vocabulary words from a read-aloud at other parts of the day, relating the word to children's real lives. ■ Use open-ended questioning (who, what, when, where, why, how) to provide opportunities for children to respond with more detail than simple yes/no questions. ■ Use reflection to allow children to respond in past tense, such as asking children about parts of the day or events that happened in the past to make connections to the present. For example, "I wonder if we've ever felt like this character?" and "Have we read any other books like this one?" ■ Use synonyms and rich descriptors when narrating or describing learning experiences. For example, saying, "That ice cube is cold! My hands feel chilly!"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use phrases and sentences of 4-5 words or signs. ■ Respond to questions with detail. ■ Demonstrate a broad and increasing vocabulary of about 500 words or signs. ■ Use their growing vocabulary to express their needs and describe objects, relationships between objects, emotions, and actions, including an increasing number of details. ■ Use questions to ask for things or gain information. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Combine 5-8 words or signs together into complete thoughts or sentences. ■ Answer questions with detailed and more abstract signs, words, and ideas. ■ Demonstrate an increasingly complex and varied vocabulary of over 1000 words or signs. ■ Ask specific questions to understand and solve problems. ■ Describe events that happened in the past with many details. 	

Indicator 2c. Communicate using increasingly complex grammar and sentence structure.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use narration throughout the day to describe children's and adults' actions. Respond to children's vocalizations and gestures. Focus on encouraging communication rather than correcting errors in speech. Model longer and more complex sentences. For example, when a child says, "Outside," or "Go outside," extending the response by saying, "You want to go outside. You like to play outside."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine two words or signs to express a want or interest (e.g., says "go side" when wanting to go outside). Increasingly combine simple words or signs into sentence-like structures (e.g., "milk please"). Combine gestures, signs, and words to communicate a thought. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine simple words into longer sentence-like phrases (e.g., "Go Grammy's house!"). 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combine simple words into sentences, using plurals, past tense, subject-verb agreement, and the possessive form (although often incorrectly). For example: "Mommy goed work." Tell stories about their experiences using past, present, and future tenses and terms interchangeably (e.g., "yesterday we go to the zoo"). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Model longer and more complex sentences. For example, when a child says, "I want the red one," extending the response by saying, "Do you like the red car because it looks like your grandpa's car? Or maybe because it goes faster than the yellow one when you play on the hard floor?" Focus on context and encouraging communication rather than correcting children's tense or grammar. For example, when a child says, "My birthday is Saturday," responding by saying, "Your birthday is coming up soon, isn't it?" Read stories with increasingly complex words and sentence structure.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use plurals as well as past and future tense verbs correctly when telling stories, most of the time. For example: "We went to the zoo. We saw two tigers and I got popcorn!" Combine words and phrases into increasingly complex sentences. (e.g., "She doesn't like peas, but I do!") Use sentence structures reflective of their home languages, such as adding adjectives after nouns (rather than before nouns, as in English). For example: "I have a shirt blue." Imitate songs and finger plays. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell increasingly detailed stories about their lives. Combine words and phrases into increasingly complex sentences. For example: "Teisha's moms came today and read us a story and they took turns doing different voices!" Use sentence structures that are grammatically complex, most of the time. 	

Goal 3 Communication Skills: Children use social and conversational skills, beginning with their home language and cultural values.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-LC 3; IT-LC 4; IT-LC 5; IT-LC 6; P-LC 4) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT3; L.18) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B; 2.D)

Self-Reflection Questions

What routines and processes will I establish to support children’s growing social and conversational skills? What activities will I plan to encourage children’s social and conversational interactions? How will I model positive social interactions? How will I model a variety of purposes for communication, such as asking a question (gathering information), clapping hands (expressing emotions), or pointing out a new toy (sharing information)?

Indicator 3a. Communicate with others for a variety of purposes.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4b](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 1a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 8c](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1a](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1c](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2c](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 3a](#), [Engineering and Technology Indicator 2a](#), [Engineering and Technology Indicator 3b](#), and [Science Indicator 1d](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate through facial expression or body movement. For example: turn toward sound, smile, squeal, make ‘mmm’ sounds while sucking, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in regular, face-to-face conversations, including imitating a child’s babbling, acknowledging their word approximations, and labeling items used in conversation. Call attention to objects, people, etc. in the child’s environment to spark and encourage conversation. Use children’s requests and gestures as the starting point for expanded dialogue and conversations. For example, after Carlos signs “milk,” saying, “You would like some milk. Let’s grab your cup from the table.” Use “serve and return” conversational strategies, such as mimicking children’s vocalizations and waiting for them to respond.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initiate interaction or “conversation” with adults by pointing at objects, speaking, or signing a word, sharing a toy, or calling attention to an object or person. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to others’ communications with gestures, speaking or signing words, facial expressions, and body movement. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in brief back-and-forth (serve and return) conversations, often repeating or imitating the words, signs, tone, and actions of adults. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Initiate and respond to communication with others. ■ Begin to hold longer back-and-forth conversations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pause during conversations with children to allow them time and opportunities to respond to questions and build on the conversation. ■ Use what they know about children's interests to spark and drive conversations.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hold extended back-and-forth conversations by asking questions and making comments related to the topic, sometimes. ■ Tell a story out loud for a familiar adult to write down. ■ Retell a story or describe one of their own experiences in sequence. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Extend conversations by asking questions and making comments related to the topic. ■ Engage in a wider variety of conversational topics. ■ Return to previous topics of conversation with new information "Remember, I told you about the zoo? This is a picture of the tiger!" 	

Indicator 3b. Follow the social expectations of their personal cultural context when communicating with others.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 3b](#), [Communication, Language, and Literacy Development Indicator 1a](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1b](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, and sounds to engage in turn-taking "conversations" with familiar adults (serve and return). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take turns vocalizing with children. ■ Use visuals and concrete reminders, such as hand signals or "talking wands," to support children in waiting for their turn to talk.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Look at an object a familiar adult is pointing to and looking at (joint attention). ■ Respond differently to different tones and voices, such as smiling when someone speaks to them in a high, happy tone; or calming when someone speaks softly. ■ Play with a familiar adult by taking turns vocalizing. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hold up a toy and look at it, look at a familiar adult for eye contact, and then look back at the toy (initiating joint attention). ■ Pause what they are doing to pay attention to someone talking to them. ■ Initiate and engage in communications with others, either vocally or nonverbally. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With modeling and support, begin to use polite terms such as <i>please</i>, <i>thank you</i>, and <i>excuse me</i>. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With modeling and support, use polite terms such as please, thank you, and excuse me with increasing consistency. ■ Show attention to a person they are having a conversation with. ■ Take turns in conversation by initiating and sustaining a simple back and forth conversation. ■ With modeling and support, begin to apply their understanding of conversational routines, such as turn-taking and maintaining eye contact, to a variety of situations and types of conversations (with a familiar adult, a peer, an unfamiliar adult, at home, etc.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use visuals and concrete reminders, such as hand signals or "talking wands," to support children in waiting for their turn to talk. ■ Provide opportunities for turn-taking during small group activities. ■ Include turn-taking games in outdoor play as well as in the learning environment. ■ Use visuals and modeling to indicate appropriate volume in various areas of the room or building, as well as different parts of the day. For example, a building library or naptime may require whispering voices, but the music area may invite singing voices.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use nonverbal cues during conversations according to their personal cultural context, including physical proximity, maintaining eye contact, asking questions, etc. ■ Adjust their volume and tone depending on the context of their conversation, such as speaking with a friend or an unfamiliar adult, having a conversation in the learning environment or in a public library. ■ Engage in longer, multi-turn conversations. ■ Adjust their language and tone when having a conversation with younger children. ■ With some support and reminders, apply their understanding of conversational routines, such as turn-taking and maintaining eye contact, to a variety of situations and types of conversations (with a familiar adult, a peer, an unfamiliar adult, at home, etc.). 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Stay on topic during peer-to-peer and group conversations. ■ Engage in peer-to-peer conversations, listening and responding while staying on topic. ■ Initiate conversations and stay on topic during through multiple turn-taking exchanges. ■ With support and reminders, apply their understanding of conversational routines, such as turn-taking and maintaining eye contact, to a variety of situations and types of conversations (with a familiar adult, a peer, an unfamiliar adult, at home, etc.) with increasing consistency. 	

Goal 4 Concepts of Print: Children construct meaning from text.
 (HS-ELOF: IT-LC 10; IT-LC 11; P-LIT 2) (MI PTEC-BK: IT3; L.6; L.9) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.E)

Self-Reflection Questions

What routines and activities will I plan to support children’s developing interest in books and text? How will I model an understanding that print and pictures communicate ideas? What will I provide in the learning environment to support children’s growing understanding of print and pictures as forms of communication?

Indicator 4a. Demonstrate interest in and care for books, including book handling concepts.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4b](#) and [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 7a](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore books with all their senses, including petting or crinkling sensory pages, mouthing on covers. ■ Reach for a book, page, or picture to show preference or interest. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use the “picture walk” strategy to introduce new stories to children, looking through the book and talking about what is happening in each illustration. ■ Read with children frequently, allowing them to touch and manipulate the books and printed materials. ■ Provide a wide variety of colorful, sturdy, and high-interest books for children to explore.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Touch, mouth, grab for, and manipulate board books and sensory books. ■ Sit on a familiar adult’s lap to listen to a story and look at pictures. ■ Pat, kiss, or point to pictures or books to show preference or pleasure. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pick out books and bring them to a familiar adult to read. ■ Pretend to read books by holding the book, making word-like sounds, and trying to turn pages. ■ Repeatedly choose the same favorite book(s) to read. ■ Begin to hold books and turn pages, sometimes two or three at a time, and sometimes moving backward and forward in the book. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pick out books to pretend to read from among a selection of materials or from a toy shelf. ■ Begin to care for books by putting them away and trying not to tear pages. ■ Begin to hold books right-side up and turn pages left-to-right. ■ Recognize the sequence of familiar stories, such as showing excitement when a favorite part of a familiar book is about to happen. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Choose familiar books to “read” to themselves or to a doll or stuffed animal. ■ Hold books with two hands and turn the pages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model reading behaviors, such as reading left to right and pointing at each word when reading it aloud. ■ Provide a comfortable reading area in the learning environment. ■ Model reading the title, as well as author and illustrator names, on the cover of books. Talk about what authors and illustrators do, and what the title can tell us about a story. ■ Talk about the parts of a book – front cover, back cover, pages, spine, etc. – and model holding a book upright and turning pages one at a time. ■ Point out illustrations on the front and back covers of a book and encourage children to describe what they see and what it makes them think about the story.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify the parts of a book: the front and back covers, top and bottom, and title. ■ Ask about, identify, and distinguish between the roles authors and illustrators play in making a book. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn to the approximate part of the book and then turn pages to find specific parts of a story in the book. ■ Hold books upright and with front cover facing them and turn individual pages to read a story either using the text or the pictures, or a combination of both. 	

Indicator 4b. Demonstrate an understanding of print concepts.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4a.](#))

	Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...	Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Emerging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Read with children frequently, allowing them to touch and manipulate the books and printed materials.■ Model reading behaviors, such as tracking the words with a finger while reading aloud.■ Post and refer to a visual daily schedule in the learning environment at children's eye-level.■ Label the learning environment with words and pictures, such as children's cubbies, shelves marked for different toys and materials, doors, sinks, etc.■ Provide a wide variety of colorful, sturdy, and high-interest books for children to explore.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Show particular interest in pictures of faces.	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Point to pictures and/or try to turn pages while a familiar adult reads a book.	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Begin to recognize familiar environmental print, such as signs for restaurants they know, familiar brand logos, or labels in the learning environment.	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expand their environmental print vocabulary with some less familiar signs and logos. ■ Begin to use pictures and logos in environmental print to attempt to decode the text, such as a new label in the learning environment with a picture of a Crayola crayon box to identify the basket of crayons, a picture of a STOP sign to wait at the end of a hallway, or the red and white bullseye image to identify a Target store. ■ Begin to understand that the text on a page is separate or different from the pictures. ■ Join in with adults saying "the end" at the end of a book. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model using the illustrations in a story to help decode the text. ■ Post and refer to a visual daily schedule in the learning environment at children's eye-level. ■ Provide a variety of high-quality books with rich vocabulary and interesting illustrations for children to explore. Use the same standards when choosing stories to read aloud. ■ Model reading behaviors, such as tracking the words with a finger while reading aloud. ■ Label the learning environment with words and pictures, such as children's cubbies, shelves marked for different toys and materials, doors, sinks, etc. ■ Plan activities using environmental print, such as familiar road, store, and restaurant signs for children to decode.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to run their fingers along the text in a book. ■ Mimic and repeat familiar story routines, such as saying "the end" at the end of a book. ■ Begin to recognize the difference between letters, words, and sentences, such as pointing out the word that starts with a particular letter. ■ Recognize and show interest in the ways people use print, such as reading a story about getting letters in the mail and then asking a familiar adult to send them a letter in the mail or making and "reading" a grocery list during pretend play. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Track text from left to right, top to bottom, and page to page. ■ Point to individual, sequential words on a page as they read (or attempt to read) each word. 	

Indicator 4c. Understand that print and pictures communicate ideas that can be read/viewed and understood by others.

(See also: [Mathematics Indicator 1b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Become quiet or show pleasure through physical responses such as kicking their feet when listening to a familiar story or song. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Read with children frequently, allowing them to touch and manipulate the books and printed materials. ■ Model reading behaviors, such as tracking the words with a finger while reading aloud. ■ Post and refer to a visual daily schedule in the learning environment at children's eye-level. ■ Label the learning environment with words and pictures, such as children's cubbies, shelves marked for different toys and materials, doors, sinks, etc. ■ Use the "picture walk" strategy to introduce new stories to children, looking through the book and talking about what is happening in each illustration. ■ Read stories with rhyming or repetitive phrases, and encourage children to "fill in the blank" by pausing at the end of familiar repeating phrases or pointing out illustrations that explain what comes next, such as reading, "And on that farm he had a..." and then pointing to the illustration of a cow before saying, "Cow!"
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Look at pictures in stories and make vocalizations. ■ Continue to calm or show pleasure through physical responses such as kicking their feet when listening to a familiar story or song. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to or name animals or objects or people in photos, pictures, or illustrations. ■ Point to an unfamiliar picture in a book as if to ask the caregiving adult to name it. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Touch, identify or name pictures in books when asked to, such as touching the picture of a dog and saying, "Dog!" or pointing to the dog picture when asked to find it. ■ Use pictures as cues to remember and attempt to retell a story. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use some language from a story when attempting to retell a story, such as saying "Boom boom!" as they turn pages in Chicka Chicka Boom Boom. ■ With support and prompting, describe what is happening in a picture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model reading behaviors, such as tracking the words with a finger while reading and using the illustrations in a story to help decode the text. ■ Post and refer to a visual daily schedule in the learning environment at children's eye-level. ■ Use a variety of high-quality books with rich vocabulary and interesting illustrations for read-alouds. ■ Label the learning environment with words and pictures, such as children's cubbies, shelves marked for different toys and materials, doors, sinks, etc. ■ Plan activities using environmental print, such as familiar road, store, and restaurant signs for children to decode. ■ Use the "picture walk" strategy to introduce new stories to children, looking through the book and talking about what is happening in each illustration.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Finish the ends of repeating phrases or complete a rhyme or sentence while an adult reads a book, such as "He ate through one apple, but he was still...." "Hungry!" 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to and talk about words and pictures in a variety of texts. ■ Express their thoughts, experiences, and ideas using a variety of strategies, including gestures and facial expressions, words, signs, pictures, text, numerals, sounds, shapes, models, and photographs. ■ Draw a picture of and write about the elephant they saw at the zoo. ■ Use a device to record video of a gymnastics meet they attended and play it back later when telling others about the experience. 	

Goal 5 Alphabetic Knowledge: Children begin to understand that (in alphabetic languages like English) letters and letter sounds represent the sounds of the spoken language.

([HS-ELOF](#): P-LIT 3) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT3; L.8; L.9) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.E)

(Note: For some children, their home languages may not function this way. In those cases, the development of the below indicators may differ. We have made every effort to include examples of what that could look like in practice.)

Self-Reflection Questions

What activities will I plan to support children in letters, letter shapes, and letter names? What materials can I provide to support children's developing understanding that letters and letter sounds represent the sounds of spoken language? What can I do while reading stories, giving instructions, or interacting with children to support their alphabetic knowledge?

Indicator 5a. Recognize letters, the names of letters, and how the letters are shaped, as well as some personally meaningful words.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 5b](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 7b](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 1b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	■ Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of books and other printed materials for children to look at and touch. ■ Spend time reading with children regularly, pointing out the words and pictures on the pages. ■ Label personal items with children's names and photos, and point to the label when using the objects. For example, pointing to the label over a child's cubby and saying, "Chloe. This is Chloe's cubby." ■ Label shelves with the names and photos of toys and other materials. Model using the picture label to match a toy when cleaning up. ■ Provide toys with letters on them, such as blocks or letter shapes, and model naming the letters when children play with the toys. ■ Post a visual schedule at children's eye-level, including names and pictures of each activity. Point to the schedule and name the current or upcoming activity throughout the day.
6-14 months	■ Emerging	
12-26 months	■ Emerging	
24-36 months	■ Emerging—May show an interest in printed letters in the environment, as well as the letters in their own names.	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify some frequently appearing letters and numbers. ■ Notice a letter appearing in printed words as being the first letter of their name. ■ Sort and/or match letter shapes, without necessarily being able to name or identify those letters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Label personal items and cubbies with children's names and photos. Encourage children to use the labels to find their own cubbies. ■ Encourage children to use the labels to find each other's cubbies to "send letters" or help other children put away their belongings. ■ Label shelves with the names and photos of toys and other materials. Model using the labels to put materials back where they belong. ■ Post a visual schedule at children's eye-level, including names and pictures of each activity. Encourage children to use the visual schedule to tell what comes next in the day. ■ Post signs and symbols that are common in their community, such as stop signs or the names of local stores, and discuss the words, letters, and sounds found in those signs. ■ Provide toys and materials with letters and words, such as alphabet puzzles and uppercase and lowercase matching games.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize and identify the letters in their name when they appear in other printed words. ■ Recognize and identify many uppercase and lowercase letters. ■ Recognize the printed form of their own name and other names of familiar people (classmates, family members, etc.). ■ Recognize and identify at least 18 uppercase and 15 lowercase letters by the end of their prekindergarten year. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Differentiate between uppercase and lowercase letters. 	

Indicator 5b. Recognize the sounds associated with letters.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 5a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 7b](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 1b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	■ Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sing songs and read books that highlight letter sounds, and encourage children to imitate the sounds and phrases from the song or book. ■ Hang an alphabet poster or line of alphabet cards that include pictures of objects that start with each letter. Point to and talk about the letters and letter sounds.
6-14 months	■ Emerging	
12-26 months	■ Emerging	
24-36 months	■ Emerging—May show an interest in printed letters in the environment, as well as the letters in their own names.	
3 years	■ Make the sounds associated with many of the letters they recognize.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model noticing letters in print throughout the day, naming them and their sounds. ■ Provide opportunities for children to match letters, letter sounds, and objects that start with certain letters. For example, asking, “Can you find something that starts with the letter T?” or “Can you find something that starts with the t- sound?”
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make the letter sound associated with the first letter of a word, with adult prompting. ■ Produce the letter sounds associated with the letters in their own name, with adult support. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify letters based on hearing their associated letter sounds. ■ Use invented spelling as they sound out new words, with and without adult support. 	

Goal 6 Phonological Awareness: Children will build their awareness of, and ability to work with, the sounds of language.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-LC 9; P-LIT 1) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT3; L.7) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.E)

(Note: For some children, their home languages may not function this way. In those cases, the development of the below indicators may differ. We have made every effort to include examples of what that could look like in practice.)

Self-Reflection Questions

What activities or games can I plan to support children in noticing and playing with the sounds of language? How will I model playing with sounds, such as rhyming, recognizing syllables, and recognizing beginning and ending sounds? What can I do during my regular interactions with children to encourage them to play with the sounds of language?

Indicator 6a. Notice, manipulate, and play with the sounds of language.		
Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Read stories with rhyming or repetitive sounds and phrasing to encourage children to repeat the phrases or fill in the blanks. ■ Sing songs and fingerplays that provide children with opportunities to mimic or repeat sounds and words. ■ Sing nursery rhymes and other rhyming songs. ■ Repeat children's vocalizations back to them and wait for them to respond. ■ Play with sounds and language during interactions with children, such as making animal sounds.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make vocalizations, such as cooing and babbling. ■ Pause in their activities to listen to an adult who is singing. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mimic repetitive and engaging sounds in a song, such as "e-i-e-i-o" in Old Macdonald. ■ Take turns making sounds and repeating them with others, as if having a conversation. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When asked by a familiar adult, say that a cow says "mooo." ■ Repeat a word or sound after an adult says it. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice and identify that some words start with the same sound, such as “cat and cow start with kkkkk.” ■ Act out the motions to familiar songs, chants, and fingerplays. ■ Recognize some rhyming words, or words that sound the same, such as zip and clip. ■ Say the last word of a repeating phrase in a familiar chant, song, or story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out rhyming words in stories, songs, and fingerplays. ■ Emphasize beginning or rhyming sounds during word play, and model recognizing the connections. For example, “Cow and cat...kkk...Cow, cat...they both start with the kkk-sound!” ■ Encourage children to experiment with rhyming words. For example, saying, “Can you think of a word that sounds like cat?” and “I noticed that you just rhymed sit and kit. Can you think of any other words that rhyme with sit?” ■ Provide and read aloud a wide variety of books with rhyming words or alliteration. ■ Sing nursery rhymes and other rhyming songs.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clap out the words in a song or sentence, with adult support. ■ Recognize words that have matching sounds. ■ Identify rhymes in familiar words, games, stories, songs, and poems. ■ Recognize the difference between similar sounding words, such as blue and glue. ■ Recognize beginning sounds in familiar words. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize final sounds in familiar words. ■ Create and extend series of rhyming words. 	

Indicator 6b. Recognize, manipulate, and play with sounds within words.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sing songs and fingerplays that provide children with opportunities to mimic or repeat sounds and words. ■ Sing nursery rhymes and other rhyming songs. ■ Play with sounds and language during interactions with children. For example, changing the beginning or ending of nonsense words in a chant such as "I like to eat-eat-eat apples and bananas...I like to ite-ite-ite apples and baninis..."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With adult support, identify when two words rhyme or begin with the same sound. ■ Imitate and show enjoyment for rhymes and alliteration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use music to encourage children to play with sounds and words. For example, chanting, "I like to eat-eat-eat apples and bananas...I like to ite-ite-ite apples and baninis..." and clapping for each the syllable in a word or name, such as "A—ri—sa." ■ Plan activities that encourage children play with sounds. For example, taking words apart into their component sounds, such as "Red. Rr—eh—D," and finding beginning and ending sounds of different words, such as, "Mom starts with the mmm sound. What sound does Mom end with?" ■ Play games like I Spy with things that start with different sounds, such as, "I spy something that starts with the <i>b-</i> sound," and inviting children to add to a chain of rhyming words. ■ Emphasize beginning and ending sounds, as well as words that rhyme, when reading aloud. ■ Talk to children about the letters in their names, and the sounds each letter stands for to make up the sound of their name.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell an adult that "here" and "cheer" rhyme but "here" and "there" do not. ■ Identify the parts of compound words, such as book—shelf and race—car. ■ Begin to recognize and identify separate syllables in words, such as in their own name. For example: "A—ri—sa." 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When asked, identify whether two words start with the same sound. ■ Produce a series of rhyming words. ■ With adult support, clap out the syllables of a word. ■ Identify the beginning and ending sound in words. 	

Goal 7 Comprehension: Children will interact with people and materials to increase their understanding of text. (HS-ELOF: IT-LC 12; P-LIT 4; P-LIT 5) (MI PTEC-BK: IT3; L.9; L.16) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.D; 2.E)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask while reading stories to support children's increasing understanding of text? What activities will I plan to encourage children's interest in text, pictures, and print materials? What materials will I provide to support children in making up and retelling stories, writing and illustrating their own stories? How will I model reading-like behaviors?

Indicator 7a. Demonstrate reading-like behaviors with familiar text or print materials.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4a](#) and [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the "picture walk" strategy to introduce new stories to children, looking through the book and talking about what is happening in each illustration. Read with children frequently, allowing them to touch and manipulate the books and printed materials. Point to pictures of common items in a book and ask children to name what they see in the illustration. For example, stopping on a page with a picture of a farm and saying, "Show me the cow." Create a book of photos of the children and spend time looking through it with children, pointing out and naming pictures of their friends.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at pictures when a familiar adult points to or names them. Look at pictures in stories and make sounds or words. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to or names animals or objects or people in photos, pictures, or illustrations. Show anticipation when a familiar or favorite book is presented. Point to an unfamiliar picture in a book as if to ask the caregiving adult to name it. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Touch, identify or name pictures in books when asked to, such as touching the picture of a dog and saying, "Dog!" or pointing to the dog picture when asked to find it. Imitate left-to-right reading while turning the pages of a book. Imitate pointing to the text in a story while turning the pages of a book. Use pictures as cues to remember and attempt to retell a story while turning the pages of a book. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use some language from a story when attempting to retell a story, such as saying "Chicka chicka boom!" as they turn pages in <i>Chicka Boom Boom</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model reading behaviors, such as reading left to right and pointing at each word when reading it aloud. ■ Provide a comfortable reading area in the learning environment and schedule regular time for children to read or explore books and other printed materials. ■ Model reading the title on the cover of books, talk about the parts of a book, and encourage children to tell you about the illustrations on the front and back covers of the book.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pretend to read a book to a friend, stuffed animal, or pet. ■ Hold a book right-side up and with the front cover facing them. ■ Follow the pages of a book left to right (if their home language is English). 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify the parts of a book (front and back covers, title, author). ■ Follow the text of a story left to right and top to bottom (if their home language is English). 	

Indicator 7b. Demonstrate an understanding of text.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 5a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 5b](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 1b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Show interest in pictures of people's faces.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Use the "picture walk" strategy to introduce new stories to children, looking through the book and talking about what is happening in each illustration.■ Provide books and other printed materials with common objects, animals, and people.■ Model and encourage children to point to and/or name what they see.■ When reading repetitive texts, encourage children to finish the repeated phrase by pausing and giving time to respond.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Point to pictures in a book.■ Point to a picture of an animal and make an associated animal sound, such as "woof" for a dog or "meow" for a cat.	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Point to or name animals or objects or people in photos, pictures, or illustrations. For example: When a familiar adult asks, "Where is the cow?" point to the cow in the picture.■ Point to an unfamiliar picture in a book as if to ask a familiar adult to name it.	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Touch, identify or name pictures in books when asked to, such as touching the picture of a dog and saying, "Dog!" or pointing to the dog picture when asked to find it.	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask questions about what is being shown or happening in a particular picture in a book. ■ With support and prompting, describe what is happening in a picture. ■ Answer a simple question about a story, such as "What is the cat wearing?" "Boots!" ■ Remember events from earlier in a story, such as that the narrator of Green Eggs and Ham does not like them in a house or with a mouse. ■ Respond to silly, unrealistic situations in stories by laughing or expressing disbelief, such as when the pigeon begs to drive the bus in Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! ■ Remember what will happen next when a familiar adult is reading a favorite story aloud—for example, that the letters will fall out of the coconut tree at the end of Chicka Chicka Boom Boom. ■ Look at the pictures in a book when asked to describe what's happening in the story. ■ Begin to understand that the text on a page is separate or different from the pictures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use the "picture walk" strategy to introduce new stories to children, looking through the book and talking about what is happening in each illustration. ■ Ask open-ended questions about what might happen next in a story. ■ Encourage children to use the illustrations as clues about what is happening and what might happen next, including the cover illustration as a clue to what the story is about. ■ Provide picture cards that show sequences of events from familiar stories and model using them to show what happened first, in the middle, and last in a story. Encourage children to use the cards to retell another story. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to retell familiar stories, such as drawing pictures and using puppets or dolls.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to run their fingers along the text in a book. ■ Ask and answer factual questions about a text or story, such as "What was the main character's name" or "What comes next?" ■ Notice similarities to their own lives when being read a story, such as telling another child that they made a snow angel yesterday when a familiar adult reads about Peter making a snow angel in The Snowy Day. ■ Talk about possible consequences of a character's actions, such as noticing that the tree is bending in Chicka Chicka Boom Boom and wondering if the letters will fall. ■ Show empathy for the characters in a story, such as worrying about Grover in There's a Monster at the End of this Book or saying that they are happy when Max comes home to his family at the end of Where the Wild Things Are. ■ Look at the pictures in an unfamiliar book to help them predict what might happen next. ■ Look at a picture and, with support and prompting, make up a story about what is happening. ■ Identify the characters and main events of a story, as well as where the story happens. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Summarize a story, mentioning several key events or ideas and how they connect the structure of the story. ■ Ask and answer subjective or abstract questions about a story, such as "How do you think the main character should solve their problem?" or "How is the main character feeling? Why do you think they are feeling that way?" ■ Use what they know about the characters and events of the story to make predictions about what might come next. ■ Use flannel board pieces to retell a story. ■ Identify the characters in a story. ■ Notice similarities between themselves and the characters in a story, or between their own lives and what is happening in a story, such as saying "I like lima beans too," when reading <i>A Bad Case of Stripes</i>. ■ Learn and remember new information from the books they read or have read to them, such as telling others that a platypus uses its nose to dig after reading <i>What Do You Do with a Tail Like This?</i> ■ Actively participate in a story being read aloud by repeating or filling in sounds, words, or actions throughout the story. 	

Goal 8 Writing: Children will demonstrate emerging understanding of writing as a way to communicate.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-LC 13; P-LIT 6) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): L.15; L.17) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.C; 2.E)

Self-Reflection Questions

What materials can I provide to support children's small muscle control, strength, and coordination? What materials, activities, and routines can I incorporate to encourage children to explore writing as communication? What writing tools and materials will I include in the learning environment to support children's development? How will I model writing as a way to convey meaning, and to represent sounds and words?

Indicator 8a. Develop increasing control, strength, and coordination of small muscle groups.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 3b](#) and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies <i>The early childhood professional can...</i>
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coordinate their hands and eyes to reach for an object. ■ Reach, grasp and bring objects to their mouth. ■ Grasp and hold objects in both hands. ■ Manipulate objects with individual movements, such as pushing a ball. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan a variety of activities that support children's developing fine motor skills, such as working with playdough, finger painting, and picking up objects of different sizes with their hands and later with tools. ■ Encourage and celebrate all forms of early writing, including simple marks, scribbles, and drawing.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hold a spoon or other object in a single-hand fist grasp. ■ Pass objects from one hand to the other. ■ Bring their hands together to the middle of their body. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Coordinate their hands and eyes for more complex actions, such as dropping toys into a container or putting a ring on a stacking toy. ■ With increased coordination, begin to refine their ability to grasp objects, such as using their index finger and thumb to pick up food (pincer grasp). ■ Pick up objects to look at them more closely. ■ Hold a crayon or another object in a full hand grasp (palmar grasp). ■ Begin to use simple tools to extend their reach, such as using a stick to push. ■ Manipulate objects with more complex movements, such as pulling, pushing, and turning. ■ Turn the pages of a board book. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Perform activities with greater dexterity, such as putting on mittens or putting puzzle pieces together. ■ Adjust their grasp based on what they are holding, such as a spoon versus a crayon. ■ Use crayons, paintbrushes, and other tools to make marks on paper. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies <i>The early childhood professional can...</i>
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manipulate objects with hand-eye coordination, such as threading beads with large holes onto thick string. ■ Grasp writing tools with their thumb and fingers (pincer grasp). ■ Draw or scribble to represent something they've seen or to convey a thought. ■ Make repeated marks on paper to represent lines and circles, with these shapes growing clearer with experience over time. ■ Make snips in paper with scissors. ■ Demonstrate limited precision and control in more complex fine motor tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a wide variety of writing materials throughout the learning environment, such as envelopes, stationery, markers, pencils, and clipboards. ■ Model, teach, and encourage children to hold writing utensils correctly, using a three-finger grasp.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use scissors to cut along a line or cut out shapes on paper, with some precision. ■ Draw letter-like forms with increasing accuracy and control. ■ Put together simple puzzles. ■ Begin to use a three-finger grasp (tripod grasp) when holding a pencil, crayon, or other drawing/writing tools. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a dominant hand for using paintbrushes, scissors, crayons, and other tools. ■ Make letters out of playdough. ■ Use a three-finger grasp (tripod grasp) with increasing confidence and ease when holding drawing/writing tools. ■ Coordinate their movements with greater ease for complex tasks, such as buttoning or cutting along a line. 	

Indicator 8b. With guidance and support, explore a variety of writing tools and materials.

(See also: [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide time in the daily routine for painting and drawing with a variety of materials. ■ Use descriptive words to comment on children's work, such as saying, "I see you made blue lines on your paper."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Draw or color for a short period of time. ■ Make marks on paper with fingerpaint. ■ Use markers or bingo daubers to make marks on paper. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Draw and "write" with their fingers or tools in sand. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make shapes out of playdough. ■ Attempt to draw letter shapes on paper with crayons or pencils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide writing materials in all areas of the learning environment. ■ Intentionally model and teach children in small groups how to use different writing tools.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Draw shapes, lines, and letters with their fingers in fingerpaint. ■ Practice writing letter shapes in sand. ■ Shape letter forms with playdough. ■ Use a variety of writing tools, such as pens, pencils, markers, colored pencils, etc. ■ Practice making letters or words with a tablet or computer. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Record their thoughts and ideas in a journal, including drawings, scribbles, and invented spelling (or some combination of those). ■ Use a tablet or computer to make words or write "stories." 	

Indicator 8c. Develop an understanding that writing is a way of communicating for a variety of purposes.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask children about their drawings and offer to “take dictation” for them, writing down the story or label that goes with their work. When writing, speak each word aloud, supporting children in understanding the relationship between written letters and words, and spoken language.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to recognize the relationship between familiar pictures and text on the page. Show interest in telling what their marks on paper represent. For example: Saying “water” when pointing at blue scribbles. Use crayons, paintbrushes, and other tools to make marks on paper. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask a familiar adult what they are writing. Explain what their drawings or paintings represent. Draw and scribble to represent a thought or something they’ve seen. Mimic the writing actions of familiar adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite children to help create labels with pictures and words for materials in the learning environment. Encourage children to use real and invented spelling to write a story or label that goes with their drawings.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print the letters in their own name from left to right, such as to “sign in” to the learning environment. Write a shopping list, menu, or party invitation during imaginative play. Use invented spelling, drawings, and letter approximations to write a letter to a friend or family member, sometimes. Explain the intended meaning of their writing and drawings. Write a note or story with drawings, letter approximations, and invented spelling, and then ask a familiar adult to read it. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record their thoughts and ideas in a journal, including drawings, scribbles, and invented spelling (or some combination of those). Use a tablet or computer to make words or write “stories.” Draw pictures and write words to express their thoughts and ideas. Write text under a picture to describe the picture or tell a story. Use real and invented spelling to write notes and letters to familiar adults, other children, and family members. 	

Indicator 8d. Show interest in using a variety of forms of early writing to convey meaning and represent sounds and words.

(See also: [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage children who are beginning to use writing utensils to “write their name” on their work. ■ When writing, speak each word aloud, supporting children in understanding the relationship between written letters and words, and spoken language. ■ Model different purposes for writing, such as making a grocery list, telling a story, and writing a letter.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make repeated marks on paper to represent lines and circles, with these shapes growing clearer with experience over time. ■ Make marks on paper that are meant to represent letters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model different purposes for writing, such as making a grocery list, telling a story, and writing a letter. ■ Encourage children to write letters to friends and family using real and invented spelling. ■ Provide a list of familiar words, with pictures, in the writing area, word wall, or other area of the learning environment where children can refer to it when doing their own writing.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Print the letters in their own name in the correct order, most of the time, such as when “signing in” to the learning environment. ■ Write some letters of the alphabet. ■ Use known letters and letter approximations to represent written words. ■ Express their thoughts and feelings in text, writing letters and letter approximations as well as known words and invented spellings. ■ Begin to modify and add detail to their writing and drawings with prompting and support. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Write words and stories using known words and invented spelling. ■ Ask a familiar adult how to spell a word. ■ Write their name on drawings, dictation, and other works. ■ Begin to write words/letters representing words with spaces in between. ■ Begin to look over and modify their own writings and drawings. 	



Creative and Expressive Arts

The **Creative and Expressive Arts** domain focuses on the dynamics of children's self-expression through the arts, as well as their appreciation for and understanding of others' self-expression through the arts. As their self-expression is validated and supported by trusted adults and peers, children's belief in themselves as unique and valued individuals grows.

The goals and indicators in the **Creative and Expressive Arts** domain are expressions of personal creativity and self-concept, as well as children's confidence in being creative, expressing themselves, and taking risks through their art, which strengthens their ability to persist, problem-solve, and make choices.

The goals of the Creative and Expressive Arts domain are:

Goal 1 Self-Expression: Children develop healthy self-concepts through creative self-expression that draws from their backgrounds, experiences, and identities.

Goal 2 Supporting Skills: Children develop the skills that support self-expression through a variety of art forms.

Goal 3 Artistic Appreciation: Children develop preferences and appreciation for the arts.

Goal 1 Self-Expression: Children develop healthy self-concepts through creative self-expression that draws from their backgrounds, experiences, and identities.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-ATL 8; IT-ATL 9; IT-SE 6; IT-SE 11; IT-C 12; IT-C 13; P-ATL 12; P-ATL 13; P-SE 6; P-SE 9; P-SE 10; P-SE 11) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B; 2.J)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I encourage children to explore their individuality and express themselves through their creative works? What materials will I provide for children to use in their creative works to express themselves? What activities will I plan to support children in explore their own creativity and express themselves? What questions will I ask to encourage children to think about how they have expressed themselves through their creations? How will I work with families to understand children’s backgrounds, identities, and experiences so I can better support them in expressing themselves?

Indicator 1a. Explore and experiment with the arts in increasingly creative ways to express themselves, with modifications as needed.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 2b](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a](#), and [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 8d](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Smack their lips or squeal to express themselves. ■ Explore objects with their mouths. ■ Express themselves through their facial movements, vocalizations, and eventually body movements. ■ Watch another child playing with a musical toy and reach toward the sounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan activities and materials that encourage children to explore creativity and self-expression, such as providing rattles, maracas, and egg shakers, or putting finger paint on children’s highchair trays to run their fingers through. ■ Talk about the colors and shapes in books, pictures, and paintings. ■ Provide crayons, markers, paints, play dough, and books or materials with a variety of textures (cardboard, foil, velour, etc.).
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore different textures, such as a board book with different textures, with their fingers, hands, and mouths. ■ Shake a rattle or bang a drum and show delight in the sounds they’ve made. ■ Clap their hands or smack their hands down on a table to make sounds. ■ Wiggle and dance when listening to upbeat music. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Laugh while smacking paint-covered hands against paper. ■ Make sounds with toys and other objects. ■ Explore new uses for familiar materials, such as using a blanket as a cape or a bowl as a steering wheel. ■ Experiment with changing the volume of their voice when singing. ■ Explore the ways different objects can make sounds, such as hitting an upside-down pot with a spoon. ■ Squish and smash playdough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to children about their creative works, pointing out the colors and other features and asking children to describe what they were thinking or feeling during its creation, even if they are not yet verbal. For example, saying, "You swirled the blue and red paint together. How did the paint feel in your fingers? Was it cool and slippery? Did you see that the paint changed color when you put them together? It's purple now!"
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show pleasure and pride in their creative work. ■ Show their artwork to a familiar adult and say, "Look! I did it!" ■ Talk with others about their artwork. ■ Begin to experiment with including others in their pretend play, such as by handing a toy phone to an adult or another child because "It's for you!" ■ Pretend to eat at the same table as other children who are also pretending to eat (parallel play). ■ Play with vocalizations and movements when participating in songs and fingerplays. ■ Use a drum or clapping to play with rhythm. ■ Play and move with scarves or ribbon sticks when listening to music. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When prompted, describe what they are creating. ■ Display their artwork to a familiar adult, and say, "Take a picture for my daddy!" ■ Hum the tune of a familiar or invented song. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to children about their creative works, pointing out the colors and other features and asking children to describe what they were thinking or feeling during its creation. For example, saying, "Tell me about your picture," or "I noticed you used several different shades of blue in your drawing. Can you tell me about that?" ■ Celebrate children's creative choices. For example, saying, "There are so many layers of color here!" or "You painted the whole page red!" ■ Talk about the ways illustrators and other artists use their art to tell a story or express an idea or feeling. For example, in a story about a snowstorm, an illustrator may use many shades of white and grey to convey the feeling of the snow all around. ■ Display children's works at their eye-level, alongside works of other artists. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to create works that express a certain thought, feeling, or idea.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk with others about the artwork they have made. ■ Follow the directions in a movement song. ■ Respond with matching movements when asked to move like a certain animal (arms out like a bird, hop like a kangaroo, etc.). ■ Draw and combine shapes into more complex figures. ■ Contribute to group storytelling and songwriting. ■ Make up their own dances. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Invent their own songs – sometimes just music and sometimes also with lyrics. ■ Use fine motor skills to pinch, push, and form playdough into the shape they want. 	

Indicator 1b. Explore and experiment with the arts through the lens of their personal cultural context and that of others.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show interest in familiar music, such as music they might hear at home or in their community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post photos of children and their families at children's eye-level. Display art from artists with backgrounds similar to the children or that children might find in their own homes and communities, such as Anishinaabe/Ojibwe beading, basket weaving, and textiles, Mexican yarn paintings and beaded gourds, or Finnish embroidery. Play music that may be familiar to children from their own homes and communities. Provide "dress up" clothes from a variety of cultures, particularly those that reflect the backgrounds of the children in the group.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show preference for colors and textures commonly used at home and in their community. Repeat some words of familiar rhymes and songs, particularly those they hear in multiple situations, such as at home and in the program. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show preference for colors and textures commonly used at home and in their community. Repeat some words of familiar rhymes and songs, particularly those they hear in multiple situations, such as at home and in the program. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempt to mimic the types of music they might hear at home and in their community when singing or playing with instruments. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear "dress up" clothes that are similar to those commonly worn by their family. Show some preference for dolls that look like themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide diverse, open-ended materials for children to use in their creations, such as different fabrics, papers, and loose parts. Display and incorporate art from artists with backgrounds similar to the children or that children might find in their own homes and communities, such as Anishinaabe/Ojibwe beading, basket weaving, and textiles, Mexican yarn paintings and beaded gourds, Motown music, or Finnish embroidery. Provide "dress up" clothes from a variety of cultures, particularly those that reflect the backgrounds of the children in the group.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in a discussion with other children to decide which favorite foods from home will be served during their pretend meal (collaborative pretend play). Incorporate their home culture into color, texture, and musical choices in their artwork. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend their pretend play with other children by including more themes, detail, and storylines, such as turning a pretend meal into a Thanksgiving, Chinese New Year, or Kwanzaa dinner with cousins, aunts, and uncles. 	

Indicator 1c. Explore roles, express thoughts, and feelings, recreate experiences, and act out stories through the arts.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1a](#), and [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 3a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use vocalizations and movements to express themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of open-ended dramatic play materials for children to explore during pretend play. ■ Engage with children during pretend play, asking questions and interacting within the pretend scenario. For example, picking up a baby doll and saying, "Oh, no! The baby is crying. What should I do?"
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sit down to play with a baby doll near another child also playing with a doll. ■ Respond to a familiar adult wrinkling their nose by trying to make the same facial expression. ■ Imitate some sounds made by familiar adults. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pretend to feed a doll or stuffed animal. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pretend to go grocery shopping or set out dishes/play food for a meal. ■ Pretend to change a doll's diaper or dress a doll to go outside. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Imitate other people's conversations and interactions during pretend play, in a similar context to how they heard or experienced the conversation initially. Often, they will recite memorable words and phrases. ■ Join in cooperative pretend play with other children, passing dishes around the table during a pretend meal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk about the ways illustrators and other artists use their art to tell a story or express an idea or feeling. For example, in a story about a snowstorm, an illustrator may use many shades of white and grey to convey the feeling of the snow all around. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to create works that express a certain thought, feeling, or idea. ■ Play and talk about music that express different feelings, such as upbeat music that might make someone feel happy and want to dance, or feeling sleepy or thoughtful when soft and quiet music is playing. ■ Talk to children about their creative works, asking them to describe what they were thinking or feeling during its creation. For example, saying, "I noticed that your clay is very smooth over here, and has lots of holes poked in it on this side. Can you tell me about that? What were you thinking about?" ■ Provide materials and opportunities for children to express themselves, their emotions, and ideas through their creativity, such as journaling, music, painting, and dance.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mimic words and phrases commonly used by familiar adults or favorite shows. ■ Explain to other children their ideas or plans for play, such as describing the roles they want each person to act out. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Act out familiar stories or characters from books, movies, or television. ■ Work with other children to decide on the details of a story to tell in their play, and who will perform each role. 	

Goal 2 Supporting Skills: Children develop the skills that support self-expression through a variety of art forms. (HS-ELOF: IT-PMP 6; IT-PMP 7; IT-PMP 8; IT-LC 13; P-ATL 3; P-PMP 1; P-PMP 2; P-PMP 3; P-PMP 4; P-LC 6; P-LC 7; P-LIT 6) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.C; 2.J)

Self-Reflection Questions

What materials and activities can I include to support children’s developing fine and large motor control? What materials will I provide to broaden children’s artistic experiences and vocabulary? What terms will I intentionally include in my interactions with children to expand their artistic vocabulary? What activities will I plan to encourage children’s intentional creativity and attention to detail in their creations?

Indicator 2a. Explore and develop increasing control over fine motor and large motor movements.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 2b](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 3a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 3b](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 3c](#), and [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 8a](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to intentionally move their hands and fingers. ■ Reach for a toy being held out toward them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer children finger foods such as crackers, cheese cubes, or dry cereal for them to feed themselves. ■ Provide paint brushes, large crayons, markers, and finger paints for children to make marks on paper. ■ Provide playdough and tools for children to roll, squeeze, pound, and manipulate the dough. ■ Use wedges, pillows, floor mats, and other soft materials to create safe areas for children to pull up and to climb. ■ Play movement games and fingerplays, such as If You’re Happy and You Know It, Itsy Bitsy Spider, and Hokey Pokey.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pick up small food items with a pincer grasp (fine motor skills). ■ Squeeze soft toys in their hands. ■ Use their hands and fingers to make marks on paper with paint. ■ Sway or bounce when listening to music. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try to follow the motions of a movement song. ■ Pick up thick crayons in a fist grasp to make marks on paper. ■ Use their hands and fingers to spread fingerpaints across paper. ■ Use paintbrushes with knob handles to paint. ■ Show interest in using large crayons or markers to make marks on paper, for short periods of time. ■ Squish and smash playdough. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Move quickly to fast songs. ■ Try to move slowly when listening to slow songs. ■ Try to follow directions in a movement song, most of the time. ■ Begin to roll playdough into balls and snakes. ■ Begin to use thick-handled paintbrushes to paint. ■ Hold a thick crayon in a fist grasp and poke or drag it on paper to make marks. ■ Tear paper with little control over its final shape. ■ Sing along to “Five Little Monkeys” and try to match their hand movements to the fingerplay. ■ Fall down at the end of “Ring Around the Rosy”. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play along with songs like “Hokey Pokey” and “Head Shoulders Knees and Toes.” ■ Squish and roll playdough into balls and snakes. ■ Attempt to mimic a familiar adult’s clapping rhythm. ■ Draw straight and curved lines to create pictures. ■ Use scissors to cut paper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Invite children to set the table with napkins, plates, and flatware. ■ Provide children with opportunities to serve themselves food and to pour their own drinks. ■ Provide child-size tweezers and clothes pins to pick up small objects, such as pompoms, cotton balls, and manipulatives. ■ Provide pencils, crayons, markers, paints and brushes, and other fine motor art materials. ■ Play Red Rover, Hokey Pokey, Freeze Dance and other movement games. ■ Play music with various tempos and moods to encourage different kinds of movements and dancing. ■ Model galloping, skipping, and other complex large motor movements.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dance to the (approximate) beat of different kinds of music, most of the time. ■ Match and repeat a rhythm demonstrated by a familiar adult, such as stomping their feet back and forth (left-right, left-right) four times. ■ Draw and combine shapes into more complex figures. ■ Use scissors with more precision, cutting along dotted or folded lines, most of the time. ■ Show more control in making intentional marks, such as straight and curved lines. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Imitate a familiar adult’s movements when trying to learn a new dance, most of the time. ■ Match the beat of a song when playing an instrument along with music. ■ Use fine motor skills to pinch, push, and form playdough into the shape they want. 	

Indicator 2b. Explore, use, and begin to use artistic vocabulary to describe the tools, mediums, and components of the arts.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2b](#) and [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 8b](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage children to move creatively through the learning environment, such as hopping like frogs to the playground door or dancing like ballerinas to the snack table. ■ Talk about the music in the learning environment with words like volume, rhythm, beat, and tempo. ■ Provide a variety of opportunities for children to explore materials and techniques. For example, providing a variety of props for pretend play, planning activities with playdough, and playing different kinds of music throughout the day.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pay attention to a stuffed animal being used by a familiar adult, and interact with the toy – laughing, reaching for the toy, etc. ■ Mimic some of the sounds of a song they are listening to. ■ Touch and smear paint on paper. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play with a toy phone by “talking to Papa” or holding the toy phone out to a familiar adult as if the call is for them. ■ Repeat “swish, swish” and other anticipated lyrics while listening to The Wheels on the Bus. ■ Experiment with changing the volume of their voice when singing. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore the ways an object can be repurposed as a prop in pretend play, such as using a rectangular wooden block as a phone. ■ Hold a thick crayon in a fist grasp and poke or drag it on paper to make marks. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a towel as a blanket to “tuck in” a doll for bedtime. ■ Make “pizza” out of playdough and pretend to eat it during imaginative play. ■ Use props like ribbon sticks, scarves, and dolls while dancing to music. ■ Make different sounds with their voice (loud/soft, high/low). ■ With support, use tongue depressors to make bunny ears in a ball of playdough. ■ Use terms like volume, beat, and shadow to describe art, sometimes. ■ Point to a jar of paint or basket of crayons and ask to use them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of opportunities for children to explore materials and techniques. For example, providing a variety of props for pretend play, planning activities with playdough, and playing different kinds of music throughout the day. ■ Talk about visual artwork with artistic vocabulary, such as sculpture, sketch, collage, illustration, pointillism, and abstract. ■ Talk about music and dancing with artistic vocabulary, such as choreography, performance, rhythm, volume, beat, tempo, lyrics, and encore. ■ Encourage children to experiment with more complex artistic materials and techniques as they begin to master supporting skills. For example, once a child is confident using a thick paintbrush, offering thinner brushes, cotton swabs for pointillism, and other tools.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use terms like collage, rhythm, and watercolor to describe art, sometimes. ■ Repeat part of a song they have just heard for the first time. ■ Use cookie cutters and rollers to shape playdough. ■ Experiment with the angles they can hold a crayon or marker to make different kinds of marks. ■ Use whatever materials are on hand (blocks, paint, playdough, manipulatives) to create something new. ■ Use tissue paper, construction paper, and glitter glue to make a collage. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Match the beat of a song when playing an instrument along with music. ■ Use creative tools with noticeable control as they create artwork with some detail and intentional color choices. ■ Use terms like sculpture, sketch, and melody to describe art, sometimes. ■ Combine two colors of paint to get the shade they want. ■ Experiment with changing the pressure they use on their crayons or colored pencils to make dark and light shades. 	

Indicator 2c. Plan and create works of art with increasing intentionality and detail.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3b](#) and [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 2b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to children about their creative works, pointing out the colors and other features. Ask children to talk about the choices they made, even if they are not yet verbal. For example, "Oh, you used lots of yellow in your painting. What do you like about the yellow paint? It makes me think about bright sunshine." ■ Plan activities that encourage children to make choices in their art. For example, which color will they paint or draw with, which tools will they use with playdough, which instrument will they use to make music. ■ Provide a variety of opportunities for children to explore materials and techniques, such as musical instruments and costumes, as well as paint rollers and brushes.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Manipulate musical toys to intentionally create sounds. ■ Watch with interest as they gently pat a clump of playdough. ■ Experiment with crayons and paint. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use marks on paper to represent an object, action, or idea – even if an adult may not recognize what it is. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With prompting, express their ideas through the arts. ■ Follow along with appropriate body movements during "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes." ■ Draw straight and curved lines to create pictures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask children about the choices they made in their creative works. For example, what were they thinking about when they drew green circles and swirls on the paper, or why they chose to use a maraca instead of a tambourine or egg shaker. ■ Talk about the way illustrators use their art to tell the story along with the words in a picture book, so they have to think about what the words say and how they want to make that look on the page. ■ Encourage children to think about what they are going to create before they begin working. ■ Invite children to return to their creative works to make changes or add more details.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With and without prompting, communicate their ideas through the arts. ■ When asked, describe their plan for a drawing or painting. ■ Create intentional designs in their work. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask questions about a prompt to "Draw and write about your day" to clarify if it should only be about school-time or if they can draw their morning routine too. ■ Use a variety of media (paint, text, music, etc.) to express themselves. ■ Plan a creation, saying, "I'm going to paint a picture of my cat. She has brown stripes and a white belly." ■ Add details to their work and revise when necessary. ■ Focus on a single work for longer periods of time, such as sessions over 30 minutes, returning later in the day, and/or working over multiple days. 	

Goal 3 Artistic Appreciation: Children develop preferences and appreciation for the arts.

(HS-ELOF: IT-ATL 6; IT-ATL 7; P-SCI 3) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.J)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to encourage children to notice similarities and differences and begin to share their preferences for different works of art? How will I model expressing preferences in art without swaying children in their own opinions? What kinds of art will incorporate into the learning environment to support children's developing skill in comparing and expressing preferences for works of art?

Indicator 3a. Explore, recognize, and respond to similarities and differences between works of art, and the emotions, moods, situations, and cultures being expressed.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 1a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 2a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 3a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1b](#), [Social Studies Indicator 1a](#), [Social Studies Indicator 1c](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 1d](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show interest when a familiar person is singing. ■ Pay attention to familiar adults or older children dancing or moving to music. ■ Respond differently to a lullaby than to a cheerful fingerplay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk about the colors and shapes in books, pictures, and paintings. ■ Provide crayons, markers, paints, play dough, and books or materials with a variety of textures (cardboard, foil, velour, etc.). ■ Talk to children about their creative works, pointing out the colors and other features and asking children to describe what they were thinking or feeling during its creation, even if they are not yet verbal. For example, saying, "You swirled the blue and red paint together. How did the paint feel in your fingers? Was it cool and slippery? Did you see that the paint changed color when you put them together? It's purple now!" and "Oh, you used lots of yellow in your painting. What do you like about the yellow paint? It makes me think about bright sunshine." ■ Talk to children about the similarities and differences between works of art. For example, as the background music in the learning environment moves from one song to another, pointing out that the previous song was slow and soft, and the new one is light and quick. ■ Display art from artists with backgrounds similar to the children or that children might find in their own homes and communities, such as Anishinaabe/Ojibwe beading, basket weaving, and textiles, Mexican yarn paintings and beaded gourds, or Finnish embroidery.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch a mobile or objects on a baby gym while they move overhead. ■ React to changing lighting, as well as bright and contrasting colors. ■ Laugh or smile when being held by a familiar adult who is dancing to music. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Rub their fingers over the pages of a texture book. ■ Pay attention and respond to familiar songs and rhymes. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in a group sing along activity with a familiar adult. ■ Rub soft items against their cheek. ■ Join in with familiar songs and rhymes. ■ Request favorite songs and music, such as asking for a familiar adult to sing "Itsy Bitsy Spider." ■ Rock back and forth when listening to soft music. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out the differences in color or mood (happy, sad) between two pictures. ■ Bang on a drum or pot to make loud noises and show frustration—or delight. ■ Explore different musical instruments, such as bells, xylophones, and maracas. ■ Tap on a drum, a table, and a cardboard box to hear the different sounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk about the ways illustrators and other artists use their art to tell a story or express an idea or feeling. For example, in a story about a snowstorm, an illustrator may use many shades of white and grey to convey the feeling of the snow all around. ■ Display and incorporate art from artists with backgrounds similar to the children or that children might find in their own homes and communities, such as Anishinaabe/Ojibwe beading, basket weaving, and textiles, Mexican yarn paintings and beaded gourds, Motown music, or Finnish embroidery. ■ Display and discuss art that expresses a variety of moods, emotions, cultures, and situations. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to create works that express a certain thought, feeling, or idea. ■ Play and talk about music that express different feelings, such as upbeat music that might make someone feel happy and want to dance, or feeling sleepy or thoughtful when soft and quiet music is playing. ■ Talk to children about the similarities and differences between works of art. For example, pointing out the lines, circles, and swirls of a Kandinsky painting alongside the lines and boxes in a Mondrian painting, and how both artists used bright colors.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experiment with a variety of instruments and recognize their differing sounds. ■ Experiment with different instruments to match the sounds in a song. ■ Sing a silly song and laugh. ■ Use drawings (including scribbles) to tell a story or describe a concept (such as showing who is part of their family). ■ Draw a picture and describe or dictate to a familiar adult what the picture is showing. ■ Move their body in ways that match the mood of a song. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Compare and identify the differences between a slow song and a fast one, or a quiet song and an upbeat one. ■ Move ribbons or scarves in time with the music when dancing to a song that switches from fast to slow, or slow to fast. ■ Mimic the sound of a musical instrument with their voice, such as making high-pitched noises to match a triangle, or low thumping sounds to match a drum. ■ Create a book of pictures that tell a story. ■ Show their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through multiple art forms, such as combining drawing with writing to express an idea or draw or paint symbols on a clay formation. ■ Move and dance to describe their own feelings, or a feeling/idea from a story. 	

Indicator 3b. Express preferences within the arts.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3a](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 4a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 2a](#), and [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Show interest or enjoyment of music, sometimes.■ Notice and sometimes show preference for brightly colored toys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Describe the similarities and differences between works of art. For example, as the background music in the learning environment moves from one song to another, pointing out that the previous song was slow and soft, and the new one is light and quick.■ Provide materials with a variety of textures (cardboard, foil, velour, etc.) and books with a variety of illustration styles.■ Play music and display art from a variety of styles and talk about what the children are seeing and hearing.■ Talk with children about and encourage them to explore the different textures, colors, shapes, and sounds in their learning environment.■ Talk with children about their perceived preferences. For example, "I see you reaching for the bear. You liked playing with the bear yesterday, too. The bear is very soft."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Return to the same picture in a book again and again.	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Wiggle, shake, bounce, and dance when listening to music they enjoy.■ Sing loudly when they are enjoying a song.■ Point to a photo of their family on the wall.	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Choose a favorite drawing.■ Express a preference for a favorite color.	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Tell about their preferences in colors and textures, such as saying that they want to play with the green plastic blocks and not the blue ones.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Talk to children about the similarities and differences between works of art. For example, pointing out the lines, circles, and swirls of a Kandinsky painting alongside the lines and boxes in a Mondrian painting, and how both artists used bright colors.■ Play and talk about music that express different feelings, such as upbeat music that might make someone feel happy and want to dance, or feeling sleepy or thoughtful when soft and quiet music is playing.■ Plan activities that allow children to explore and discuss art from a variety of artists, art styles, and cultures, such as ballet and belly dancing, jazz and mariachi music, or pointillism and abstract art.■ Ask children about the choices they made in their creative works. For example, what were they thinking about when they drew green circles and swirls on the paper, what they were thinking or feeling when they poked holes in one side of their sculpture, or why they chose to make music with a maraca instead of a tambourine or egg shaker.■ Ask children what they see when they are looking and different kinds of art. For example, saying, "What do you notice in this painting?"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Tell a friend they like their drawing.■ Request a favorite song repeatedly.	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Describe why they like to play with the egg shakers (or another favorite instrument).■ Work with the weaving loom frequently because, "it's just like my Abuela's."	



Mathematics

Children are born mathematical thinkers. Infants instinctively recognize differences in quantity, are drawn to patterns, and discriminate between and show preferences for certain sounds, objects, and people. Problem-solving and understanding cause and effect begin in the earliest months of life. The importance of early math cannot be understated. Research shows that math development strongly predicts later school success across multiple domains, including acting as an indicator of future reading skills—possibly even more so than domain-specific literacy measures.

Mathematical experiences involving interactions with the environment, materials, peers, and supportive adults give children opportunities to build, modify, and integrate mathematical thinking and concepts. Adult knowledge and understanding of the subdomains of math and the developmental trajectory, or path, for each of these areas is crucial to nurturing mathematical knowers and doers of math.

The goals in the **Mathematics** domain are aligned to each subdomain of math development, with indicators that ensure a comprehensive approach. These goals are:

Goal 1 Mathematical Thinking: Children begin to develop processes and strategies for solving mathematical problems.

Goal 2 Number Sense: Children show a growing understanding of the concept of number and quantity.

Goal 3 Geometry and Spatial Sense: Children show a growing understanding of shapes and spatial relationships.

Goal 4 Algebraic Thinking: Children show a growing understanding of patterns, structures, and relationships in math.

Goal 5 Measurement: Children show a growing understanding of the concepts of quantifying and comparing.

Goal 6 Collecting and Organizing Information: Children begin to develop processes and strategies for classifying and using data.

Goal 1 Mathematical Thinking: Children begin to develop processes and strategies for solving mathematical problems.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-C 1; IT-C 6; IT-C 7; P-MATH 5) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT2; M.1; M.4) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.F)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to encourage children’s growing mathematical thinking skills? How will I model thinking about number and other math concepts? What activities can I incorporate into children’s daily explorations and experiences to support their growing mathematical thinking skills?

Indicator 1a. Explore and begin to make sense of their world through mathematical thinking and strategies.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Science Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect a response when they cry; expect a noise when they push a button. (Begin to recognize cause and effect.) Squeals or coos in anticipation of a known item or person (bottle, caregiver interaction, etc.). Throw a toy, sign for “more,” cry/grunt, or smack the tray to communicate a wish for more when their bottle is empty, or their snack is gone. Begin to use objects as tools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support children’s curiosity about cause and effect by engaging in repetitive Peek-a-Boo games, repeatedly and playfully picking up objects children drop again and again, as well as stacking and restacking objects for children to knock over while watching what happens. Model and support children’s play with puzzles and puzzle games, “thinking out loud” while looking for certain sizes, colors, or shapes; trying to find where pieces belong; and turning pieces to fit.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to look around an adult to find the toy behind the adult’s back; lift a blanket to find a toy underneath. (Object permanence: recognize that an object still exists when it is out of view.) Explore water with cups and other containers. Put one ring at a time onto stacking rings, begin placing one stacking cup on another (trial and error problem-solving). 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pack containers, bags, and push/pull toys with materials to move them from place to place. Fill and dump with cups and other containers. Turn and manipulate shape manipulatives to fit them through the matching openings in a shape sorting toy (trial and error problem solving). Ask for “more” food at snack time. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experiment with cause and effect by rolling a ball down the slide. Use trial and error problem solving to put together a simple puzzle, turning the pieces to fit. Respond with a number word or fingers when asked how old they are. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask for “three candles” on their birthday cake. ■ Ask a familiar adult to pour more milk to fill their cup all the way (concept of “more”). ■ Play with signs, words, and patterns, e.g., <i>Five Little Monkeys</i> or <i>Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You Hear?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Create an environment incorporating a variety of open-ended materials and tools in all areas that invite children to explore or invent ways to use them. ■ Talk with children about the details of the world around us, using descriptive words and phrases that highlight attributes like size, shape, color, quantity (number, more, less, etc.), and position (above, below, next to, etc.). ■ Ask children to explain their thinking, e.g., how they knew where a puzzle piece fit, how they figured out the solution to a problem.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When building with Legos, search for another wheel, while saying “I only have three wheels.” ■ Sort colored goldfish crackers, then count how many are in each color group. ■ Tell a friend that their birthday is in five days. ■ Make an ‘AB’ pattern using colored manipulatives. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Suggest an idea for sharing when there are a limited number of scoops in the sand table. ■ Use different size blocks, different arrangements, and other strategies to build and re-build a structure that falls, until achieving their goal. ■ Count the children sitting at the table to answer how many napkins are needed for snack. ■ Explain to a friend how they figured out how many musical instruments were needed so that each child in the group could have two. 	

Indicator 1b. Explore and begin to understand mathematical symbols and language in communicating their explorations and discoveries.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2b](#) and [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4c.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore objects, noticing different textures and shapes. ■ Listen as an adult describes how the child is exploring an object. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Intentionally use words that describe objects in a variety of ways, such as color, size, shape, position, quantity, texture, etc. ■ Use fingers to show quantity while talking about number, e.g., "You are two years old." "You have three blocks stacked." "Please bring me one more."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use words or signs to communicate "more" or "all gone." ■ Reach into the basket to get more stuffed animals when they're already holding one, and listen as a familiar adult says, "Oh, you want <i>more</i> teddies?" 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use some quantity terms (more, all gone, too much, big, small, etc.). ■ Pick up a block and hold it to their ear like a phone (symbolic thinking). 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to count small numbers of objects. ■ Begin to recognize numerals and name some shapes. ■ Hold up two fingers to communicate how hold they are. ■ Use more quantity vocabulary (more, less, heavy, full, empty, etc.). 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to a clock and ask if it is time for snack. ■ Match numeral shapes when completing a number puzzle. ■ Point out pictures in book that resemble familiar shapes (e.g., sun/circle; roof/triangle; truck/rectangle). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use mathematical terms during shared interactions to demonstrate ways of understanding and describing math, such as more than/less than, equal to, total/all together, estimate, and predict. ■ Use numerals (i.e., 1,2,3,4...) and mathematical symbols such as + or = when writing about number with children.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell about how they put a puzzle together. ■ Participate in a group activity to predict what will happen to a toy car if the ramp is taller or shorter. ■ Estimate how many toy frogs they think are in a plastic pond. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use mathematical terms like bigger/smaller than, more/less than or the same when referring to quantities or size of items. ■ Recognize different ways to represent number such as tally marks, dice, 5/10 frames, and numerals. ■ Begin expressing simple mathematical problems identifying mathematical symbols such as "+" or "=". 	

Indicator 1c. Develop an increasing ability to recognize mathematical problems in everyday situations at home and in the learning environment, and experiment to find possible solutions.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3d](#) and [Engineering and Technology Indicator 1c.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to recognize when familiar adults come and go. ■ Use their senses and actions to examine people and objects (mouthing, touching, shaking, or dropping). ■ Engage in simple repeated actions and movements to reach a goal, such as trying to get their whole hand and then fingers or thumb in mouth, rolling to the side to reach an object, or kicking to make something move. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make observations out loud about what they notice when children are problem-solving, such as saying, "You tried reaching over that chair and around that chair and then figured out you needed to move the chair!" ■ Encourage children's experimentation with a variety of way to solve problems and respond with helpful information when asked "why" questions.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Act intentionally to make something happen again. For example: dropping a cup off the side of a highchair tray, and then after it has been picked up, drop it again. ■ Explore how something works by repeating an action over and over, such as repeatedly filling and emptying a container. ■ When offered a choice between one toy or several toys, or one treat or several treats, reach for the pile with more, most of the time. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Try different ways to reach a toy under a table, such as by stretching their arm, using a stick, crawling on the floor, etc. ■ Engage in activities for longer periods of time. ■ Try several times to solve more challenging problems, often using a combination of actions or behaviors. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Observe and experiment with how things work. ■ Ask questions or experiment with different behaviors to see how people and objects react. ■ Solve social problems, such as agreeing to take turns when someone else wants to ride in the car they are playing with. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a variety of strategies to solve problems, such as trial and error, simple tools, or asking someone to help. ■ Try to fix things that are broken, such as putting a toy back together or using tape to repair a torn paper. ■ With support and modeling, explain their thinking when trying to solve problems, such as telling a familiar adult that they couldn't put a toy back together themselves, so now they are asking for help. ■ Plan ways to solve problems based on their knowledge and experience, such as getting a stool to reach a book that is on a shelf after trying to reach it on tiptoes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Support and encourage children's use of math strategies to solve problems, such as taking turns for five minutes each or counting items into equal shares for each child. ■ Provide a variety of materials for children to use while constructing art projects, block structures, or in dramatic play. ■ Help children to try out the solutions they think of and ask them about the results. If a solution doesn't work, encourage children to adjust their idea and try again.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With support, explain how they decided that each child would get two crackers from the snack tray. For example, by passing out one cracker to each child, and then counting to make sure that there were enough left for every child to have one more. ■ Try to put a bead on a shoelace as a bracelet, and then look around for other options to replace the shoelace when the bead doesn't fit. ■ Stack blocks in several ways until they figure out how to make the tower stay up. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share several ideas with another child about how to keep their block tower from falling. ■ When their first idea for a solution doesn't work, try to think of other ways to solve their problem or achieve the result they want. For example: when the mosaic tiles they chose for their city artwork are too heavy for the paper, tell a familiar adult they might need to choose something else to work with, or different paper, or maybe even different glue to make it stick better. 	

Goal 2 Number Sense: Children show a growing understanding of the concept of number and quantity.
 (HS-ELOF: IT-C 4; IT-C 8; P-MATH 1; P-MATH 2; P-MATH 3; P-MATH 4; P-MATH 5; P-MATH 6) (MI PTEC-BK: IT2; M.13; M.14; M.15; M.16)
 (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.F)

Self-Reflection Questions

What books, songs, games, and fingerplays will I include in my practice to support children's growing number sense? How will I incorporate number, quantity, subitizing, and other number sense skills into the daily routines of my learning environment? How will I incorporate number, quantity, and other number sense skills into my interactions with children?

Indicator 2a. Counting: Explore numbers and number vocabulary with increasing understanding of their relationship to quantity.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Observe adults as they count objects. ■ Listen to counting and number vocabulary as an adult reads a book. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use fingers to show quantity while talking about number, e.g., "You are two years old." "You have three blocks stacked." "Please bring me one more." ■ Read engaging stories about number and counting concepts, such as Ten Apples Up On Top and The Very Hungry Caterpillar. ■ Use math words throughout the day, such as more than/less than, equal, and total/all together. ■ Sing songs and fingerplays that involve counting and number, such as "Five Little Monkeys."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show a preference for larger collections of items that change in number, rather than smaller groups or groups that stay the same. ■ Ask for "more" at snack time (beginning to understand quantity). ■ Recognize that when they are holding a ball, and a familiar adult is holding a ball, they have the same quantity of balls. ■ Notice when someone adds to or takes away from a group of crackers on their tray. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin using some number words with no sequence. ■ Sing along and repeat number words. ■ Begin to mimic adults by repeating counting sequences and then repeating adult actions by placing objects item-by-item. ■ Begin to understand the names of numbers (e.g., says, "1, 2, 3, go" when running). ■ With support, begin counting one or two objects. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Count verbally up to five, but not always in the correct order (e.g., "one, two, three, four, five, seven"). ■ Begins to recognize and understand the meaning of number words. For example: "I have two eyes." ■ Use one-to-one correspondence to place one counting bear into each bowl. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to animal counters one-by-one, counting out loud from one to five. ■ Serve themselves five carrot sticks for snack. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Post a number line in the learning environment and refer to it when talking about numerals, the names of numbers, and counting. ■ Incorporate counting into daily routines. For example, inviting children to set the table for snack with instructions to place “five napkins” or “three spoons” at each table, and inviting children to serve themselves “six carrot sticks” or “two scoops of potatoes.” ■ Model counting throughout the day, counting children who are ready to go outside, chairs that are pushed in, and snow boots in cubbies. ■ Use numerals in area signs within the learning environment to indicate how many children fit in a particular area.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Roll a die that lands on 5, then move their game piece five spaces. ■ Pass out one plate and one cup to each child. ■ While pretending to launch a rocket, count backwards 5,4,3,2,1 and then shout, “BLAST OFF!” 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pass out ten crackers for each child. ■ Show an understanding of cardinality, or the understanding that the last number said when counting is the total quantity. For example: counting the cards in their hand, and saying, “I have six cards.” ■ Keep track of what they counted and what they haven't counted in a group of objects. ■ Point out mistakes in counting. 	

Indicator 2b. Subitizing: Recognize and name the quantity of objects in a group without counting.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize quantity (more and less) without explicit knowledge of number, using inborn intuition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide children with opportunities to use their developing subitizing skills. For example, offering a child a choice between one cracker sitting by itself or three crackers grouped together. "Which pile of crackers do you want? This one, or this one?" Use mathematical terms such as more and less, as well as counting words, when interacting with children. Model subitizing by pointing out the quantity of small groups of objects. For example, saying, "You brought me three teddy bears!" or "I have two leaves."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intuitively distinguish between groups of one and two. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect small quantities to number. For example: pointing at a pair of bears instead of a single bear. Begin learning the number words one and two. Use quantity terms more and less. Begin to understand that groups labeled with the same number have the same amount. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect two leaves and two rocks, or other collections of matching quantity. Name groups of one, two, and three. Collect items and possibly use matching strategies (e.g., putting all bears together in one basket and all bunnies in another). 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tell a familiar adult that there are "only two" Goldfish crackers on their plate after looking but not counting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan activities that allow children to practice their subitizing skills. For example, setting out two small groups of cubes and asking children which group has three cubes, holding up several fingers and then hiding the fingers while children say how many there were, or guessing how many items are in a small cup after looking quickly inside. Model subitizing throughout the day. For example, thinking aloud when setting the table for snack and saying, "I know there are five chairs so I need five plates."
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that they have five counting bears, and their friend has four, so they have more than their friend. Demonstrate "conceptual subitizing," or identifying a whole when only seeing parts of it. For example, seeing five cookies stacked and overlapped on a plate and saying that they see five. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize some common number arrangements, such as 5 and 5 makes 10. Mentally separate a large group of objects into two or more smaller groups. For example, recognizing that they have five blueberries, and their sister also has five, so there are ten blueberries in all. 	

Indicator 2c. Comparing, Adding, and Subtracting Numbers: Begin to understand numbers as sets to be compared, put together, and taken apart.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Track the path of moving objects. ■ Explore objects with different textures, colors, shapes, and other characteristics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Narrate children's behaviors and describe what is happening around them. For example, when a child reaches for a toy, saying, "You have one teddy bear. Now you'd like another teddy bear. Then you'll have two teddy bears!" or "I have Sarah's sippy cup, that's one bottle. But I also need Jaime's sippy cup—then I'll have two cups!" ■ Sing songs and finger plays with adding and subtracting, such as "Five Little Ducks" and "Five Little Speckled Frogs."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore related objects, such as placing one nesting cup inside the other. ■ Show surprise or interest when objects are added or taken away from a group. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to recognize that two collections have the "same number" of objects. ■ Use one-to-one correspondence as they hand a familiar adult one cup and keep one for themselves. ■ Begin to recognize similarities and differences in the characteristics of objects, such as picking up a stacking ring when a familiar adult asks for another one. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Compare groups of objects that are different in quantity, such as "She has more Cheerios than me!" ■ Use some number words to compare groups of items (e.g., "one" and "two" or "big" and "small"). ■ Match objects with similar characteristics, such as placing a yellow block in the yellow container and a blue block in the blue container. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell who is first and who is second in a race or other scenario. For example, "Sarah finished her snack first, and I finished second." ■ Choose the biggest piece of cake. ■ Look at the two pieces of crackers on their plate, compare that with the three on Laura's plate and say, "I need one more." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Call attention to changes in quantity. For example, when a child puts another block on their tower, saying, "Your tower was three blocks high, but you added another block and now there are four!" ■ Use fingers and manipulatives to demonstrate how counting helps us figure out changes in quantity, such as taking two cubes away from a set of five, and then asking children how many cubes are left. ■ Play simple board games that encourage children to count, add, and subtract, such as <i>Hi Ho Cherry-O</i>, <i>Zingo</i>, and <i>Candy Land</i>. ■ Sing songs and fingerplays, and read stories that invite opportunities to talk about addition and subtraction, such as <i>Fish Eyes</i> and "Five Green and Speckled Frogs."
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Say that William has more blocks than they do, after counting. ■ Tell how many children are present after counting how many are absent. ■ After naming who is missing during the morning message, tell <i>how many</i> children are absent today. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use finger patterns, objects, and counting on to join quantities together. For example, when prompted with "You have 7 cheese sticks, and someone gives you 5 more. How many do you have now?" will start at 7 and counting 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 until they have counted 5 more numbers to find the sum. ■ Mentally separate larger groups of objects in two or more smaller groups when figuring out quantity. For example, with a plate of 7 apple slices, visually separate into groups of 3 and 4 to be able to easily decide there are 7 slices. ■ Tell how many children are present after counting how many are absent. 	

Indicator 2d. Composing and Decomposing Numbers: Begin to understand that numbers are made up of smaller numbers.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrate children's behaviors and describe what is happening around them, taking the opportunity to point out groups of objects and their quantities. For example, "You have two crackers. I'm giving you three more crackers. Two and three—now you have five crackers." Sing songs and finger plays that call attention to quantity, such as "Five Little Ducks" and "Five Little Speckled Frogs."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gather several toys or other objects together. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move grouped objects around in different orders. Begin to recognize the relationships between "parts" and "wholes," such as that an apple can be cut into slices for eating or that a wheel that has fallen off a toy car is part of the car. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the relationships between "parts" and "wholes," such as collecting 3 cars into a row. When asked for a scarf, give away 1 scarf from a pile of several scarves. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that parts make up a whole, and whole is bigger than individual parts. However, they may not be able to use numbers or measurements to explain why this is the case. Trade 2 small items for 1 bigger item. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use fingers and manipulatives to demonstrate composing and decomposing numbers, such as setting out five cubes and then separating them into a group of two and a group of five. Play simple board games that encourage children to recognize quantities and practice composing and decomposing numbers to count, such as <i>Hi Ho Cherry-O</i> and <i>Zingo</i>. Model composing and decomposing numbers throughout the day. For example, when setting the table for snack, saying, "This table has four chairs and that one has three chairs. That's seven chairs. I need seven plates."
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempt to label a whole and its parts with numbers, such as explaining that their basket of 4 pieces of play food has 2 pears and 2 oranges. Recognizes and produces number combinations up to 4. For example, moving a collection of four toy cars to groups of 1 and 3, 2 and 3, 3 and 1, 4 and 0. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentally separate larger groups of objects in two or more smaller groups when figuring out quantity. For example, with a plate of 7 apple slices, visually separate into groups of 3 and 4 to be able to easily decide there are 7 slices. Quickly answer questions about the parts of a whole. For example, recognizing that if there are 3 green blocks and 1 red block, there are 4 blocks, or if there are 6 candies then 3 people can share with 2 candies each. 	

Goal 3 Geometry and Spatial Sense: Children show a growing understanding of shapes and spatial relationships. (HS-ELOF: IT-C 9; P-MATH 9; P-MATH 10) (MI PTEC-BK: M.5; M.6; M.7; M.8) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.C; 2.F)

Self-Reflection Questions

What materials can I provide to encourage children to explore two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes? How can I incorporate shapes and positional/spatial relationships into the daily routines of my learning environment? What activities will I plan to support children's growing spatial sense and geometry skills?

Indicator 3a. Explore and begin to recognize the positional relationships between objects, their environment, and themselves.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1c.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Observe a mobile as it moves above their crib. ■ Watch someone bring them a bottle. ■ Understand where they are in relation to other things in their environment. For example, stretching out their arms to reach for a toy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide materials of different textures and sizes for exploration. ■ Talk to infants and toddlers, even when they are out of sight, to encourage development of object permanence. ■ Be present during playtime and tummy time, narrating child's actions and describing the materials they are exploring. For example, saying, "You are reaching for that block. It's far away—let's pull it closer." ■ Provide puzzles and shape sorting materials for older infants and toddlers to explore. ■ Encourage children to stack or nest toys and narrate as they stack, build, fill and dump.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Remember where the dolls are in the learning environment, and how to get to them. ■ Reach for a bottle or cup and successfully wrap their hands around it when it's in reach. ■ Use trial and error to discover how the plastic shapes fit into a shape sorter. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to use trial and error as they explore space and positions when solving puzzles or moving their body around the environment. ■ Intentionally move their body closer to or further from others. ■ Build up a personal "atlas" of locations, distances, and directions to landmarks in their environment. For example, they may know how to find the blocks, dolls, door to the playground, snack table, and more. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play with pattern blocks and explore different ways to fit them together. ■ Use spatial and directional vocabulary, such as <i>in</i>, <i>on</i>, <i>under</i>, <i>up</i>, and <i>down</i>. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expand their spatial vocabulary to include more complex terms such as beside and between. ■ Look over puzzle pieces to narrow down the group to just those that might fit in the space they are trying to fill, without using trial and error for each piece, sometimes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Read <i>We Are Going on a Bear Hunt</i> in children's home languages and call attention to positional and directional vocabulary, such as over, under, and around. ■ Play games like <i>The Floor is Lava</i> and direct children which way to move using positional/directional vocabulary, such as move forward or move left. ■ Provide puzzles of various sizes and complexity.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Find a toy that has been misplaced or intentionally hidden. ■ Play hide-and-seek. ■ Continue to expand their spatial and directional vocabulary, including terms such as left and right, as well as in front of and behind. ■ Recognize a taller bar in a bar graph means that bar has "more." ■ Begin to build a mental model of a line between dots on a graph to predict where two "lines" might meet. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep track of themselves and where they've been as they move through a maze. ■ Label or name some locations during play, such as "That corner is home base!" ■ Move successfully through a simple obstacle course. ■ Walk around furniture and other people without bumping into them. ■ Quickly decide if puzzle pieces will fit in the spot they are working on. 	

Indicator 3b. Explore and begin to analyze two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and shape attributes.

(See also: [Mathematics Indicator 4b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#), and [Science Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore the shape of toys and other objects with their eyes, hands, and mouths. ■ Begin to notice if two objects have similar shapes. For example, after rolling a ball on the floor, if they are handed a new ball, they may begin rolling that ball as well, recognizing that it is the same shape. ■ Manipulate toys of various shapes with their hands and mouths, such as rolling balls or clapping two objects with flat sides against each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide materials of different sizes, shapes, and textures to explore. ■ Label the shapes of objects that children are seeing in daily routines and in their environment. For example, saying, "This ball is a circle! It has a round shape and can roll on the floor." ■ Encourage children when using shape-sorting toys to persist when it doesn't fit, such as by saying, "We can try turning the shape so all the sides fit." ■ Provide puzzles of various skill levels (large knob puzzles, wooden puzzles, cardboard puzzles) for infants and toddlers to explore.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize that many blocks have flat sides and can be banged and clapped together in a satisfying way. ■ Match simple shapes, such as circles, squares, and sometimes equilateral triangles, with other toys that are the same shape and size. For example, putting plastic shapes into a shape sorter toy. ■ Use a single block to represent a truck sliding across the floor. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Match simple shapes with other toys that are the same shape, even if they are not the same size. For example, collecting balls (spheres) of different sizes. ■ Stack blocks, though each block choice as they stack may be somewhat at random. ■ Make a line or row of blocks. ■ Cover a larger doll with a large blanket and cover a small doll with a smaller blanket. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue matching simple shapes regardless of size and begin to match shapes even if they are rotated differently. ■ Stack blocks with more intentional choice of shape and size, such as choosing a tall, thin block and then a small cube to make their tower taller. ■ Begin to use blocks to build "2-dimensional" structures, such as walls or floors. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Match more shapes, such as rectangles, ovals, etc., even if they are different sizes or rotated differently, such as pointing out two rectangular blocks as matches, even though one was sideways and the other flat on the floor. ■ Turn two books to line up with each other, so they can check if they are the same shape, sometimes. ■ Identify circles and squares and begin to recognize and identify a sphere (ball) and a cube (box). ■ Begin to compare shapes using simple terms, such as being pointy or tall. ■ Begin to use blocks to build arches, corners, and enclosures or "rooms," though the constructions may not have interior space and may have been constructed through trial and error. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and attributes, such as the four sides of a square or the way a cube and a sphere have an "inside." ■ Point out two-dimensional shapes in the environment on familiar objects, such as rectangles on doors, circles as the general shape of some cookies, or square windows. ■ Provide children with opportunities to identify shapes familiar to them in objects from their home and the learning environment. ■ Provide children with materials (PVC pipes, cubes, cones, clay, playdough, etc.) they can use to explore, build, and recreate two- and three-dimensional shapes.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to expand the range of shapes they can match, even with size or rotation differences. ■ Recognize a wider variety of shapes, such as identifying a book cover as a rectangle, and a line drawn across the angle/corner of a square as forming a triangle. ■ Use blocks to create the lines of a shape, so their creation looks like a particular shape. ■ Use shapes as parts of their drawings, such as using a square as the body of a house and a triangle as the roof. ■ Begin to build arches and enclosures/rooms with interior space, with more understanding of what shapes they will need and how to build it. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out lines and angles as geometric objects, at least in the context of how they can be put together to form shapes. ■ Recognize lines and angles (corners) as attributes of shapes when comparing and classifying shapes. For example: noting that a triangle has 3 sides, but a rectangle has 4. ■ Recognize and identify more complex shapes, such as the trapezoid, rhombus (diamond), and hexagon, as well as more 3-dimensional shapes, beginning to learn the formal terms for these shapes. ■ Recognize that the faces of 3-dimensional shapes are 2-dimensional shapes, such as identifying the side of a cube/box as a square. ■ Use more shapes to add complexity to their drawings, such as using 2 rectangles to form the upper and lower arm in a drawing of a person. ■ Put together simple tangram or pattern block forms, creating new shapes. They may need to follow a model or map. ■ Draw a line on a simple illustration of a house to show the separation between a triangle and a square (identifying and decomposing shapes). ■ Use blocks to build taller arches and enclosures/rooms, and begin to build bridges, ramps, stairs, and add roofs to their constructions. 	

Indicator 3c. Investigate and begin to understand the concept of a whole and how it can be divided into two (or more) equal parts.

(See also: [Mathematics Indicator 2b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 2c](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 2d](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging - Recognize proportions using inborn intuition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage exploration of items that can be taken apart and put back together. Talk about pieces, halves, and wholes when cutting a snack. Allow children to line items up, sort them into groups, etc.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging - Recognize proportions using inborn intuition. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to recognize the relationships between “parts” and “wholes,” such as that an apple can be cut into slices for eating or that a wheel that has fallen off a toy car is part of the car. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the relationships between “parts” and “wholes,” such as collecting three cars into a row. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that parts make up a whole, and whole is bigger than individual parts. However, they may not be able to use numbers or measurements to explain why this is the case. Begin to use tools to divide playdough shapes (circle, square, or rectangle) into two or more generally equal parts, through trial and error, and they may not be able to explain how they decided what was “equal.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name objects using the words “whole,” “equal,” and “half.” For example, saying, “Would you like a whole sandwich or half?” Provide opportunities for children to sort objects into parts, such as separating a graham cracker into whole (1), half ($\frac{1}{2}$), and one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$).
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempt to label a whole and its parts with numbers, such as explaining that their basket of 4 pieces of play food has 2 pears and 2 oranges. Continue to explore and become more accurate in dividing shapes into equal parts. Begin to identify “half” of a circle (cookie) or square (sandwich), as well as “half” of a countable quantity (crackers) as they apply to “fair shares.” 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin extending their understanding of equal parts to include $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{3}$, such as 4 parts of a sandwich or separating crackers into 3 equal piles. Quickly answer questions about the parts of a whole. For example, recognizing that if there are 3 green blocks and 1 red block, there are 4 blocks, or if there are 6 candies then 3 people can share with 2 candies each. 	

Goal 4 Algebraic Thinking: Children show a growing understanding of patterns, structures, and relationships in math.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-C 12; P-MATH 4; P-MATH 7) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT2; M.9; M.10; M.11; M.12) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.F)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I incorporate patterns and structures into the learning environment to support daily routines and schedules? What questions can I ask to invite children to think about the patterns, structures, and relationships of objects they are exploring? What materials will I provide in the learning environment to support children’s growing understanding of patterns, structures, and relationships in math?

Indicator 4a. Recognizing and Building Patterns: Notice, recognize, copy, extend, and create repeating patterns.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 2b](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 1a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 6a](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Listen to patterns in songs and speech. ■ Explore a variety of objects with their hands and mouth. ■ Imitate facial expressions of people looking at them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow a consistent daily routine based on each child’s needs. ■ Play repetitive games like Peek-a-Boo and mimicking exaggerated facial expressions (big smile, tongue out, etc.). ■ Sing repetitive songs such as “Old MacDonald” and “If You’re Happy and You Know It.”
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore the characteristics of different objects, such as touching, squishing, and rolling balls with differing textures. ■ Begin to repeat sounds and movements, such as clapping when someone else claps, or saying “dadada” when a familiar adult says “dada.” 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show attention to the color or other characteristics of toys and other things in their environment. ■ Attempt to repeat clapping or other patterns, with occasional accuracy. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage with songs like “Old MacDonald,” “If You’re Happy and You Know It,” and other pattern and repetition songs. ■ Recognize a simple ABAB pattern, though they may not be able to name or describe it. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put a blue counting bear in the empty spot in a row of yellow bear, blue, yellow, empty space, yellow. ■ While looking at a pattern of blocks set out by an adult, copy the pattern with their own set of blocks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Read Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? and other books that have a consistent pattern. ■ Invite children to help set the table for snacks and meals, using consistent patterns for where to put the plates, napkins, and utensils. ■ Play clapping pattern games, using more and more complex patterns. ■ Provide a variety of materials children can use to build patterns, such as pipe cleaners, tangram shapes, and blocks of different colors and sizes.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue a pattern set out by an adult, adding a triangle and then a circle to a row of triangle, circle, triangle, circle. ■ Recognize, identify, and build repeating AB and ABC patterns. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize, identify, and build repeating AAB and AABC patterns. ■ Begin to copy patterns into other materials. For example: looking at an AAB pattern made with yellow and blue counting bears, draw that pattern with yellow and blue crayons. 	

Indicator 4b. Ordering and Seriation: Arrange objects in order according to changes in a specific attribute, such as size, length, number, color, etc.

(See also: [Mathematics Indicator 3b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#), and [Science Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging - Explore a variety of objects with their hands and mouth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow a consistent daily routine based on each child's needs. ■ Describe the steps of daily routines while working through them. For example, "First, we turn on the water and get our hands wet. Next, we'll put soap on our hands. Then, we scrub, scrub, scrub. And finally, we rinse and dry." ■ Play repetitive games like Peek-a-Boo and mimicking exaggerated facial expressions (big smile, tongue out, etc.). ■ Clap along to familiar songs, and sing songs and fingerplays with repetitive lyrics, such as "Five Little Monkeys." ■ Provide objects of different sizes and colors, as well as materials that encourage seriation, such as stacking rings and stacking cups.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore the characteristics of different objects, such as touching, squishing, and rolling balls with differing textures. ■ Put one object into another, such as a block into a stacking cup. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experiment with ordering objects, such as stacking cups on top of each other, placing rings onto a peg, etc. ■ Show attention to the color or other characteristics of toys and other things in their environment. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to recognize characteristics such as height as descriptions of people and objects, such as "Mommy is tall" or "babies are little." 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Choose picture books from the library that have main characters who look like them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Post a visual daily schedule at children's eye-level and refer to it throughout the day. ■ Post a visual sequence of the step-by-step process for daily routines at children's eye-level near where they will be used, such as a poster with pictures of a toilet, the flushing handle, and a sink to wash hands. ■ Talk about the sequence of familiar stories—what happened first, second, next, last. ■ Provide rods, cubes, and other materials of varying lengths or sizes, and encourage children to put them in order from smallest/shortest to largest/longest.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Set several blocks next to each other, using trial and error to decide which is longest, when working to line blocks from longest to shortest. ■ Place rods of Unifix cubes in order from shortest to longest based on the number of individual cubes. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a mental map of ordering as they set stacking cups in a row from smallest to largest. 	

Goal 5 Measurement: Children show a growing understanding of the concepts of quantifying and comparing. (HS-ELOF: P-MATH 4; P-MATH 8; P-SCI 3) (MI PTEC-BK: M.17; M.18; M.19; M.20) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.F)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to support children as they begin to understand how to compare and quantify objects? What materials will I provide in the learning environment to support children's growing understanding of comparison and measurement? What activities and routines will I plan to engage children in the process of comparing and measuring?

Indicator 5a. Notice and recognize that things in their environment can be measured (length/height, weight, area, volume, temperature, time).

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 3b](#), [Mathematic Indicator 4b](#), and [Science Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging - Instinctively notice some characteristics that can be measured, such as size and volume. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe sizes, lengths, heights, etc. during daily routines and in the learning environment. For example, saying, "This bear is bigger and this bear is smaller." ■ Describe the characteristics of objects as children explore them, such as by saying, "That block is heavy!" ■ Give warnings before transitions to begin introducing a sense of time to children. For example, saying, "We will pick up in 5 minutes." ■ Provide a variety of materials of different sizes, textures, weights, etc. for children to explore.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging - Instinctively notice some characteristics that can be measured, such as size and volume. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice that one ball is larger than another and reach for the larger ball. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to recognize characteristics such as height as descriptions of people and objects, such as "Mommy is tall" or "babies are little." 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Draw scribbles and spirals both inside and outside the lines when asked to "color in" or "fill in" a square (early recognition of area). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide children with opportunities for children to measure each other's height or shoe length. ■ Plan opportunities for children to measure various objects, such as the weight of apples or pumpkins, the depth of snow, etc. ■ Introduce the concept of time using the visual schedule, model clocks, and/or the wall clock in the learning environment.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in a group discussion to decide which shelf will best fit the wooden unit blocks. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask a familiar adult to help them measure string for a bracelet. 	

Indicator 5b. Compare things in their environment and use the language of measurement (lighter, darker, long, longer, big, bigger, etc.) to describe them.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1c](#), [Mathematics Indicator 2c](#), [Mathematics Indicator 4b](#), [Science Indicator 2a](#), and [Science Indicator 4c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging - Explore a variety of objects with their hands and mouth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use vocabulary like hard, soft, big, small, long, and short when describing objects and daily routines. ■ Provide a variety of materials that include different textures and sizes for children to compare and contrast during exploration. ■ Encourage older toddlers to group items by size or to find the smallest of an item.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to make intuitive comparisons between objects in their environment, such as showing a preference for a softer blanket or a more brightly colored toy. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make intuitive comparisons between objects in their environment, such as reaching for the bigger of two balls to play with. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use comparisons as generalizations, such as “grownups are big” or “bugs are little.” 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Compare size with simple terms, such as <i>bigger</i>, <i>smaller</i>, <i>taller</i>, <i>shorter</i>, <i>lighter</i>, and <i>heavier</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide materials for children to compare by size, weight, or other attributes, such as by guessing which of two stones is “lighter or heavier” and then using a balance scale to find the answer. ■ Invite children to line up sticks, pencils, or themselves from shortest to tallest.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Set several blocks next to each other, using trial and error to decide which is longest, when working to line blocks from longest to shortest. ■ With prompting, place blocks somewhat randomly inside two differently sized squares to compare how much space is inside each square (<i>area</i>), with some accuracy. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Place blocks tightly against each other to compare the area, or space inside, two differently sized rectangles, with more accuracy. ■ Point out that one book must be “longer” than another one because the spine is thicker. 	

Indicator 5c. Use non-standard and standard tools and units of measurement.

(See also: [Mathematics Indicator 2a](#) and [Mathematics Indicator 2c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging - Explore a variety of tools and other objects with their hands and mouth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide infants a variety of materials to explore shape and size, with free exploration. ■ Provide measuring cups, measuring spoons, and containers for children to explore. Allow for scooping, filling, dumping with objects, including water or sand in a sensory table. ■ Include real kitchen utensils and measuring cups/spoons to use during dramatic play.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pick up food with a pincer or fist grasp, depending on the size of the food. ■ Play with measuring cups and spoons in the sensory table. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Scoop water with a cup and pour it into a bucket until the bucket overflows. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play with measuring cups and spoons in the sensory table and during dramatic play. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a cup to move sand into a bucket, counting out loud as they pour each cupful in, sometimes. ■ Hold a piece of fruit in each hand to decide which is heavier. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan opportunities for children to use measuring cups and spoons to measure ingredients when making "Stone Soup," play dough, ice cream, or other recipes. ■ Provide children with a variety of materials they can use for measurement, such as blocks, carpet squares, feet/shoes, hands, pipe cleaners, etc.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to use formal measuring tools, such as tape measures and balance scales, to determine size and weight. ■ Use informal measuring tools, such as footsteps, hands, or blocks to measure length, volume, and other measurable characteristics. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expand their use of formal measuring tools to include more complex or detailed tools, such as rulers, kitchen and bathroom scales, thermometers, etc. ■ With support, measure ingredients for making bread. 	

Goal 6 Collecting and Organizing Information: Children begin to develop processes and strategies for classifying and using data.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-C 3; IT-C 6; IT-C 7; IT-C 10; P-SCI 3) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT2; M.21; M.22; M.23; M.24) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.F)

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to encourage children to begin to categorize and classify information? What games and activities will I incorporate to support children’s developing ability to organize, classify, and use data? How will I incorporate classifying and using data into the daily routines and processes of the learning environment?

Indicator 6a. Recognize and classify things in their environment.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 5c](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#), and [Science Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intuitively recognize objects or situations as similar in some way. Determine if an object is something to suck on or not. Show a preference for certain textures (softer toys instead of firmer ones, for example), or for certain flavors of puree (carrot versus peach, for example). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide toys with different textures, colors, and materials for exploration. Provide multicultural crayons and construction paper for art exploration. Ask questions and voice “noticings” that encourage children to compare, contrast, and categorize objects, such as saying, “I found another cat! Should we put this one with the other cats?”
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to make intuitive comparisons between objects in their environment, such as showing a preference for a softer blanket or a more brightly colored toy. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect objects that are alike, such as gathering rocks, flowers, or sticks from the playground or walking trail. Point to and identify a bird, cat, or dog. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect objects that are alike, such as gathering only “big” leaves from the playground. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to describe the difference between objects, such as telling that one doll has a blue dress and the other has a red dress. ■ Participate in a group activity to count how many people in the group have pets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play games like Dominoes, Mother May I?, and I Spy to support children's developing abilities to compare, classify, and categorize. ■ Provide multicultural crayons and construction paper for art exploration. ■ Discuss, plan activities, and read books about topics that encourage classification and categorization, such as types of clouds, dinosaurs, food groups, seasons, etc. ■ Plan opportunities for children to participate in making charts and taking polls, and talk about the information (data) learned from the polls and charts.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe the similarities and differences between objects, such as determining by feel that some of a collection of buttons are fabric-covered and others have holes. ■ Ask the other children if they have a cat at home and make marks in their journal to count how many. ■ Chart different kinds of weather with their group over the course of a week or a month. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Measure the growth of their seedling every day. ■ Classify items by their similarities, such as "all of these animals have fur, and these ones over here have scales!" 	

Indicator 6b. Sort things in their environment into groups based on attributes.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 5c](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6a](#), and [Science Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Intuitively recognize objects or situations as similar in some way. ■ Turn their head away to refuse certain flavors of puree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Serve different colored apples, cheese cubes, or other foods for snack and talk about how they look the same and different. ■ Help children put away toys by type, such as putting blocks in one basket and play food in another. ■ Wonder aloud about the differences in taste or texture between foods, such as yogurt that is smooth and applesauce that's a little grainy.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Place objects together that are different, such as putting blocks and dolls into the same basket. ■ Help an adult put balls in one basket and blocks in another, sometimes. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help an adult separate the teddy bears from the dolls in the dramatic play area. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collect leaves from the playground and, with support, sort them by size or color. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sort blocks by material (plastic/wooden) during clean-up time, when directed by an adult. ■ Sort animals by habitat (farm or forest, for example), when directed by an adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help children put away blocks by size, shape, and color. For example, suggesting that everyone find a red block to put away first. ■ Wonder aloud and ask questions about the differences in taste or texture between foods, such as different kinds of crackers, carrots and celery, or types of apples. ■ Invite children to transition from one activity to the next based on the color or patterns of their shirts or shoes. For example, those with red shoes might start putting their coats on first, and then everyone with white shoes. ■ Plan opportunities for children to share a photo or draw a picture of their favorite animals, and talk about similarities and differences in their appearances, size, diet, and behavior.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Organize buttons based on different attributes, such as solid color, stripes, dots. ■ Sort manipulatives into separate containers during clean up time. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collect leaves and sort by type of tree and/or leaf shapes. 	



Engineering and Technology

Engineering and Technology go hand-in-hand in young children's development. In early childhood learning and play environments, engineering can be seen everywhere. Children are constantly planning, constructing, analyzing, and improving on their constructions. Similarly, technology, at its core, is about using tools—and in early childhood, children's use of tools to achieve their goals can be seen throughout their day, whether the tools are being used for their intended purpose (a fork for eating) or in a more creative fashion (a fork to rake through the sand table).

Engineering and technological skills are more important than ever for young children as we are constantly surrounded by technology (digital and non-digital), problems to solve, and the need for collaboration and critical thinking throughout our everyday lives.

The goals in the **Engineering and Technology** domain are designed to apply broadly to skills with both digital and non-digital tools, with indicators that ensure a comprehensive approach. These goals are:

Goal 1 Creativity and Critical Thinking: Children use tools (digital or non-digital) to learn, create, accomplish tasks, and solve problems.

Goal 2 Communication and Collaboration: Children use tools (digital or non-digital) to communicate and collaborate with others.

Goal 3 Exploration and Information: Children explore and interact with (digital or non-digital) tools and resources.

Goal 4 Responsibility with Technology: Children begin to use digital tools and resources responsibly.

A note about digital technology in the early childhood learning environment: While it is important for young children to learn about and explore digital technology, technology in the learning environment should not be used in place of teacher-child or peer-to-peer interactions. Technology materials are educational tools intended to promote learning.

Goal 1 Creativity and Critical Thinking: Children use tools (digital or non-digital) to learn, create, accomplish tasks, and solve problems.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-ATL 7; IT-C 1; IT-C 6; IT-C 7; IT-PMP 8; P-SCI 1; P-SCI 3; P-SCI 5) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): IT2; S.2) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.G; 2.H)

Self-Reflection Questions

What tools and materials can I provide for children to use in their learning, creating, and problem-solving? What questions can I ask to support children ask they consider how to use tools and solve problems? What routines and processes will I model and teach to support children's developing creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills?

Indicator 1a. Explore and experiment with different uses for the tools, objects, and materials in their environment.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning 2c](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1a](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Grasp and shake a rattle. ■ Grasp and squish a stuffed animal. ■ Mouth on learning materials and objects such as plastic spoons for babies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of objects and materials to explore and experiment with, with varying textures, sizes, and shapes. ■ Provide child-size spoons during mealtimes and allow children to experiment with them. ■ Plan opportunities for children to use various tools in their experiments with water, sand, playdough, and other materials with adult supervision and support. ■ Post photos at children's eye-level showing people using different kinds of tools in their daily lives and talk about the ways they might see familiar adults using different kinds of tools.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bang on a pot with a wooden spoon. ■ Hold a spoon and play with it during feeding time. ■ Use a rattle to knock over a stuffed animal. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Grab for and play with hanging or attached toys on an exer-saucer. ■ Pull the string to get a string toy closer to them. ■ Use a spoon to eat during feeding time and as a drumstick during play. ■ Connect linking toys to each other and tap them together to make noise. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use stamps to make marks on paper. ■ Pound play dough with a rolling pin. ■ Use a stick to pull an object closer to them. ■ Swish a whisk in the sand table. ■ Use a drinking cup to move sand or water in the sensory table. ■ Use different materials as a substitute for a paint brush. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a camera to take a picture of their block tower. ■ Use a sand timer to know how long their turn is on a computer. ■ Use a triangular block as a ramp for a small car. ■ Use a large appliance box as a space for dramatic play. ■ Use wood blocks to make a ramp for cars. ■ Use wooden blocks to build a road for the animal toys to follow. ■ With adult supervision, click on a specific, favorite game app on a tablet in the learning environment. ■ Use a small mallet or hammer to pound golf tees into a Styrofoam block. ■ Use a scoop to move water or sand from the sensory table into a container. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of tools and materials for children to build, explore, and experiment with. ■ Teach children the basics of how to use electronic devices such as a computer or a tablet. ■ Ensure adult supervision and support when children are using the electronic devices, and particularly when those devices are connected to the internet. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to explore different ways to use materials. For example, supplying children with craft sticks, pipe cleaners, cotton swabs, and masking tape to construct a bridge for toy cars. ■ Post photos at children's eye-level showing people using different kinds of tools in their work and in their daily lives. ■ Talk about the different kinds of tools people use in their work and in their daily lives. For example, doctors and nurses using stethoscopes to listen to patients' heartbeats, using a stapler to put carpet on the floor, a librarian using a handheld scanner to help us check out books, and an artist using paintbrushes or a digital tablet to create illustrations for a book.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Record the behaviors of a classroom pet on a tablet, on chart paper, or in a science journal. ■ Work with a group to build a tunnel out of shipping boxes that is large enough to crawl through. ■ Use an empty cereal box to support an unsteady "balcony" area of the castle they are building. ■ Make walls, tunnels, and towers for their castle construction with paper towel tubes and cardboard boxes. ■ Use a stylus to navigate an interactive technology device and find out how tall a T. Rex was. ■ With adult supervision, choose a game from the PBS Kids website using visual cues. ■ Use a screwdriver to drive large, flat-tipped machine screws in and out of a block of wood, using their fingers to twist and untwist a bolt on the other side of the screw. ■ Use a small garden trowel to dig holes for planting seeds. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a tablet, or clipboard and paper, to record other children's responses to a survey of their favorite colors, then use blocks or paper and markers to create a graph to show the most common favorites. ■ Use a tablet and stylus to "sign in" when they enter the learning environment. ■ Use a tablet to watch a video of how crayons are made. ■ Use scrap supplies and paper to engineer an imaginary city. With adult supervision, identify a website of their choosing from the options bookmarked in the web browser. ■ Use a stencil, straight-edge ruler, and/or compass to draw shapes on paper. ■ Use an eyedropper to move liquid from one container to another. 	

Indicator 1b. Learns from their experiments and experiences.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1c](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 4b](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice that banging their hand in the water makes the toys move on the waves, and then continue to pat the water so they keep moving. ■ Notice that familiar adults respond to their distressed vocalizations by coming to them to offer comfort and check on their needs and continue to use that method to express their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of objects and materials to explore and experiment with, with varying textures, sizes, and shapes. ■ Plan opportunities for children to use various tools in their experiments with water, sand, playdough, and other materials with adult supervision and support. ■ Model playing with objects using a wide variety of actions, such as shaking, dropping, pushing, rolling, squeezing, throwing, banging, and stacking, and encourage children to do the same.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ After tasting a new food, they enjoyed, show excitement when being offered that food again. ■ Recognize that banging two plastic blocks together makes a noise, and then experiment with banging those blocks against a hard floor for different noises. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore objects through an increasingly wide variety of actions such as shaking, dropping, pushing, rolling, squeezing, and throwing them. ■ Stack blocks into towers and knock them over, again and again. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put a door stop in front of the door to make it stay open. ■ Flush the toilet after using it. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Carry their toy cars to the hard floor or table to play “because they go faster” than when they’re on the carpet. ■ Bounce balls on the sidewalk with more and more force, to get them to bounce higher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of objects and materials to explore and experiment with such as balls, ramps and inclines, cars, magnets, and blocks, as well as toys that can be taken apart and put back together in different ways, such as marble runs. ■ Invite children to move materials from one learning area to another as needed and model returning items to their proper places during clean up time. ■ Ask children questions about their experiences and experiments such as “What happened what you rolled the car on the carpet?” ■ Provide a sensory table or tray for children to fill, pour, mix, and dump water, sand, and other materials.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Add water to sand to make it moldable without turning into mud. ■ Stop pouring milk into their cup before it’s full or overflows. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learn how to play <i>Red Light</i>, <i>Green Light</i> and explain the rules to another child. ■ Experiment to discover what a magnet will stick to. 	

Indicator 1c. Recognizes real-world problems in their environment and begins to experiment with tools and other strategies to solve those problems.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 3e](#) and [Mathematics Indicator 1c.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mouth a teething ring to soothe their aching gums. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pay attention to children's cues, responding when they express their wants and needs. ■ Provide children with opportunities to solve problems. For example, putting a cold teething ring in the hands of a child who is teething (and has previously used a teething ring) and allowing them time to put it into their own mouth. ■ Provide self-correcting puzzle toys such as shape sorters, simple puzzles with knob handles, and stacking cups. ■ Ask open-ended questions and describe what is happening when a problem presents itself. For example, saying, "You built a very tall block tower. I wonder if that's why it fell down."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Start pulling themselves up on furniture to reach a toy. ■ Turn the bottle around to get the correct end in their mouth to drink. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to an object they want. ■ Try to place shapes into their appropriate place in a shape sorter. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lead a familiar adult to an object they want and point to it. ■ Try different scoopers in the sand box to fill their bucket with sand. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With adult support, look through the basket of playdough tools to find something that will cut playdough. ■ Walk around the room touching a magnet to different things to find out what will stick to it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of toys and games that encourage children to think critically and solve problems, such as marble runs, magnetic tiles and pattern blocks, puzzles, gears and linking toys, and matching games. ■ Ask children open-ended questions about the problems they are trying to solve. For example, if a child's tower is wobbly, asking, "Where could we put more blocks to make the tower stronger?" or "The marble didn't come out of the bottom of the marble run. Where did it stop? Can you figure out why it stopped?" ■ Provide and plan opportunities to play problem-solving games and activities, such as Rush Hour, making pictures with pattern blocks, driving a toy car through a cardboard maze, scavenger hunts, and obstacle courses.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask a familiar adult to plug in a tablet that won't turn on. ■ Think of and test several ways to build a sturdy ramp for their toy cars. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask a familiar adult to look up the directions for a card game they want to play. 	

Goal 2 Communication and Collaboration: Children use tools (digital or non-digital) to communicate and collaborate with others.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-SE 3; IT-LC 11; IT-LC 13; P-ATL 12; P-SCI 5; P-SCI 6) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B; 2.H)

Self-Reflection Questions

What tools and other materials can I provide that children will use to communicate and collaborate with each other? How will I support children in learning to use tools that allow them to communicate and collaborate in new ways? How will I model using tools to communicate and collaborate with others?

Indicator 2a. Explores tools for the purpose of communication or self-expression.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4b](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 4c](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 8c](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1a](#), [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 1c](#), [Engineering and Technology Indicator 3b](#), and [Science Indicator 1d](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch another child playing with a musical toy and reach toward the sounds. ■ Express themselves through their facial movements, vocalizations, and eventually body movements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide children with toys they can use for communicating and expressing themselves, such as toys that make music, sounds, or rattle. ■ Talk, sing, and interact with children to encourage them to communicate and express themselves. ■ Post and refer to a visual schedule of the daily routine and provide picture cards of common items in the learning environment that children can use to communicate their wants and needs. ■ Pay attention to children's cues and respond when they express their wants, needs, and emotions. ■ Provide children with a variety of tools for self-expression, such as art materials, musical instruments, costumes, and props for pretend play.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shake a rattle or bang a drum and show delight in the sounds they've made. ■ Clap their hands or smack their hands down on a table to make sounds. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Experiment with changing the volume of their voice when singing. ■ Explore the ways different objects can make sounds, such as hitting an upside-down pot with a spoon. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to a picture card to explain what they want or need. ■ Have pretend conversations on toy phones. ■ Answer a pretend call on a toy cell phone. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a mirror to watch themselves make happy and sad faces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide children with tools and materials they can use for self-expression and communication, such as art materials, mirrors, props for pretend play, cameras, and tablets. ■ Provide opportunities for children to use cameras or tablets to take pictures of themselves or to request that pictures be taken of them and their work. ■ Group children of different abilities together in small groups to collaborate and solve puzzles or engineering challenges, such as building a bridge. ■ Encourage children to use audio translation apps or software to communicate with other children who speak different home languages.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a tablet to take pictures of themselves making different faces. ■ Use adaptive devices to operate software on the computer. ■ Join in with others of differing abilities in solving a puzzle or maze. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play a "coding" game using arrow cards to "program" another child's movements. ■ Use a translation or interpreter app to help them communicate with a friend whose home language is not the same as their own. 	

Indicator 2b. Uses tools to work with others.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 2a.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look into a mirror with a familiar adult and mimic the adult's actions, such as blinking after the adult blinks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide mirrors at children's eye-level. Play imitation and mimicry games with children, such as Peek-a-Boo or shaking a rattle and then encouraging the child to do the same. Place children near each other and provide each child with similar toys or tools to encourage imitation and interaction. Plan activities for children to use playdough and other art materials, including art tools such as sponges, paintbrushes, and rollers. Play with children in ways that encourage them to use objects as tools, such as a banging a toy on the surface of a drum to make noise or reaching with a ribbon wand to pull a ball closer.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to play imitation games, such as banging a rattle against the table when someone else does it first. Help an adult put balls in one basket and blocks in another, sometimes. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin to mimic adults by repeating counting sequences and then repeating adult actions by placing objects item-by-item. Help an adult separate the teddy bears from the dolls in the dramatic play area. Use one-to-one correspondence as they hand a familiar adult one cup and keep one for themselves. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Color on paper with crayons or in a coloring app, with another child. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with other children to take pictures for a collage. Use a computer next to another child. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide opportunities for children to work and use tools together. For example, creating large murals, playing cooperative computer games or board and card games, and other activities that require multiple participants. Plan activities for children to purposefully interact, such as interviewing each other to collect data about pet ownership, working together to measure a large surface with a tape measure, or completing a challenge to build a zoo from blocks or a fort with chairs and blankets. Provide tools and other materials that encourage interaction, such as board and card games, cooperative computer games, cameras for photos or video, and puppets or materials to create self-made puppets.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with other children to use a tablet to collect data on their peers' favorite fruit. Use glue sticks, scissors, and paintbrushes to create a mural with other children. Take turns using a tablet with another child. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work as a group to draw a map on a tablet or chart paper. Plan and build a complex block construction with other children. 	

Goal 3 Exploration and Information: Children explore and interact with (digital or non-digital) tools and resources. (HS-ELOF: IT-ATL 7; IT-LC 6; IT-LC 10; IT-LC 13; IT-C 1; IT-C 6; P-ATL 11; P-SCI 4; P-SCI 5) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.B; 2.G; 2.H)

Self-Reflection Questions

What tools and materials can I provide for children to use for finding information? How will I model using digital technology, as well as other tools and resources, to find information? What questions can I ask to encourage children to communicate about how they've used tools in their experiences?

Indicator 3a. With adult support and supervision, explores (digital or non-digital) tools and resources to find information.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use their hands and mouth to determine if an object is something to suck on or not. ■ Explore objects, noticing different textures and shapes. ■ Touch to explore others' faces. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide interactive toys, as well as toys and materials with a variety of textures for children to touch and manipulate. ■ Model engaging with interactive toys such as pop-up or musical toys, encouraging children to experiment to find out what different buttons, switches, and gears do. ■ Plan activities that invite children to explore and experiment with translucent colored blocks on a light table, a variety of tools to manipulate playdough, or other opportunities that invite experimentation.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore the characteristics of different objects, such as touching, squishing, and rolling balls with differing textures. ■ Explore water with cups and other containers. ■ Tip a sippy cup upside down and watch to see what happens. ■ Smack their hands into the water table to see what happens. ■ Drop or throw a block and watch to see what happens. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drop a toy from a highchair and then look over the side to see it on the floor. ■ Bang and shake toys to hear different sounds. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Put the lid on a container of sand and hold it upside down to see if any pours out. ■ Use different materials on a light table to see how the light changes. ■ Hold translucent color panels up to the window and look through them. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With adult support and supervision, use a tablet to look for pictures of a plant's life cycle. ■ Look at a picture of a block tower as an example of what they can build. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide nonfiction and reference books, as well as encyclopedia apps and other software that children can use to answer questions and learn about topics of interest, such as where lions live or what is inside an ant hill.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With adult support and supervision, use a computer to look up instructions for how to plant seeds. ■ With adult support, use non-standard measuring tools, such as blocks or carpet squares, to figure out how long something is. ■ Look through a book about birds to find out how many different colors a parakeet can be. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a variety of tools for finding information, such as measuring tapes and rulers, balance scales, number lines, color wheels, and word walls. ■ Model and plan activities for children to learn how to find information in books or apps, as well as how to use the tools provided in the learning environment to answer their questions. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to figure out the steps needed to accomplish a task, and provide opportunities for children to communicate those steps to others verbally, in writing, by drawing pictures, on video, or through other methods.
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With adult supervision, look up dinosaurs in an encyclopedia app to find out what color dinosaurs were. ■ Use a cup, compass, or stencil to draw a circle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Partner or group children together to use available tools and resources to answer a question or find out about a topic. ■ Invite children to help determine where to find information about a topic. For example, answering a question by saying, "I don't know how big penguins get. What could we do to find out?"

Indicator 3b. Communicates about their experiences with (digital or non-digital) tools and resources.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a](#) and [Engineering and Technology Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make cooing sounds and reach for a mobile moving over their crib. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide interactive toys, as well as toys and materials with a variety of textures for children to touch and manipulate. ■ Respond with excitement and encouragement to children's cues and communication about their experiences. For example, when a child drops a toy into the water table and then laughs when it splashes, laughing along and saying, "That was a big splash, wasn't it?" ■ Model engaging with interactive toys such as pop-up or musical toys, encouraging children to experiment to find out what different buttons, switches, and gears do. ■ Talk and sing with children. ■ Display children's work using tools, such as artistic creations or photos of their block constructions, at their eye-level.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bang a toy on the table, then squeal when it makes a loud noise. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Laugh while smacking paint-covered hands against paper. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Display their artwork to a familiar adult, and say, "Take a picture for my daddy!" 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe a game they play on a family member's phone at home. ■ Draw a picture of one of the characters from a favorite game. ■ Show a familiar adult how they used scoops and funnels in the sensory table. ■ Use adaptive devices for support when telling peers about themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Invite children to share about their experiences with technology. For example, they may talk about using FaceTime to talk to their grandparents out of state, using their own screwdriver to help build a table, or watching "brain break"-style dance videos on YouTube Kids. ■ Interact with children at the sensory table and ask questions about their explorations and experiments. ■ Provide cameras, tablets, and adaptive devices for children to explore and model using those tools to communicate. For example, recording a video of themselves doing a cartwheel, to share with friends, pressing the "cracker" button on an adaptive device to request a specific snack, or taking pictures of their sunflower sprout as it grows.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a tablet to take pictures of themselves making different faces. ■ Tell about something they learned from a video clip about penguins. ■ Draw pictures of their bicycle with more and more detail. ■ Show others a video they made of themselves dancing. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Follow along with a simple YouTube Kids video as it demonstrates how to draw a cat. ■ Record their measurement of the rain in their science journal. ■ Use an encyclopedia app to answer their questions about where penguins live. 	

Goal 4 Responsibility with Technology: Children begin to use digital tools and resources responsibly.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-C 5; IT-PMP 2; P-ATL 3; P-ATL 4; P-ATL 5) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.H; 2.K)

Self-Reflection Questions

How will I model using digital technology responsibly? What routines and processes will I establish to support children in using digital technology responsibly and safely? What resources or other materials can I provide to support children as they learn to use technology responsibly and safely?

Indicator 4a. With adult support and supervision, uses digital tools and resources responsibly.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 5a](#) and [Social Studies Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	■ Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Provide visual cues such as gestures or pictures when giving directions.■ Repeat directions clearly and model the expectation, working alongside children as they complete the task.■ Support children through modeling and encouragement as they learn that some toys and manipulatives are more fragile than others, and must be treated carefully.■ Celebrate children's attempts to follow directions.
6-14 months	■ Emerging	
12-26 months	■ Emerging	
24-36 months	■ Emerging	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage in a large group activity to make a short list of what is expected when they are using digital tools in the learning environment. ■ When reminded, leave their food or drink on a table away from the device they're using. ■ With modeling and guidance, turn a device on and off, and navigate to favorite apps. ■ When reminded, shut down a device when they are finished using it. ■ With modeling and practice, return a device to an adult when they see a low battery warning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model, teach, and support children in caring for and using digital tools safely. ■ Post a brief list of picture guidelines, such as a water cup circled in red with a line through it, near where the technology is used or stored to remind children how to use the tools safely. Present the picture guidelines to children and talk through what each guideline means. ■ Monitor children who are using digital tools, watching for cues that they need support with how to do something or with following established guidelines. ■ Model how to use a computer mouse, fingertip, keyboard, and other tools to navigate a computer or tablet. ■ Use correct terms for various devices and equipment, encouraging children to expand their vocabulary. For example, mouse, keyboard, escape key, tablet, home button, microphone, trackpad, touchscreen, and stylus. ■ Choose apps and devices carefully, considering children's needs, abilities, and potential learning experiences. ■ Plan activities using the devices, such as creating an e-book of a story written interactively with each child contributing to the story and illustrations.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask questions and engage in a conversation about how to use digital tools responsibly when the group is making a list of expectations. ■ With modeling and guidance, carry a device carefully around the room to take photos. ■ When reminded, and with modeling and guidance, plug a tablet into its charger when they see a low battery warning. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make suggestions about how to use digital tools responsibly when the group is deciding on expectations for their use. ■ With modeling and guidance, use a mouse to navigate a computer screen. ■ With support, use different apps on a device to take a series of photos of a plant, and then include those photos in a slideshow of the plant's growth. ■ With guidance and support, explain that a photo on the internet belongs to the person who took the picture. 	

Indicator 4b. With adult guidance and supervision, begins to demonstrate an understanding of internet safety.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 5a](#) and [Physical Development and Health Indicator 4c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	■ Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide visual cues such as gestures or pictures when giving directions. ■ Repeat directions clearly and model the expectation, working alongside children as they complete the task. ■ Celebrate children's attempts to follow directions.
6-14 months	■ Emerging	
12-26 months	■ Emerging	
24-36 months	■ Emerging	
3 years	■ Emerging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Adjust and monitor privacy settings and parental controls to manage what children have access to from technology in the learning environment, both from the devices themselves as well as from any online games or other sites they are approved to reach. ■ Talk with children about internet safety, including examples that connect to children's daily lives. For example, explaining that the internet is to be used only with adult supervision, just like if a child were using any other complex tool or communication device. ■ Work with children to develop a clear list of guidelines, with picture cues, for internet safety. Post the list near devices with internet access and review regularly.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask questions and engage in a conversation about how to use the internet safely when the group is making a list of expectations. ■ Use only provided apps and digital resources on their device. ■ Share pictures by showing the device to other children. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make suggestions about how to use the internet safely when the group is deciding on expectations for their use. ■ Use a tablet to take pictures of themselves making different faces. ■ With guidance and supervision, use only those websites listed in a web browser's bookmarks. ■ With guidance, remember to only open a web browser or internet-connected software when an adult is supervising. ■ With modeling and support, use the share feature of a photo app to upload a photo of their block tower to an archive managed by a familiar adult. ■ With modeling and support, remember that they should not share any personal information (name, age, address, phone number) online. 	



Science

Young children are born scientists, exploring, experimenting, and learning about the world around them. Even the youngest children are developing their scientific skills through their everyday actions, such as turning toward a sound or splashing in water.

The goals in the **Science** domain are designed to foster children's natural curiosity and support the development of scientific skills as they explore the world around them. These goals are:

Goal 1 Scientific Thinking: Children explore and demonstrate curiosity about the world around them.

Goal 2 Physical Science: Children show a growing understanding of the scientific principles of physical science.

Goal 3 Earth Science: Children show a growing understanding of the scientific principles related to the earth.

Goal 4 Life Science: Children show a growing understanding of scientific knowledge related to living and non-living things.

Goal 1 Scientific Thinking: Children explore and demonstrate curiosity about the world around them.
[\(HS-ELOF: IT-C 1; IT-C 2; IT-C 3; IT-C 4; IT-C 5; IT-C 6; IT-C 7; IT-C 10; P-LC 6; P-SCI 1; P-SCI 2; P-SCI 3; P-SCI 4; P-SCI 5; P-SCI 6\)](#)
[\(MI PTEC-BK: IT2; S.1; S.2; S.4; S.6; S.7\)](#) [\(NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.G\)](#)

Self-Reflection Questions

What materials and experiences can I provide to encourage children to explore and express their curiosity about the world? How will I model curiosity, observation, investigation, and exploration? In what ways will my interactions with children support the development of their scientific thinking skills?

Indicator 1a. Observe and investigate their environment using scientific thinking, scientific vocabulary, and the scientific method.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 1a](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 1b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn toward a new sound. ■ Put a toy or manipulative into their mouth to learn about it. ■ Manipulate plush texture cubes and other textured toys. ■ Show interest in people's faces by looking and exploring them with their hands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide toys and materials with a variety of textures, colors, patterns, shapes, and sizes, as well as toys that make noise or are otherwise interactive. ■ Rotate toys to encourage children to investigate and explore new things in their environment. ■ Provide a sensory table or tray for children to scoop, pour, dump, and manipulate water, sand, water mixed with non-toxic soap or shampoo, soil, and other materials. ■ Point out and talk about new and interesting phenomena, such as watching the rain out the window, birds at a birdfeeder, squirrels climbing a tree, or worms in a worm habitat. ■ Plan activities for children to explore a variety of materials and textures, such as fingerpaint, playdough, mashed banana, and snow.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Crawl toward new materials or toys. ■ Fill and dump cups of water. ■ Show that they recognize the difference between familiar and unfamiliar people in their reactions - smiling or appearing happy with familiar faces and seeming more hesitant or upset with unfamiliar people. ■ Pick up multiple toys and shake each one to find out if it makes noise. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build a block tower and knock it down. ■ Climb on a playscape. ■ Explore leaves and large pinecones in the tray table. ■ Squish fingerpaint between their fingers and hands while painting 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask, "What's that?" when they hear an unfamiliar noise. ■ Bang, shake, and look closely at a toy to figure out how it works. ■ Join a playdough activity that is already in progress. ■ Pour sand through a funnel at the sensory table. ■ Search for dandelion puff balls on the playground. ■ Paint with leaves and long blades of grass from the playground instead of paint brushes. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice snow on the ground and say, "It's cold!" ■ Build a snowman by stacking lumps of snow. ■ Observe and discuss the movement of worms in the sensory table. Say, "That bug is going over the other one!" ■ Wheel around the room with a magnet wand, testing different objects to find out if they stick (are magnetic), and announce, "The toy car sticks, but the blocks don't." ■ Mix paint colors and notice the new color they create, saying, "I put yellow in my blue – now it's green!" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Include natural materials such as leaves, rocks, and shells in the science area of the learning environment. ■ Rotate toys and materials in the science area frequently to encourage children's interest and ongoing attention. ■ Ask open-ended questions, such as "I noticed... What do you think that means?" and "What do you think will happen if...?" ■ Plan opportunities for children to explore and experiment with new materials, such as painting with leaves or blades of grass, making rubbings of different kinds of leaves, and building with snow. ■ Invite children to ask questions about the world around them, and work with children to find the answers to their questions. ■ Encourage children to use their five senses to investigate the world around them.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice which side is lower/heavier when weighing rocks on a balance scale. ■ Take a nature walk around the outside of the building with an adult and ask them to identify things. ■ Taste several varieties of apples and describe the differences in flavor, color, and texture. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Draw their observations of a seedling's growth over time in their science journal. ■ Notice the different colors of the birds on the playground. ■ Use magnifying glasses to observe plants and insects on the playground and record their observations in a science journal, such as drawing a picture of a grasshopper and writing, "The grasshopper has long spikey legs." ■ Label the parts of a flower in a drawing, such as stem, petal, roots, and leaves. 	

Indicator 1b. Explore cause-and-effect relationships.

(See also: [Mathematics Indicator 1a](#), [Engineering and Technology Indicator 1b](#), and [Science Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wave their arms to hit a mobile on their baby gym and make it move. Watch a toy car as it rolls across a hard floor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a sensory table or tray with water, ice cubes, sand, mud, gelatin, or other substances for children to explore with a variety of tools, such as scoops or funnels. Provide interactive toys, such as rattles, shakers, pop-up toys, and other materials that have an obvious response to the child taking an action with it (playdough squishes in fingers, for example). Narrate what is happening when children play, and ask open-ended questions, even if children are not yet verbal. For example, saying, "Oh, that was a big splash! The water splashed when you smacked your hand into it! What do you think will happen if you tap the water?"
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Push buttons or turn knobs on a pop-up toy to make something happen. Splash water in a sensory tub. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open and close drawers and cabinet doors. Push and pull a toy with wheels. Pull the string on a talking toy. Fill and dump water in the sensory table. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stack and knock down block towers. Put the lid on a container of sand and hold it upside down to see if any pours out. Blow and pop bubbles. Pour water through a waterwheel to make it spin. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix playdough colors together. Melt ice cubes in their hands. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a sensory table or tray for children to explore a variety of materials and textures, and to scoop, pour, and manipulate materials using their hands as well as a variety of tools, such as funnels, measuring cups and spoons, and sifters. Provide ramps and inclines, as well as rolling toys such as balls and toy cars. Ask open-ended questions about children's experiments. For example, "Why do you think the car rolls faster on the hard floor than it does on the carpet?" and "The tower fell over. Why do you think that happened?"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a flashlight to make shadows with their hands. On a light table, stack a blue translucent square on top of a red one to make purple. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With adult support, mix vinegar into baking soda to make it fizz over the edges of the container like a volcano erupting. 	

Indicator 1c. Observe, compare, and classify objects and information.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 5c](#), [Mathematics Indicator 4b](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6a](#), and [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show a preference for certain textures (softer toys instead of firmer ones, for example), or for certain flavors of puree (carrot versus peach, for example). ■ Explore the physical attributes of toys by putting toys in their mouths. ■ Experiment with different ways to move their own body parts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide toys and materials with a variety of textures, colors, patterns, shapes, and sizes, as well as toys that make noise or are otherwise interactive. ■ Talk to children about the characteristics of the toys they are playing with. For example, saying, "Oh, that teddy bear is very soft, isn't it? The blanket is soft too," "The toy car rolls across the floor just like your ball," and "Can you help me find all the yellow blocks?" ■ Encourage children to help return toys to their baskets, saying things like, "The dolls belong in this basket. Can you help me put them in?" and "Do you see the picture of the car on this basket? All our toy cars go in here. Let's put away the ones we're finished playing with."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Move away from or gravitate toward loud toys (comparing and showing preference). ■ Stack ring toys. ■ Touch and explore a variety of textures. ■ Help an adult put balls in one basket and blocks in another, sometimes. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help an adult separate the teddy bears from the dolls in the dramatic play area. ■ Point to and identify a bird, cat, or dog. ■ Collect rocks, flowers, or sticks from the playground or walking trail. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with a group to sort blocks by color. ■ Collect only "big" leaves from the playground. ■ Collect leaves from the playground and, with support, sort them by size or color. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sort blocks by material (plastic/wooden) during clean-up time. ■ Talk about cats and dogs and demonstrate an understanding that they are different. ■ Sort animals by habitat (farm or forest, for example). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a light table with translucent colored blocks, color paddles, colored cling wrap or cellophane wrapping paper, and x-rays to explore. ■ Provide materials that provide children with opportunities to sort and classify, such as puzzles, "smell jars," musical instruments, leaves, a recycling center, and manipulatives with different textures, sizes, or colors.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make marks in their journal as they count how many children have yellow shirts and green shirts, then compare how many there are of each color. ■ Chart different kinds of weather with their group over the course of a week or a month. ■ Sort buttons by feel, into piles of fabric-covered buttons and buttons with holes. ■ Sort manipulatives into separate containers during clean up time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Label materials in the learning environment with words and pictures, including words from children's home languages. Label shelves and baskets where toys and manipulatives are kept.
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Measure the growth of their seedling every day. ■ Classify items by their similarities, such as "all of these animals have fur, and these ones over here have scales!" ■ Collect leaves and sort by type of tree and/or leaf shapes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Plan activities for children to sort or classify objects. For example, after a poll to find out what kinds of pets the children have at home, working with the children to sort photos of the pets into two categories: pets that have fur, and pets that do not have fur.

Indicator 1d. Communicate and/or record observations, questions, and predictions about their environment.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 3a](#), [Engineering and Technology Indicator 1a](#), [Engineering and Technology Indicator 3b](#), and [Science Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cry or grunt when their bottle is empty. ■ Vocalize or squirm when they are put down after being held. ■ Grab at a bottle being brought to them when they are hungry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage with children during one-on-one interactions, such as toileting and mealtimes, asking questions and narrating what is happening. ■ Read books about nature and other science topics, and about people who communicate about the world around them, such as a character describing what they see on a nature walk. ■ Plan activities that connect to children's experiences with their environment. For example, after a rainy day when children likely saw mud and puddles, filling a sensory table or tray with water or mud and reading stories about rain, mud, and puddles. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to communicate about what they see, such as taking a nature walk and then inviting children to draw pictures of what they saw – regardless of their drawing skill or the likelihood that the subject of a drawing will be recognizable. ■ Use a variety of science terms, such as large/larger/largest, solid, liquid, measure, mixture, effect, and notice.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hold up their arms toward an adult, expecting to be picked up. ■ Smack the surface of the water in a sensory table and laugh when it splashes. ■ Lift a blanket off a toy the adult has hidden for them as they begin to develop a sense of object permanence. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bring a rock from the playground to an adult to show its features (smooth, sparkly, colors, etc.). ■ Hold an adult's hand to take them across the playground and show the bugs they found. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out the window and announce, "Snowing!" ■ Ask why there are no leaves on the trees. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask to feed the classroom fish when they come to school in the morning because "it's breakfast time!" or the fish usually gets fed in the mornings. ■ Say, "It's sunny—we can go outside!" or look out the window at the rain and grumble, "But I wanted to go outside." ■ Chart their predictions about what color flower will grow from the seeds they planted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe the details and results, as well as any wonderings, that come from experiments and scientific experiences in the learning environment, modeling curiosity and the scientific thought process. ■ Invite children to share their predictions before an experiment or experience. For example, asking, "What do you think will happen?" before mixing two paint colors together or "What do you think we will see?" before turning over a log in the grass. ■ Plan activities that provide opportunities for children to record their experience of a scientific process, such as recording or drawing pictures of a plant's growth from seed, taking photos of an ice cube as it melts, or drawing the position of the sun throughout the day. ■ Ask open-ended and thought-provoking questions, encouraging children to think about what they see, what might happen next, why something might have happened, and other aspects of their experiences.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out the squirrels gathering nuts and ask why they need so many. ■ Tell stories about the squirrels in their neighborhood eating the jack-o'-lanterns and playing with the decorations. ■ Chart different kinds of weather with their group over the course of a week or a month. ■ Point out the tiny buds beginning to form on trees and plants in the spring. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice that the classroom fish comes to the surface of the water when people stand near the tank, and ask, "Why is he doing that?" ■ After being taught that a plant needs moist soil, touch the soil in a potted plant and ask to water it because it's dry. ■ Notice that the clouds are getting darker and say, "I think it's going to rain." ■ Use a bar graph to chart favorite colors in the group and discuss the results using terms like more, less, and equal. ■ Record the height of their seedling in their science journal each day. 	

Goal 2 Physical Science: Children show a growing understanding of the scientific principles of physical science.
 (HS-ELOF: IT-C 9; P-SCI 1; P-SCI 3) (MI PTEC-BK: IT2; S.3) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.G)

Self-Reflection Questions

What materials and experiences can I provide to support children’s explorations with matter, movement, light, and sound? What questions can I ask to encourage children to think scientifically about matter, movement, light, and sound? In what ways will I tailor my interactions with children to support their growing understanding of matter, movement, light, and sound?

Indicator 2a. Explore and compare the ways objects move, including their speed, direction, and duration of movement.

(See also: [Science Indicator 1b.](#))

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Kick at a mobile to make it move. ■ Shake a rattle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide toys that move or are interactive in other ways, such as push or pull toys, balls, rattles, and pop-up toys. ■ Describe the science of what children are doing or experiencing in simple terms. For example, “You threw the ball and it bounced, bounced, bounced!” and “When you pushed the car on the hard floor, it went fast! It’s easier for the car to roll on the hard floor because the hard floor is smooth, but the carpet is soft and bumpy.”
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bang two blocks together. ■ Push a toy car across the floor. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show interest in the different ways a ball might move when rolling it down a ramp. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Roll a ball to an adult sitting across from them, and say, “fast!” when the adult rolls a ball back to them. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build ramps for toy cars and experiment to see which car goes faster down the ramp. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide toy cars and trucks of varying sizes, as well as ramps, inclines, and materials that can be used by children to build their own ramps and pulleys, such as string or twine, cardboard, blocks, and flat pieces of wood or plastic. ■ Plan opportunities for children to explore the way objects move, such as comparing whether a smaller or larger car will go faster down a ramp, which surfaces help cars go faster, and what objects might fall more slowly than others (for example: a feather or sheet of paper compared to a wooden bead or spoon). ■ Provide marble and water run pieces and encourage children to experiment with different constructions. ■ Ask questions that encourage children's curiosity about movement, such as "Which car do you think will go faster? Why do you think so?" and "The paper is bigger than the bead, but the bead is heavier. Which one do you think will fall faster?"
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build a marble run and make predictions about what pieces they can add to make the marble move faster or slower. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Drop a feather and a baseball from the same height and notice that the feather falls slower. ■ Explore using a small pulley system to raise and lower toy cars. 	

Indicator 2b. Explore and observe the states of matter (liquids, solids, gasses) in their environment.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#), and [Science Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tense up when placed in water. ■ Explore the sensation of puree in their mouth when it is being introduced into their diet. ■ Move their arms and kick when placed in the water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a sensory table or tray with containers and tools for filling, pouring, dumping, and sifting. ■ Rotate materials such as water, sand, and soil in the sensory table to maintain ongoing interest and to provide experiences with both liquids and solids. ■ Provide sensory boxes and jars, as well as materials with different textures and other characteristics. ■ Talk about the characteristics of different materials while children are using them. For example, discussing the flow of liquids such as milk and water during mealtimes, and about the hard surface of blocks while children are stacking them. ■ Provide balance scales, as well as opportunities for children to explore weights and sizes, such as comparing different sized objects and which ones are bigger or heavier.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Splash water around at a sensory table. ■ Pull back when touching cold water or snow. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Observe and play with ice as it melts. ■ Notice that sand and water both slide through a funnel in the sensory table. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mix water with dirt to create mudpies. ■ Ask a familiar adult where the rainwater went, when the playground slide is dry the day after a rainstorm. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice that snow is melting into water, while playing with snow outdoors or in the sensory table. ■ Paint with ice cubes that have been made with drops of food coloring. ■ Use their hands to melt ice cubes in the sensory table. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a sensory table or tray with containers and tools for filling, pouring, dumping, and sifting. ■ Rotate materials such as water, sand, and soil in the sensory table to maintain ongoing interest and to provide experiences with both liquids and solids. ■ Provide balance scales and sensory tubes filled with liquids, solids, and gasses, as well as materials for children to use in sink and float experiments. ■ Plan opportunities for children to discuss states of matter, such as sorting and classifying different materials and objects into solids, liquids, or gasses. ■ Plan opportunities for children to explore and discuss the ways some materials switch between states of matter. For example, pressing together a brick of snow to bring indoors and then watching as it melts in the warmth or cooking ramen noodles and watching the water “disappear” as some soaks into the noodles and the rest evaporates into the air.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Breathe onto a cold window so they can write their name in the condensation. ■ Participate in group discussions to identify items that fit into the categories of solids, liquids, and gasses. ■ Explain that when ice and snow melt, they both turn into water. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work with a group to shake a jar of heavy cream until it turns to butter. ■ With adult support, sort and classify items such as a block, a cup of water, and the air as solids, liquids, or gasses. ■ Notice that when rain freezes in cold weather, it turns into ice. 	

Indicator 2c. Observe and explore light and sound.

(See also: [Creative and Expressive Arts Indicator 2b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond when lighting has changed. ■ Turn toward familiar voices. ■ Look toward a mobile or baby gym that is lighting up or making noise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide rattles and other toys and musical instruments that make noise. ■ Engage and talk with children during one-on-one and group interactions. ■ Sing songs and fingerplays and encourage children to make noise and sing along. ■ Provide or create sound jars, such as a container with rice inside that makes a shushing sound when shaken. ■ Point out and talk about the colors of different toys and materials, as well as sunshine and other light sources.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reach for a rattle that is being shaken. ■ Show interest when someone is singing or making music. ■ Reach for toys that light up or make noise. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Bang and shake toys to hear different sounds. ■ Show interest in movement and light on device screens, such as a colorful and highly active character on television. ■ Play with translucent colored blocks on a light table. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use different materials on a light table to see how the light changes. ■ Hold translucent color panels up to the window and look through them. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use the light switch to turn lights on and off. ■ Build with translucent colored blocks on the light table. ■ Play with toy drums or egg shakers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide musical instruments and other toys and materials that make noise. ■ Provide a light table, as well as prisms, color paddles, crystals, and translucent blocks for children to use in their explorations of light and color. ■ Talk about and plan activities that encourage children to explore different kinds of sounds. For example, playing a recording of different animal noises and inviting children to identify them, or tapping drums of different sizes and talking about how and why the sounds change. ■ Talk about and plan activities that encourage children to explore light and color, such as making shadow puppets with flashlights, experimenting with what materials will stop a beam of light, and layering different colors of cellophane wrapping paper to find out what color will be made by different combinations.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play with a child-size piano or keyboard. ■ Use a variety of objects as drums. ■ Ask for sunglasses to shield their eyes from the sunlight. ■ Layer red and blue translucent panels over each other on the light table to make purple. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tap different things around the room using rhythm sticks to see how the sound varies. ■ Use a desk lamp to make shadow puppets. ■ Play an electronic Simon Says game and match the light patterns, sometimes. 	

Goal 3 Earth Science: Children show a growing understanding of the scientific principles related to the earth.
([MI PTEC-BK: S.3](#)) ([NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.G](#))

Self-Reflection Questions

What questions can I ask to encourage children's curiosity about the earth? What experiences can I provide to support children's investigations into earth materials, weather, and seasonal changes? How will I prompt conversations that expand children's understanding of earth science?

Indicator 3a. Explore and recognize a variety of earth materials in their community (soil, rocks, water, etc.) and their observable properties.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#), and [Science Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Move arms and legs when placed in the water. ■ Place objects in their mouth to learn about them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide a sensory table or tray for children to explore and manipulate earth materials, such as water, sand, and soil. ■ Engage children in simple sink-float experiments with water in the sensory table, talking about which items sink or float. ■ Talk about the earth materials in the environment during outside time and nature walks, pointing out materials such as rocks, soil, and water.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fill and dump cups of water. ■ Squish dirt and mud in their hands. ■ Stroke their hands over grass or leaves to explore the texture. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play with sand or water in the sensory table. ■ Collect rocks with different colors and textures – shiny, gray, black, speckled, smooth, spiky, bumpy, etc. ■ Bring a rock from the playground to an adult to show its features (smooth, sparkly, colors, etc.). 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collect rocks, flowers, or sticks from the playground or walking trail. ■ Identify different earth materials (dirt/soil, rock, water, etc.), especially after hearing an adult name them several times. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Match color swatches with the different colors of soil and rocks they find on the playground. ■ Participate in a group activity to identify differences between a collection of rocks. ■ Sort rocks by size, color, shape, or texture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide children with materials to support their explorations of earth materials, such as scales, magnifying glasses, magnets, and tweezers. ■ Plan activities and experiences for children to explore and identify earth materials, such as sorting rocks by color or texture and charting their comparison of sand, soil, and clay. ■ Bring magnifying glasses to the playground for children to explore what soil, sand, rocks, and other natural materials look like up close.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use a magnifying glass to look closely at the dirt to see and identify grains of soil, as well as tiny twigs, rocks, and sometimes insects. ■ Match color swatches with the different colors of soil and rocks they find on the playground. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Shake several different kinds of rock in a container until the rocks begin to grind together and produce new sand and soil, then discuss what happened. ■ Experiment with using soil, water, and other natural materials such as straw and broken leaves to create mud bricks in an ice cube tray, then build with them once they dry. 	

Indicator 3b. Recognize and identify different weather conditions and the ways weather can impact their lives.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 5a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Physical Development and Health Indicator 4c](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#), and [Science Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respond to changes in the weather, such as chill or rain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk with children about the weather on a regular basis, taking them to the window or outside to point out sunny days, rain, clouds, and other weather conditions. Plan opportunities for children to explore and investigate changes in the weather, such as playing with snow, holding their hands out to feel raindrops, and mixing water and soil to make mud. Incorporate a weather routine into the daily schedule, such as looking out the window to check the weather and then talking about what clothes to wear for outside time or dressing a "weather bear" or flannel character for the weather. Talk about the weather while preparing to go outside. For example, saying, "It's cold outside, so we need to put on our coats and mittens," or "I see dark clouds. That tells me it might rain soon, so we might have to come back inside early today."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express interest in changes in the weather, such as the sound of rain on the roof or snow falling. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say, "Wet!" when walking outside in the rain. Snuggle into a blanket on a cold day. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go outside without a coat during the winter, then ask for their coat. Show interest in playing in a rain puddle. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask for sunglasses when it is sunny out. ■ Laugh and dance in the rain. ■ Express disappointment when rain means they won't be able to play on the playground. ■ Participate in a group activity to make a snowman. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Incorporate a weather routine into the daily schedule, such as looking out the window to check the weather and then talking about what clothes to wear for outside time, charting the weather for each day of the week, or dressing a "weather bear" or flannel character for the weather. ■ Talk about the weather while preparing to go outside. For example, saying, "We put a snowflake on today's weather chart. Let's think about what that means for the clothes we put on to go outside today." ■ Establish a clean-up routine at the end of the group's daily outside time and discuss how the weather can be hard on the balls and other outside toys, so putting them away helps keep them in good condition. ■ Provide materials and experiences that encourage children to investigate the weather, such as an outdoor thermometer, windsock, and rain gauge.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify appropriate clothes for different kinds of weather (shorts for sunny days, rain jacket for rainy days, heavy coat for cold winter days, etc.). ■ Participate in a group routine to identify and record the daily weather. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe the weather using more detail, such as "It's only raining a little bit," or "It's sunny now, but my momma says it's going to snow later." ■ Use a weathervane or windsock to figure out which way the wind is blowing. ■ Participate in a group routine to chart how many days each type of weather has happened. 	

Indicator 3c. Recognize and make connections between the seasons and their observable characteristics.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#), [Science Indicator 1c](#), and [Science Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use senses and respond to changes in the environment and routines in different seasons, such as temperature changes and daylight at bedtime. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk with children about seasonal changes that impact children's lives, such as the temperature getting cooler or that it's still dark when at drop-off time. ■ Plan opportunities for children to explore and investigate seasonal weather changes, such as crunching dry leaves under their shoes in the fall and playing in the snow during winter.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use senses, respond to, and may begin to consciously recognize that there are changes in the environment and routines as seasons change. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond to the snow falling in winter by pointing and catching snowflakes. ■ Hold their hand out for the rain or snowflakes to land on. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice that the playground slide is hot to the touch from the sun. ■ Ask why there are no leaves on the trees. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice snow on the ground and say, "It's cold!" ■ Point out the leaves falling in autumn and new buds and sprouts in spring. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish a routine to chart the weather each day, then compare seasonal trends over time. For example, discussing how there are fewer snowy days as spring progresses. ■ Talk with children about seasonal changes they may notice in their daily lives, such as tree leaves changing color, strawberries or apples being ready to harvest, or different kinds of flowers blooming in different seasons.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Notice leaves falling from the trees and say that soon it will be time to go to the apple orchard or pumpkin patch. ■ Point out that the leaves change color before they fall off the tree. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in a group routine to chart the changing temperatures. ■ Categorize types of weather by the seasons they typically happen in. 	

Goal 4 Life Science: Children show a growing understanding of scientific knowledge related to living and non-living things.

([MI PTEC-BK: S.3](#)) ([NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.G](#))

Self-Reflection Questions

What materials and experiences will I provide to encourage children's curiosity about living and non-living things? What questions can I ask and in what other ways will I model curiosity about living and non-living things? What investigations and activities will I plan to support children's growing understanding of living and non-living things?

Indicator 4a. Explore, observe, notice, and describe a variety of plants and animals in their community, and their life cycles.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1c](#), and [Science Indicator 1a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn toward the sound of a bird chirping or a dog barking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Incorporate small pets and non-toxic plants in the learning environment, if possible, and discuss the care routines for those plants and animals with children. ■ Place a bird or squirrel feeder outside the window and point out when animals visit to eat. ■ Read stories that have photos of real plants and animals. ■ Point out, ask questions, and talk about the plants and animals children see on nature walks or while playing on the playground.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Giggle when their family dog "kisses" their face. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show excitement when they see another animal like their family pet. ■ With support, gently stroke the leaves of a plant. ■ Identify stuffed animals, drawings, and photos of familiar animals. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Mimic the actions of an adult caring for a plant or feeding a pet. ■ Identify some characteristics of animals, such as color or color patterns, and size. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point at a bird on the playground and announce, "Birds eat worms!" ■ After an adult explains that a tree's roots help it drink water, pour a cup of water at the bottom of a tree to "help it drink." ■ With guidance and support, use their fingers to poke holes in soil for planting seeds. ■ Identify more characteristics of animals and plants, such as the color of the leaves and flowers of a particular plant, a dog's ear shape, etc. ■ Show interest in caring for the environment, such as asking to care for plants or animals in the learning environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out, ask questions, and talk about the plants and animals children see on nature walks or while playing on the playground. ■ Incorporate small pets and non-toxic plants in the learning environment, if possible, and involve children in the care routines for those plants and animals. ■ Plan experiences for children to investigate what animals need to survive, such as placing a bird or squirrel feeder outside the window and watching what they choose to eat, taking part in caring for small pets in the learning environment, and watching the process of a caterpillar becoming a butterfly. ■ Plan experiences for children to investigate plants and their life cycles, such as growing their own plants from seeds, collecting leaves from the playground and sorting them by type, and placing plants near the window that attract birds or butterflies and talking about what the animals are doing when they land on the plants.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell a familiar adult, "The tree's leaves are red, but they were green before," and ask why. ■ When drawing a picture of themselves at Halloween, draw trees with orange and brown leaves. ■ Ask about different kinds of flowers, and compare different characteristics of their seeds (size, color, shape, etc.). ■ Begin to recognize and discuss the life cycles of different kinds of animals, such as recognizing that a bird hatches from an egg, but cats give birth to kittens. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe a caterpillar they saw outside and ask what kind of butterfly it will turn into. ■ Describe or identify more details around the characteristics of plants and animals, such as the breed of a familiar type of dog, the shape of a flower petal or leaf, more detail around the colors in a butterfly's wings, etc. ■ Watch a deer run through a field and notice that it gallops like a horse. 	

Indicator 4b. Observe and explore the habitats of a variety of plants and animals in their community (such as wooded areas, parks, lakes, and streams).

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 1c](#), [Science Indicator 1a](#), [Science Indicator 4a](#), [Social Studies Indicator 3a](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 3b](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use their senses and respond to different environments, such as tensing up in the cold when out for a walk in the stroller. ■ Notice and respond to the noises of the outdoors, such as turning their head toward birds calling. ■ Reach out toward a leaf falling near them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Place a bird or squirrel feeder outside the window. When animals visit to eat, point them out and talk about where they might live, such as in the trees near the playground. ■ Read stories about plants and animals that children might see nearby. ■ Point out, ask questions, and talk about the plants and animals children see on nature walks or while playing on the playground. For example, pointing out bird and squirrel nests, grass growing on the ground and moss growing on trees, and ducks or geese in a pond.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond to differences in the environment, such as watching the sun flicker through the leaves of trees overhead. ■ Watch the environment and natural features around them as they ride in a stroller. ■ Point at a bird flying overhead. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pick up items they find outside, such as leaves and rocks. ■ Notice the difference in texture between a fresh green leaf and an old, fallen brown leaf when they squeeze it in their hand. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out and name various features of the environment when going for a walk, such as "tree" or "water." ■ Ask about a feature of the environment, such as the moon visible in the daytime sky. ■ Show excitement when they see a frog, turtle, bird, or other wild animal. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Compare and describe features of the environment, such as identifying one lake as bigger than another. ■ Explain that the park they like best is the one where they go to watch the big fish in the pond. ■ Identify the basic needs of animals (food, water, air, and shelter). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide experiences and materials that encourage children to explore their ideas about animal habitats, such as matching animal toys to pictures of their habitats, caring for an ant or worm farm, and making dioramas of animal habitats to extend children's play with animal toys. ■ Point out, ask questions, and talk about the plants and animals children see on nature walks or while playing on the playground. For example, guiding a conversation about bird or squirrel nests, grass growing on the ground and moss growing on trees, and ducks or geese in a pond. ■ Plan an investigation of animal characteristics, and record children's discoveries about how some characteristics help animals live in different habitats, such as fish using their gills to breathe underwater, squirrels using their tails for balance, and birds using their talons to hold onto branches.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell about the frogs they saw during their visit to the lake. ■ Participate in a group discussion about where they have seen deer in their community. ■ Identify the basic needs of plants (water, air, sunlight, and nutrients). 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out a bush on the playground that is the same kind as one in their aunt's backyard. ■ Participate in a group project to draw pictures of animals that live in their community, to paste where they have been seen on a map of their community. ■ Watch for animal tracks during an outdoor walk. 	

Indicator 4c. Observe, describe, and compare the differences between living and non-living things.

(See also: [Physical Development and Health Indicator 1a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6a](#), [Mathematics Indicator 6b](#), [Science Indicator 1c](#), and [Science Indicator 4a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Place objects in their mouth to learn about them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Incorporate small pets and non-toxic plants in the learning environment, if possible, and discuss the care routines for those plants and animals with children. ■ Place a bird or squirrel feeder outside the window and point out when animals visit to eat. ■ Read books that have photos of living and non-living things. ■ Provide a wide variety of toys and materials for children to explore. ■ Take children on nature walks and talk about what children see, such as birds, grass, trees, soil, and rocks.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Show preferences between differently textured blankets. ■ Respond differently to brightly colored and neutral shaded toys. ■ Point at a bird flying overhead, or other moving things (a rolling ball, leaf falling, etc.). 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collect rocks with different colors and textures – shiny, gray, black, speckled, smooth, spiky, bumpy, etc. ■ Reach for insects and small animals flying or crawling nearby. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Collect rocks, flowers, or sticks from the playground or walking trail. ■ Identify different plants, animals, and natural materials (flower, duck, rock, etc.), especially after hearing an adult name them several times. ■ Show excitement when a rabbit runs past during an outdoor walk. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in a group activity to categorize things as “alive” and “not alive.” ■ Sort rocks or leaves by size, color, shape, or texture. ■ Categorize things as “alive” and “not alive,” sometimes. For example, recognizing that a dog is a living thing, and a toy car is not. ■ Mis-identify a dead plant as a “non-living” thing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Incorporate small pets and non-toxic plants in the learning environment, if possible, and involve children in the care routines for those plants and animals. ■ Point out, ask questions, and talk about what children see on nature walks or while playing on the playground, encouraging them to think about what are living things (such as birds and dandelions) and what is non-living (such as rocks, soil, clouds, and buildings). ■ Read books about living and non-living things, and support children in researching and investigating living and non-living things in non-fiction books and online resources.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Sort pictures of plants, animals, and other objects into “living” and “non-living” categories. ■ Mis-identify seeds or coral as “non-living” things. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask a familiar adult if a caterpillar’s chrysalis is a living or non-living thing. ■ Explain that plants and animals need food and water, but non-living things like rocks and toy cars do not. 	



Social Studies

As children grow and develop, their awareness of themselves and as members of a family, community, and culture expands. Early childhood settings that foster a sense of belonging, valuing each individual while exploring similarities and differences, allow children to develop a positive view of themselves as well as interest in and empathy for others.

Learning about the social structures and cultural traditions of their communities helps them learn how the world works and how they and their families fit into it. All of this supports their growth toward becoming a contributing member of society.

The goals in the **Social Studies** domain are designed to foster children's empathy, curiosity, and sense of belonging. These goals are:

Goal 1 Self, Family, and Belonging: Children understand and respect themselves and others as individuals and as members of a family, learning environment, and community.

Goal 2 Community and Contribution: Children recognize the value in the contributions they, their families, and others make to the community.

Goal 3 Time, Place, and the Environment: Children begin to understand their place and time in the broader world.

Goal 1 Self, Family, and Belonging: Children understand and respect themselves and others as individuals and as members of a family, learning environment, and community.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-SE 1; IT-SE 2; IT-SE 3; IT-SE 10; IT-SE 11; IT-SE 12; IT-SE 13; P-ATL 2; P-SE 9; P-SE 11) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): SS.1; SS.2) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B; 2.L)

Self-Reflection Questions

What materials and experiences can I provide that will foster a sense of respect and belonging for all children in the learning environment? How will my interactions with children and families support children's sense of belonging in the learning environment as well as their sense of themselves as unique and valued individuals? What routines will I establish to strengthen children's developing sense of belonging and identity as a valued and respected member of our group community?

Indicator 1a. Recognize themselves as unique individuals and become aware of the uniqueness of others.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 1a](#), [Social Studies Indicator 1c](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 1d](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smile at their own reflection in the mirror. Explore their hands, feet, body, and movements. Observe what others are doing. Quiet, smile, or coo when a familiar adult says their name. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide mirrors and photos of the children at their eye-level. Use children's names when interacting with them. Label children's cubbies with their names and photos. Describe children's actions, characteristics, and preferences. For example, saying, "Oh, I think you really like this applesauce!" or "You're reaching for Grandma. Are you ready to go home?" Provide dolls and other materials that represent children of different skin colors, cultures, and abilities. Play movement games and fingerplays that encourage children to recognize their own bodies as separate from others', such as This Little Piggy, Round and Round the Haystack, and "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes."
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach for a familiar adult or another child. Nestle into a familiar adult's body when being held. Show curiosity and reach for someone else's glasses or hair. Smile at or show curiosity for photos of culturally and racially diverse people. Express their preferences and needs through vocalizations and gestures. When called by name, look, or move toward the person speaking. Pay attention when others notice what they can do. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and respond to their own first/given name. Express their personal preferences and needs through gestures, signs, utterances, and simple words. Attempt to call others by their names or titles. For example: Everyone with features similar to their "grandma" may be titled "a grandma." 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and name some parts of their own and others' bodies. Express preferences and needs through simple signs, words, and phrases. Call familiar adults, peers, and pets by their names or titles. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize and respond to their own first/given and last/family name. ■ Identify some of their own physical characteristics, such as hair color, eye color, and hair texture or length. ■ With support, recognize the similarities and differences between their own characteristics and preferences and those of others. ■ Join in group conversations about children's preferences in concrete categories such as food, colors, play areas, etc. "I like playing in the art area. Sometimes Layla will paint with me, but her favorite is the blocks." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide handheld and wall-mounted mirrors. ■ Model communicating preferences through respectful words and actions. For example, saying, "Corn is okay, but I like peas more," or "When I get to choose what to do on the playground, I prefer playing on the swings." ■ Model recognizing similarities and differences between people through respectful words and actions. For example, saying, "Lucy and Ramon both have new babies at home." ■ Read stories about children's individuality or preferences and talk about the ways those characters express themselves. ■ Plan opportunities for children to explore who they are as unique individuals, such as drawing themselves after looking in a mirror, drawing self-portraits from memory, and making "all about me" books. ■ Use polling and charts to record and display information about children and their preferences, such as their pets, favorite colors, and number of siblings. Prompt respectful conversations about the results, encouraging children to notice similarities and differences, and to ask other children questions to learn more about them. ■ Provide materials and plan activities that incorporate children's interests.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize and describe similarities and differences in some of their own and others' physical characteristics, such as hair color, age, and relative height. For example: "I'm taller than Miguel." ■ With support, identify some of their own and others' character traits. For example, "Salim is a good friend. Jordan is nice, too. Kiki talks loud." 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recite their home address and/or phone number. ■ Tell about and discuss events involving their family members. ■ Compare their own family and cultural traditions to others'. For example: "My family lights candles for Channukah but Laurie's family has a tree for Christmas." Or "I like bacon, but Nyla doesn't eat pork." 	

Indicator 1b. Recognize themselves as members of a family and become aware of how families are alike and different.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4a](#) and [Social Studies Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Respond differently to familiar and unfamiliar adults. ■ Develop trust and attachment to familiar adults. ■ Use sounds, facial expressions or body movements when recognizing family members and other familiar adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to and engage with children during one-on-one interactions, such as mealtime and toileting. ■ Respond to children's needs in a timely manner and show affection to them. ■ Implement procedures and processes that support children's growing attachment to familiar adults, such as primary care groupings, family members spending time in the learning environment, and home visiting. ■ Create and read books and photo albums about children's families. ■ Post photos of children's families at children's eye-level. ■ Use adults' and family members' names, even when they are not present, and talk with children about who they are and what they do. ■ Provide materials and experiences that support children's growing understanding of family, such as reading stories about families, providing baby dolls and home materials in the dramatic play area, and engaging with children in home/family-inspired pretend play.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seek comfort from familiar adults. ■ Reach for a familiar adult. ■ Use sounds, facial expressions, body movements, signs, and simple words when recognizing family members. ■ Cry when a familiar adult leaves. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask questions with signs, words, or gestures about the similarities and differences between themselves and others, such as reaching to touch a child's straight hair, and then their own curly hair. ■ Point at or name their family members in a display of family photos. ■ Seek out a family member when they are hungry. ■ Explore playdough or other new materials when a familiar adult is nearby. ■ Hide behind a familiar adult in the presence of unfamiliar people. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Call family members by their names or titles. ■ Imitate a family member during dramatic play, such as singing the lullaby their grandmother uses to put them to sleep when playing with a baby doll. ■ Imitate their own family or cultural traditions during dramatic play. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask a friend, "Is that a picture of your family? This one is a picture of my moms and my brother." ■ Hold a family member's hand and lead them to their learning environment or group. ■ Describe the learning environment as "mine." ■ Draw a picture of their family, including themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage children in talking about their families throughout the day, such as during mealtimes and large group gatherings, while reading stories about families, and while engaging in pretend play. ■ Post pictures of children's families at their eye-level. ■ Invite family members to visit the learning environment and read stories, share about their cultures and traditions, talk about their work, or lead activities. ■ Read books about families. ■ Plan activities related to children's families, such as creating family trees or books with pages about children's families, or using polling and charts to record and display information about children's families, such as how many have siblings or new babies, or how many have grandparents in the home. Prompt respectful conversations about the results, encouraging children to notice similarities and differences, and to ask other children questions to learn more about their families.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell about building a sandcastle with their family. ■ Draw a picture of their family and dictate the name of each person so a familiar adult can label the drawing. ■ Share about the work the adult members of their family do. "Daddy goes to work at the fire station and Nana stays home with me and my sister." ■ Draw a picture of their babysitter and say, "I like him. He plays trucks with me!" ■ When participating in a group discussion about things to do in Fall, describe their family's Día de los Muertos traditions. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to people in a photo from a large family gathering. "That's my Aunt Lily and Aunt Gigi. This is Grampa Ed and my cousin Maia." ■ Look at a friend's drawing of their family and have a conversation about the ways their families are different and the same. "I don't have a dog like you. I have an iguana named Princess." And "Your mama wears a headscarf like my mama!" ■ Tell about playing in the backyard with their cousins, or about other family relationships. 	

Indicator 1c. Demonstrate a growing sense of belonging across their home, their learning environment, and their community.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 4a](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 5b](#), [Social Studies Indicator 1b](#), [Social Studies Indicator 1d](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn toward or pause to listen to a familiar voice. ■ Calm to a family member or familiar adult's voice. ■ Look at a familiar adult, move or make sounds to get attention. ■ Smile when talked to or smiled at. ■ Recognize familiar people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to and engage with children during one-on-one interactions, such as mealtime and toileting. ■ Respond to children's needs in a timely manner and show affection to them. ■ Implement procedures and processes that support children's growing attachment to familiar adults, such as primary care groupings, welcoming family members into the learning environment, and home visiting. ■ Use children's names when talking to and about them, and use adults' and family members' names, even when they are not present. ■ Encourage children to make choices in the learning environment, such as which activity to participate in, which roles to take on and which costumes to wear during pretend play, which song to sing or book to read, and what colors to paint or color with. ■ Invite children to take on ownership of the learning environment through simple responsibilities, such as putting away toys they were playing with, carrying sippy cups to the snack table, and wiping up spills.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Calm when a familiar adult offers comfort. ■ Smile or laugh when playing simple games such as Peek-a-Boo, Open Shut Them, This Little Piggy, and others that may be specific to their family or culture. ■ Reach out or cry when a familiar adult leaves. ■ Look up when their name is said aloud. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seek out a familiar adult when they need help. ■ Play on a climber while a familiar adult walks around the playground. ■ Engage with toys and other children in familiar places. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With support, participate in adult-led routines such as singing a familiar good morning song at the start of each day or gathering their blanket for naptime. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Play with blocks while telling about a visit with cousins when they played with blocks together. ■ Tell a familiar adult about their dance teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage children in talking about themselves and their families throughout the day, such as during mealtimes and large group gatherings, while reading stories, and while engaging in pretend play. ■ Invite family members to visit the learning environment and read stories, share about their cultures and traditions, talk about their work, or lead activities. ■ Use children's names when talking to and about them, and use adults' and family members' names, even when they are not present. ■ Encourage children to make choices in the learning environment, such as which activity to participate in, which roles to take on and which costumes to wear during pretend play, which song to sing or book to read, and what colors to paint or color with. ■ Invite children to take on ownership of the learning environment through simple responsibilities, such as putting away toys and materials they were using, setting the table at mealtimes and cleaning up afterward, turning off lights when the group is leaving the room, feeding pets and watering plants, and participating in discussions to establish group expectations.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share a food their family eats on special occasions. ■ Mention different groups they belong to in conversation. For example, "I build with blocks at my preschool," "My family doesn't eat that food," "I like to play with Sharine and Lucy. They live in my neighborhood." ■ Offer their help to a family member setting the table for a meal, or a classmate cleaning up. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell about what they did at a family gathering. ■ Say, "I can do it," when a familiar adult is looking for someone to help with a task. ■ Share stories about what they do with their community group, or as part of a cultural tradition. 	

Indicator 1d. Participate in the routines, customs, and traditions of their family and community, and develops an awareness of and respect for the ways these can differ across settings, families, and cultures.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 5b](#) and [Social Studies Indicator 1c.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Calm when listening to familiar lullabies they hear frequently at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to and engage with children during one-on-one interactions, such as mealtime and toileting. ■ Respond to children's needs in a timely manner and show affection to them. ■ Engage with families to learn about children's interests and routines at home, as well as other information that will help them build a sense of belonging in the learning environment, such as incorporating familiar music, stories, and songs. ■ Use children's names when talking to and about them, and use adults' and family members' names, even when they are not present.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Smile or show curiosity when looking at photos of culturally and racially diverse people. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Smile and clap during the birthday song. ■ Tear open gift wrap on a package. ■ Notice differences in people's appearance and clothing. ■ Show a preference for familiar foods they eat at home. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point at a picture of sugar skulls in a book and say, "Tia Bella's" to indicate that they saw those candies when celebrating Día de los Muertos at their aunt's house. ■ Participate in new traditions and holiday celebrations in their learning environment and other communities they are part of. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With support, tell about some of their own family traditions, such as "We go to shul and say Shabbat shalom" or "Mommy wears a headscarf." ■ In a group discussion about what everyone did over the weekend, tell about going to Aunt Hazel's for a birthday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Engage children in talking about themselves and their families throughout the day, such as during mealtimes and large group gatherings, while reading stories, and while engaging in pretend play. ■ Invite family members to visit the learning environment and read stories, share about their cultures and traditions, talk about their work, or lead activities. ■ Engage with families to learn about children's interests and routines at home, as well as other information that will help them build a sense of belonging in the learning environment, such as incorporating familiar music, stories, and songs. ■ Model ways to respectfully discuss and ask questions about others' traditions as children notice similarities and differences.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognize and point out differences between traditions at home and in other places. For example: "I use chopsticks at home," or "At home, we say a prayer before we eat." 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell an adult visiting for lunchtime that "Charlotte can't have the meatballs." ■ Bring a <i>Mosaico</i> or other game from their home culture to show and share with other children. 	

Goal 2 Community and Contribution: Children recognize the value in the contributions they, their families, and others make to the community.

([HS-ELOF](#): IT-SE 1; IT-SE 2; IT-C 2; IT-C 3; IT-C 5; P-ATL-2; P-ATL 3; P-ATL 9; P-SE 2; P-SE 3; P-SE 4; P-SE 5; P-SE 10; P-SE 11) ([MI PTEC-BK](#): SS.1; SS.5; SS.6) ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.B; 2.L)

Self-Reflection Questions

What routines will I establish to encourage children to explore, investigate, and take ownership of the contributions they make to the learning environment? What experiences, materials, and activities will I provide to strengthen children's growing of how people support their own needs and the needs of their families? What questions can I ask and what conversations will I prompt to encourage children to think about value and the benefits of sharing and trading?

Indicator 2a. Show a growing understanding of and participation with the expectations, boundaries, and responsibilities in their family, learning environment, and community.

(See also: [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 5a](#), [Engineering and Technology Indicator 4a](#), and [Social Studies Indicator 1c](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop trust and attachment to familiar adults. Calm when being held or talked to by a family member or familiar adult. Smile when talked to or smiled at. Begin to show awareness of routines such as feeding, by opening their mouth for the spoon or bottle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to and engage with children during one-on-one interactions, such as mealtime and toileting. Describe what is happening throughout the day, such as during diaper changes, while a family member gathers the diaper bag at pickup time, and when their bottle is being prepared. Implement procedures and processes that support children's growing attachment to familiar adults, such as primary care groupings, family members spending time in the learning environment, and home visiting.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch for a family member as pickup time approaches. Reach for a bottle or food when someone is bringing it toward them. Begin to participate and interact during diaper changes, dressing, and bath time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage children to make choices in the learning environment, such as which activity to participate in, which roles to take on and which costumes to wear during pretend play, which song to sing or book to read, and what colors to paint or color with.
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With support, participate in simple routines at home or in the learning environment, such as washing hands before a meal or sitting in the group area for story time. With adult assistance, put toys away at clean-up time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe and model routines in the learning environment, such as looking for the matching photo label when putting toys away, as well as washing hands before mealtime and after toileting.
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With modeling and reminders, follow simple guidelines and expectations, such as putting away toys before getting out something new to play with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite children to take on ownership of the learning environment through simple responsibilities, such as putting away toys they were playing with, carrying sippy cups to the snack table, and wiping up spills.

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in simple routines such as gathering for group time, washing hands, or checking on a pet's food, with and without reminders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage children to make choices in the learning environment, such as which activity to participate in, which roles to take on and which costumes to wear during pretend play, which song to sing or book to read, and what colors to paint or color with. ■ Invite children to take on ownership of the learning environment through simple responsibilities, such as putting away toys and materials they were using, setting the table at mealtimes and cleaning up afterward, turning off lights when the group is leaving the room, feeding pets and watering plants, and participating in discussions to establish group expectations. ■ Model, teach, and reteach the routines children will be expected to follow. ■ Provide visual guidance for routines and expectations whenever possible, such as by posting a picture list of steps to wash hands in the bathroom.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer their help to a family member setting the table for a meal, or a classmate cleaning up. ■ Participate in different routines in different situations, such as washing hands when they come in from the playground at school but pulling out a wet wipe to wash hands at the park. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out the differences between routines and schedules at home and at school, or other groups they are part of. ■ Say, "I can do it," when a familiar adult is looking for someone to help with a task. ■ Get their naptime blanket out after they finish lunch, anticipating the next step in their daily routine. 	

Indicator 2b. Develop a growing understanding of what people need to thrive and the ways people fill those needs.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 4c](#), [Social and Emotional Development Indicator 3a](#), and [Science Indicator 4a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cry to express hunger, tiredness, and other needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Talk to and engage with children during one-on-one interactions, such as mealtime and toileting. ■ Pay attention to children's cues, respond to their needs in a timely manner, and show affection to them. ■ Describe what is happening when children's needs are being met, such as saying, "I'm going to take off your wet diaper and get you cleaned up," or "I'm putting you in the highchair so you can have lunch." ■ Teach children signs, words, and phrases to help them express their needs. ■ Pay attention to children's cues and ask questions to help them express and begin to meet their own needs. For example, if a child is chilly, asking if they need a coat or blanket and then providing them with what they need. ■ Encourage children to make choices in the learning environment, such as which activity to participate in, which roles to take on and which costumes to wear during pretend play, which song to sing or book to read, and what colors to paint or color with.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Seek comfort from familiar adults. ■ Open their mouth for a spoon or bottle when hungry. ■ Turn their head away from a bottle when they aren't hungry. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use simple signs, words, phrases, and gestures to express their wants and needs. ■ Pull a blanket around themselves when chilled. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Say, "I'm hungry," "I want yogurt," or "Can I have a cookie?" ■ Cry or show frustration when they're tired. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Help give a pet food and water. ■ Point out that animals need food and water just like people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage children to make choices in the learning environment, such as which activity to participate in, which roles to take on and which costumes to wear during pretend play, which song to sing or book to read, and what colors to paint or color with. ■ Encourage children to participate in caring for pets and plants in the learning environment. ■ Discuss what people need to survive and thrive in relation to children's daily lives, such as food, water, housing, weather-appropriate clothing, and affection, and encourage children to share about how those needs are met in their own families. For example, leading a conversation about grocery shopping or taking a poll to find out about family members' jobs and other work they might do.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Compare people's clothing to a dog's fur – how it keeps them warm, protected from the sun, etc. ■ Recognize the difference between needing something and wanting it. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe how they rely on their family to have their needs met. For example: "Daddy went grocery shopping" and "Nana has to work late tonight, but we get to go to the park tomorrow." 	

Indicator 2c. Develop a growing understanding of value, as well as supply and demand, as they relate to sharing and trading.

(See also: [Approaches to Play and Learning Indicator 2a](#) and [Mathematics Indicator 2a](#).)

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Emerging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pay attention to children's cues and respond to their needs in a timely manner. ■ Encourage children to make choices in the learning environment, such as which activity to participate in, which roles to take on and which costumes to wear during pretend play, which song to sing or book to read, and what colors to paint or color with. ■ Provide children with costumes, props, and other materials that support their pretend play as community helpers and roles/businesses that provide goods or services for pay or trade, such as grocery stores, restaurants, veterinarians, and hairstylists. ■ Read books about sharing, trading, and people's jobs.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With guidance and support, take turns with a toy. ■ Play with community helper costumes and props, such as a firefighter hat or mailbag. ■ Use words or signs to ask for "more." 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With guidance and support, take turns with a toy. ■ Play with a toy mailbox and say that their grandma is a mail carrier. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With support, modeling, and guidance, help adults and other children clean up toys. ■ Show frustration and, with support, tell a familiar adult that another child has all the dolls, and they want to play with one of the dolls. 	
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With guidance and support, agree to share a basket of dinosaur toys with another child. ■ With guidance, trade a blue dinosaur to another child in exchange for the red dinosaur they want to play with. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide children with costumes, props, and other materials that support their pretend play as community helpers and roles/businesses that provide goods or services for pay or trade, such as grocery stores, restaurants, veterinarians, and hairstylists. ■ Invite family members, community helpers, and business people to visit the learning environment and share about their work. ■ Model and teach the process of trading materials and services. For example, if a child has the blue truck but wants the red car someone else is playing with, support them in offering to trade the blue truck in exchange for the red car. ■ Ask questions and encourage children to think about value in their pretend play. For example, writing out a price list for the food being sold at their grocery store, or including prices on a restaurant menu.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use costumes and props to explore restaurant, veterinarian, grocery store, and other jobs with dramatic play. ■ Exchange "goods and services" (food, veterinary care, etc.) for pretend money during dramatic play. ■ Share something about their family members' jobs, with prompting and support. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe their family members' jobs with more detail (a general idea of what they do or where they work), with some prompting, sometimes. ■ Set aside a project to work on the next day. ■ Explain that they are saving their "birthday money" for a later purchase. 	

Goal 3 Time, Place, and the Environment: Children begin to understand their place and time in the broader world. (HS-ELOF: IT-ATL 6; IT-ATL 7; IT-C 3; IT-C 4; IT-C 5; P-SCI 1; P-LC 6; P-MATH 10) (MI PTEC-BK: SS.3; SS.4) (NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.B; 2.G; 2.L)

Self-Reflection Questions

What can I consider or focus on in my interactions with children to support their growing connection to nature, and their understanding of time and place? What routines and processes will I establish in the learning environment to strengthen children’s understanding of time and place, as well as their respect for nature? What aspects of the learning environment will encourage children to think about and grow in their understanding of time, place, and the environment?

Indicator 3a. Explore and learn how to respectfully interact with nature.

(See also: [Science Indicator 4b.](#))

Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laugh when grass tickles their hands during tummy time on a blanket on the ground. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe what children are seeing in nature, such as snow falling outside the window or birds flying overhead while on a walk. Provide a sensory table with natural materials for children to explore, such as water, soil, and sand. Read books about the natural world. Ensure children have ample time outdoors by setting blankets outside for tummy time, taking walks, and playing in the grass. Model a sense of wonder, excitement, and respect for the natural world. For example, repurposing or using recycled materials in learning experiences (such as turning a paper tube into a musical instrument), cleaning up any trash left behind after an outdoor activity, not harming insects and other animals in their natural habitat, and explaining that, “I’m going to put this in the recycle bin so it can be made into something new.” Provide opportunities for children to observe and investigate the natural world. For example, setting up a birdfeeder outside the window, including non-toxic plants and/or small pets in the learning environment, and taking nature walks.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smack hands into a puddle and laugh when it splashes. Squish dirt and mud between their fingers. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With supervision and encouragement, explore their outdoor environment. Notice the uneven terrain when moving around a park or playground. Make mounds and other simple constructions with mud. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pretend to make pies, cookies, and other pretend food props with mud. Show excitement when pointing out a squirrel in a tree or on the ground nearby. Reach out to touch different leaves, flowers, and bark in their outdoor environment. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With modeling and guidance, bring the packaging from their snack to a garbage bin rather than letting it fall on the ground outside. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Read books about the natural world. ■ Model a sense of wonder, excitement, and respect for the natural world. For example, cleaning up any trash left behind after an outdoor activity, setting up recycling and scrap paper bins in the learning environment, repurposing and reusing objects in art projects (such as turning paper tubes into musical instruments and milk jugs into an igloo, or using cereal boxes as building blocks), and not harming insects and other animals in their natural habitat. ■ Model and teach routines and processes for re-using scrap paper in art projects, separating recyclables from garbage, and cleaning up after playing outdoors. ■ Provide opportunities for children to observe and investigate the natural world. For example, setting up a birdfeeder outside the window, caring for non-toxic plants and/or small pets in the learning environment, taking nature walks, observing the process of caterpillars turning into butterflies and moths, including worm or ant farms in the learning environment, and planting a small garden the children can care for.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ With modeling and reminders, put extra paper into a scrap box, and plastic cups in the recycle bin. ■ Participate in a group activity to track the weather, temperature, or plant growth over time. ■ Participate in a group activity to carefully catch a grasshopper in an insect habitat, observe the grasshopper, and then let it go again. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Participate in a group activity to wear gloves while carefully collecting garbage on the playground, sorting items into trash and recycling. ■ Track the growth of a plant in their science journal. ■ Ask detailed questions about an animal visiting their learning environment, sometimes. 	

Indicator 3b. Begin to identify, and use location vocabulary to describe, places and physical features in their environment.

(See also: [Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development Indicator 2b.](#))

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Express interest in, and later explore, their surroundings. Scoot or crawl toward a favorite toy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create space in the learning environment for children to move, reach, manipulate, and explore their surroundings. Talk to children about their surroundings. For example, saying, "The ball is inside the basket," "The hallway has blue walls," and, "We're going to sit at the table for snack time." Play games that encourage children to explore movement and location, such as Peek-a-Boo, "Head Shoulders Knees and Toes," and Hide-and-Seek. Post photos of community landmarks and features the children may be familiar with at children's eye-level, such as the local library, grocery stores, ponds or rivers, and nearby parks or playgrounds. Create photo books of community landmarks and features children may be familiar with, such as the local library, grocery stores, ponds or rivers, and nearby parks or playgrounds. Point out and name community landmarks and features while on walks with children.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Say, "mine" when pointing to their favorite stuffed animal. Move toward a shelf in their learning environment that regularly holds their favorite toys. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring back a toy, when told where to find it, such as "Look under the table" or "It should be on the art shelf." Recognize a park or library they've been to before. Go to their own mat or cot during naptime. Show confusion when seeing a teacher or caregiver outside of their learning environment or program (at the grocery store, for example), because the teacher "belongs at school." 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow directions to put a toy "on the shelf," "in the basket," or "over there," most of the time. Point out "Nana's house!" when going past her street on a drive. Walk to their learning environment upon entering the program building, without needing to be led by a family member, most of the time. With little help, figure out where to go when told to go to the "group area" or another part of the learning environment. Point to and name familiar buildings in photos, such as "My school" and "my house." 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point out familiar places during a drive or walk around their community. ■ Say, "The park by my house has swings." ■ Put a drawing into their own cubby space, most of the time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Post photos of community landmarks and features the children may be familiar with at children's eye-level, such as the local library, grocery stores, ponds or rivers, and nearby parks or playgrounds. ■ Create photo books of community landmarks and features children may be familiar with, such as the local library, grocery stores, ponds or rivers, and nearby parks or playgrounds. ■ Point out and name community landmarks and features while on walks and outings with children. ■ Read books and watch videos about the local area or community, or about features of the local area, such as a story about someone who lives on a farm, a video clip of the Soo Locks, or nonfiction book about animals that live in the Great Lakes. ■ Plan activities that encourage children to think about location and geography, such as creating a map of the learning environment or marking places the children have visited on a map of the state. ■ Provide materials that encourage children to explore geography, such as maps, globes, GPS apps or devices, and materials for children to make their own maps. ■ Use simple geographical terms in conversation with children, such as <i>near</i>, <i>far</i>, <i>left</i>, <i>right</i>, <i>route</i>, <i>neighborhood</i>, <i>city</i>, <i>town</i>, <i>state</i>, <i>Michigan</i>, and the names of the cities or towns the children live in.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explain where something is, using terms like near and far away. ■ Recognize and draw pictures of familiar places, geographical features, and landmarks in their community. ■ Show interest in geographical tools, such as globes, maps, and GPS/map apps on a tablet. ■ Use green and brown tissue paper to represent trees or broken mosaic pieces to represent a mountain in their artwork. 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use terms like left and right when describing where something is, sometimes. ■ Recite the name of the street they live on and the town they live in. ■ Use a map to figure out if their home is closer to the park or the school. ■ Use toys and other materials to make representations of mountains, forests, streets, and other familiar landmarks during pretend play. 	

Indicator 3c. Demonstrate a growing understanding of the passage of time as it impacts their lives.

(See also: [Science Indicator 3c](#) and [Social Studies Indicator 2a](#).)

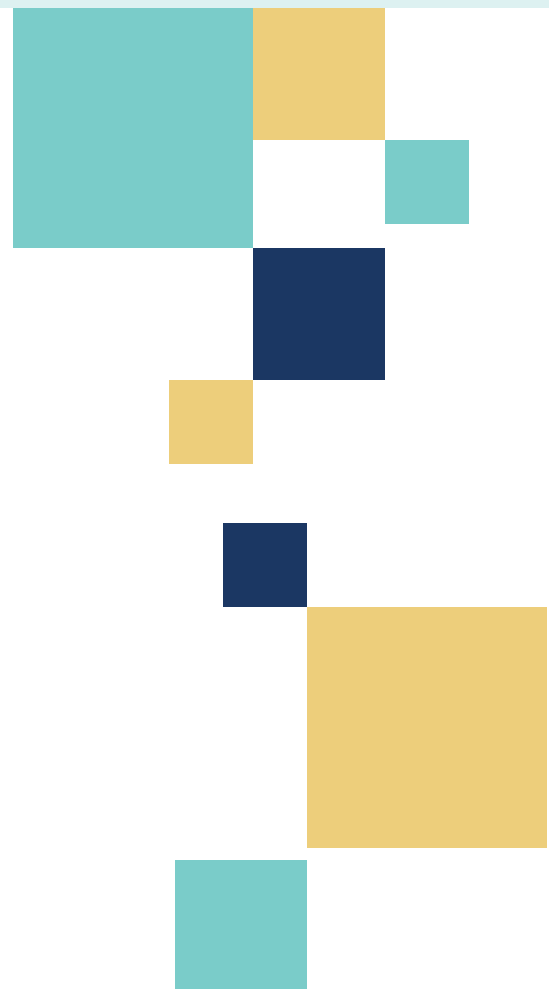
Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
Birth-8 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to show awareness of routines such as feeding, by opening their mouth for the spoon or bottle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Post a visual picture schedule of the daily routine at children's eye-level and call attention to it when talking about what comes next throughout the day. ■ Establish consistent routines and expectations in the learning environment, taking time to model, teach, and reteach each routine and expectation. ■ Describe activities and events ahead of time, step-by-step, so children know what to expect. ■ Play Peek-a-Boo, Hide-and-Seek, and other games that support children's developing sense of object permanence. ■ Use the vocabulary of time, such as next, now, and yesterday. ■ Read books that call attention to time, such as stories that begin with "Once upon a time..." ■ Display and talk about pictures that call attention to time, such as photos of children when they were born alongside more recent photos, or pictures of children participating in an event that happened in the past.
6-14 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to cooperate during familiar routines such as diaper changes, dressing, and bath time. ■ Look for a toy under a blanket. ■ Laugh while playing Peek-a-Boo. 	
12-26 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Begin to anticipate simple, familiar routines at home or in the learning environment, such as walking to the group area to sing songs after lunch. ■ Hold their hands out to be dried after washing. ■ Recognize that a story is over and begin to look for the next activity. 	
24-36 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Anticipate and participate in familiar routines such as sitting down to sing a familiar good morning song at the start of each day or gathering their own blanket for naptime. ■ Show understanding of terms that describe time and order, such as next, and then, and when we get home. ■ Eat a snack and say, "We had cheese sticks for snack before, too." ■ Say, "We sing after lunch" or "No, you have to dry your hands too," to another child who has just joined the program. 	

Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors What might this look like? The child <i>may</i> ...		Examples of Supportive Strategies The early childhood professional <i>can</i> ...
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Anticipate familiar routines, such as putting away their coat when they come inside, coming to the snack table after afternoon group time, or brushing teeth after a meal. ■ Refer to a picture schedule to find out what will happen today. ■ Imitate familiar home routines during dramatic play, such as singing a lullaby when putting a baby doll to bed or asking another child to pass out plates and cups while they “make dinner.” ■ Begin to use terms like yesterday and tomorrow with some accuracy. For example, saying “Tomorrow I go to Sunday School” on a Friday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Post a visual picture schedule of the daily routine at children's eye-level and call attention to it when talking about what comes next throughout the day. ■ Establish consistent routines and expectations in the learning environment, taking time to model, teach, and reteach each routine and expectation. ■ Describe activities and events ahead of time, step-by-step, so children know what to expect. ■ Use the vocabulary of time, such as naming a specific time (10 AM) for an event, or using words like next, now, later, soon, yesterday, before, last week, and tomorrow. ■ Plan opportunities for children to think and talk about time, such as discussing their memories of an event, drawing a picture of what they did over the weekend, taking photos or measurements of change over time as a seed grows into a plant or a caterpillar turns into a butterfly. ■ Build discussions of time into regular activities, such as pausing during a story to ask, “What happens next?”, talking about a read-aloud book from the day before, or using countdown calendars to generate excitement about an upcoming event.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use terms like morning, afternoon, day, and night to talk about times of the day, with some accuracy. ■ Put pictures of a story in the order they happened. ■ Tell a familiar adult that they are going on a trip to see their grandmother because “it's going to be her birthday” or that they can't go to gymnastics tonight because “my teacher called yesterday, and she doesn't feel good.” ■ Tell about things that happened in the past. For example: “I used to like purple, but now I like pink,” “Nana hurt her hip but now she's all better,” or “I went to Disney World before.” 	
5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Tell about things that happened in the past, are happening now in the present, or will happen in the future with accuracy. For example, “Mommy lived in Japan before, but now she lives here,” “I'm going to softball tomorrow night,” and “I'm going to go to kindergarten soon!” ■ Tell about their family histories with some accuracy. For example: “Mommy lived in Japan before but now she lives here,” “My grampa's mom used to be like the people in the book, but then she was free and she had my grampa,” and “My papa's family has lived here since always. His gramma and grampa lived in the house next door!” ■ Use vocabulary about time with some accuracy. ■ Participate in a group activity to line up pictures of themselves at various ages in the correct order. 	



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Program Philosophy

The **Program Philosophy** is a written statement that describes a program's core beliefs about how best to care for, educate, and meet the needs of children. High-quality programs regularly revisit their Program Philosophy to ensure that it still reflects the goals of the program, and that the program's policies and practices are aligned with the **Program Philosophy**.

The goals of the **Program Philosophy** section detail the ways in which all aspects of a high-quality program are built upon the foundation of the Program Philosophy, from curriculum and adult-child interactions to policies, family communication, and staff evaluations. These goals are:

Goal 1 Development and Revision: The program philosophy describes the underlying approach or beliefs that guide how the program cares for and educates children.

Goal 2 Communication: The program philosophy is shared with families, staff, and other stakeholders.

Goal 3 Purpose: The program philosophy serves as a guide for program operations and decision-making.

Goal 1 Development and Revision: The program philosophy describes the underlying approach or beliefs that guide how the program cares for and educates children. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.A; 10.B)

Indicator 1a. The underlying approaches or beliefs that guide how the program cares for and educates children are based on current research and/or best practices in the field.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- What does the program believe about what is best for children?
- Talk to state and local early childhood organizations about current research and best practices.
- Consult state, national, and local guidelines, as well as NAEYC and/or Head Start standards.
- Review current early childhood publications for an up-to-date understanding of research and best practices.

Indicator 1b. The program philosophy conveys how the program meets and is respectful of the needs of individual children across the full range of human diversity, including those who may be multilingual learners, have disabilities, or otherwise have special or differing needs.

(See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1a](#) .)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- What is the program's approach to addressing children's differing strengths and needs?
- How does the program's philosophy reflect the program's approach to addressing children's differing strengths and needs?
- Talk to state and local early childhood organizations about current research and best practices.
- Consult state, national, and local guidelines, as well as NAEYC and/or Head Start standards, and current early childhood publications for an up-to-date understanding of research and best practices.

Indicator 1c. The process of creating and, later, revisiting and potentially revising the program philosophy intentionally includes families, staff, and community and/or board members who are representative of the children enrolled and the community where the program exists.

(See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3a](#), [Program Evaluation Indicator 1b](#), and [Family Partnerships Indicator 3a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program philosophy reflect input from staff, families, and other stakeholders?
- How do the program policies and procedures reflect feedback from staff, families, and other stakeholders?
- How will the program intentionally include families, staff, and other stakeholders in the process of creating and revisiting the program's philosophy?

Indicator 1d. The program philosophy is reviewed on a regular basis (at least annually) to ensure that it still reflects the program's approach to and beliefs about how to care for and educate children.

(See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3b](#) and [Program Evaluation Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Is the program philosophy reviewed and (as needed) updated on an annual basis?
- What process does the program use to review the program philosophy?
- Does the program philosophy still reflect the program's approach?

Goal 2 Communication: The program philosophy is shared with families, staff, and other stakeholders. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.A; 7.C; 10.B)

Indicator 2a. The program philosophy is included in the staff-, family-, and other program- handbooks, and is readily provided to interested parties.

(See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 3b](#) and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 5a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Look for ways to include the program philosophy on the program website (if applicable) and highlight ways that the philosophy connects to what families will see happening in the learning environment.
- Consider including the program philosophy in the information packets that are provided to prospective families and other interested parties.
- How is the program philosophy included in the program handbook, the family handbook, and the staff handbook?

Indicator 2b. Program providers/administrators are able to speak to the program philosophy and how it provides the basis for the program's work with children and families, as well as how it aligns with positive outcomes for children.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Are new program administrators provided with information and training on the program philosophy?
- Consider planning program philosophy-focused activities during staff meetings. For example, having program administrators and staff role play asking and answering questions from families about the program philosophy.
- Are program administrators encouraged to refresh their understanding of the program philosophy on a regular basis?

Indicator 2c. Early childhood professionals and other program staff are able to identify and discuss how the program philosophy provides a basis for their own practices within the program.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Consider planning program philosophy-focused activities during staff meetings. For example, having program administrators and staff role play asking and answering questions from families about the program philosophy.
- Consider planning activities or discussions for program staff to refresh their understanding of the program philosophy and how to apply it to their care and teaching practices.
- Are program staff provided with opportunities or supplementary materials to refresh their understanding of the program philosophy?

Goal 3 Purpose: The program philosophy serves as a guide for program operations and decision-making. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.A; 10.A; 10.B)

Indicator 3a. The program philosophy is used as a tool in decisions about all aspects of the program.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the curriculum reflect the program's approach to and beliefs about how to care for and educate children?
- Do care and teaching practices in the learning environment reflect the program's approach to and beliefs about how to care for and educate children?

Indicator 3b. The policies, procedures, and other information in the program's handbook(s) are developed based on the program philosophy. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 2a.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Was the program philosophy referred to when developing discipline and classroom management policies and procedures?
- Was the program philosophy referred to when developing program procedures such as pick-up/drop-off and resolving family concerns?
- Do the program's policies and procedures reflect the program's approach to and beliefs about how to care for and educate children, as well as how to partner with families?
- Does the overall content of the program's handbook(s) reflect the program's approach to and beliefs about how to communicate and partner with families?

Indicator 3c. Training and professional learning opportunities are provided in alignment with the program philosophy. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3d](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4b](#), and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 6b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Was the program philosophy referred to when developing and implementing hiring and staff training procedures?
- Does the onboarding process for new staff provide information and training on the program philosophy?

Indicator 3d. Staff and program evaluations consider alignment with program philosophy as a key indicator. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Are program staff expected to perform their duties in alignment with the program philosophy?
- Refer to the program philosophy when selecting professional learning resources and opportunities for program staff.
- Consider planning activities or discussions for program staff to refresh their understanding of the program philosophy and how to apply it to their care and teaching practices.
- Are program staff provided with opportunities or supplementary materials to refresh their understanding of the program philosophy?

Indicator 3e. Family communication, partnership, and engagement practices are in alignment with the program philosophy.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Do the program's policies and procedures reflect the program's approach to and beliefs about how to care for and educate children, as well as how to partner with families?
- Does the overall content of the program's handbook(s) reflect the program's approach to and beliefs about how to communicate and partner with families?
- Is the program philosophy referred to when planning and implementing family partnership or engagement activities?



Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning

High-quality programs have high quality **Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning** practices, such as mentorship, reflective supervision, and professional learning goals focused on furthering staff career goals and the implementation of the Program Philosophy.

A knowledgeable and supportive program provider/administrator is able to establish and maintain the policies, processes, and practices that build a supportive work environment for staff. Early childhood program staff who feel supported in both their career development and their well-being are able to engage in higher quality interactions with children.

The goals of the **Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning** section are designed to promote supportive and inclusive work environments, which are critical to retaining high-quality staff and to maintaining a high-quality level of care and education for children. These goals are:

Goal 1 Qualifications: The program employs early childhood professionals with appropriate qualifications for their position, aligned with the MiRegistry Career Pathway (if applicable), who reflect the racial, cultural, and linguistic populations served by the program.

Goal 2 Leadership: The program provider/administrator is able to—or has access to resources to—supervise, lead, and manage all aspects of a successful early childhood program.

Goal 3 Evaluation: The program provider/administrator directs the evaluation activities of the program and early childhood professionals.

Goal 4 Professional Learning: All program staff are provided with and participate in a variety of ongoing professional learning activities, annually and as needed.

Goal 5 Staffing Models: The program's staffing models and practices are designed and implemented to improve outcomes for children.

Goal 6 Workforce Wellbeing: The program and/or program provider/administrator implements policies that support and promote workforce wellbeing.

Goal 1 Qualifications: The program employs early childhood professionals with appropriate qualifications for their position, aligned with the MiRegistry Career Pathway (if applicable), who reflect the racial, cultural, and linguistic populations served by the program. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 6.A; 10.E)

Indicator 1a. The program provider/administrator has educational preparation in developmentally appropriate early childhood education and is experienced in planning, developing, implementing, and evaluating education and care for a diverse child population. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2d.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program provider/administrator have direct experience caring for children in an early care and education setting?
- Consider reaching out to local or state early childhood organizations to establish a mentorship or advisory partnership for new program providers/administrators.

Indicator 1b. Lead teachers/lead caregivers are qualified to develop and implement a learning environment consistent with the program philosophy and policies, and appropriate to the developmental and learning needs of the children. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 2c.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the onboarding process for new staff provide information and training on the program philosophy?
- Are program staff expected to perform their duties in alignment with the program philosophy?
- Do early childhood professionals have educational preparation or experience aligned with the needs of the children they are caring for?

Indicator 1c. Assistant/associate teachers are prepared through training and supervised experience implementing program activities and assisting in the education and care of the children.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Do onboarding processes include extended time for new assistant/associate teachers to observe the learning environment while outside of ratio?
- Are new staff assigned a long-term partnership with a more experienced coworker for guidance and mentoring?
- What specific training are assistant/associate teachers provided with to support them in their roles?
- In what ways are assistant/associate teachers supported in developing their partnership with the lead or primary teachers in the learning environment?

Indicator 1d. Support staff are trained to assist in the education and care of the children.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Do onboarding processes include extended time for new support staff to observe the learning environment while outside of ratio?
- Are new support staff assigned a long-term partnership with a more experienced coworker for guidance and mentoring?
- What specific training are support staff provided with to support them in assisting with the care and education of young children?

Indicator 1e. Policies and practices for recruitment and hiring, as well as retention and promotion, reflect a commitment to racial, gender, cultural, and linguistic diversity, and representations across all positions. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2b](#) and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2c](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- In what ways do the programs recruitment and hiring practices ensure that candidates from diverse racial, gender, cultural, and linguistic identities are treated equitably throughout the hiring process?
- How does the program ensure that retention and promotion practices reflect the racial, gender, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the staff overall?
- Reach out to state and local early childhood organizations for ideas and support around equitable recruitment practices, as well as policies for promotion and retention.
- Individualized professional learning plans developed in collaboration with program staff, combined with reflective supervision and ongoing feedback, are critical to retaining and developing current staff for promotions and leadership positions (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2019).

Goal 2 Leadership: The program provider/administrator is able to—or has access to resources to—supervise, lead, and manage all aspects of a successful early childhood program. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 7.B; 10.A; 10.B; 10.C; 10.E)

Indicator 2a. Is able to or has access to resources to operate a small business, including but not limited to marketing, customer service, program funding, maintenance and upgrading of the physical spaces, and appropriate handling of accounts.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program provider/administrator have direct experience operating a small business?
- Reach out to local or state early childhood organizations to establish or join an advisory partnership for program providers/administrators.
- What systems or resources are in place to support the program provider/administrator in marketing, maintenance, accounting, program funding, and other aspects of operating an early childhood program?

Indicator 2b. Maintains a high-quality environment for staff, including supervision and evaluation of staff, as well as developing and maintaining a positive, inclusive work environment. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 1e](#) and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2c](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Lead a book study around workplace culture with program staff.
- Actively engage with local or state early childhood organizations and join groups that focus on building positive workplace environments.
- Reach out to local human resources consultants.

Indicator 2c. Understands the importance of and models effective practices for engaging and working with staff and families of varied home languages, cultural and/or socio-economic backgrounds, racial identities, family structures, gender or gender identities, religious beliefs, and abilities. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 1e](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2b](#), and [Family Partnerships Indicator 4b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program provider/administrator have direct and positive experience working with staff and families of varied home languages, cultural and/or socio-economic backgrounds, racial identities, family structures, gender or gender identities, religious beliefs, and abilities?
- What support systems are in place for the program provider/administrator, as well as program staff, in implementing effective practices for working with families varied home languages, cultural and/or socio-economic backgrounds, racial identities, family structures, gender or gender identities, religious beliefs, and abilities?
- Incorporate book clubs, roleplays, and other methods to learn and discuss effective practices for working with diverse families into regular staff meeting routines and professional learning experiences.

Indicator 2d. Has the understanding and skills, or access to expert resources, to provide child development support to the program. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program provider/administrator have direct experience caring for children in an early care and education setting?
- Does the program provider/administrator have an educational background related to early care and education?
- Reach out to local or state early childhood organizations to establish mentorship and professional learning partnerships.
- Connect with early childhood consultants or other experts in the field to provide child development support to program staff, as well as to the program provider/administrator.

Indicator 2e. Has knowledge of agencies and organizations in the community, and the skills and understanding to work with those agencies as appropriate, connecting families to needed resources. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 2d](#) and [Community Collaboration Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program provider/administrator have direct experience working with agencies and organizations in the community?
- What systems or resources are in place to support the program provider/administrator in connecting and working with agencies and organizations in the community?
- Connect with local or state early childhood organizations for information, support, and resources around sensitive methods for connecting families with local agencies, organizations, and resources.

Goal 3 Evaluation: The program provider/administrator directs the evaluation activities of the program and early childhood professionals. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS: 10.B; 10.F](#))

Indicator 3a. In partnership with early childhood professionals, staff, and families, arranges for the annual evaluation of the early childhood program utilizing research-based, valid, and reliable tools reflecting the program's standards or criteria for quality. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 1c](#), [Program Evaluation Indicator 1b](#), and [Family Partnerships Indicator 3a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Reach out to local or state early childhood organizations for recommendations on program evaluation tools.
- Select program evaluation tools from state-approved lists.
- Refer to the program philosophy, as well as any strategic plans that have been developed for the program, to ensure evaluation tools reflect the goals of the program.

Indicator 3b. Annually evaluates early childhood professionals and support staff performance according to program philosophy and policies based on local, state, and national standards and/or competencies using a variety of tools and techniques (e.g., observation, self-evaluation). (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 1d](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Use evaluation tools and techniques that reflect the specific role of the person being evaluated. For example, a program might use the Michigan Home Visiting Core Knowledge Areas to evaluate home visiting staff members' professional competencies.
- Are program staff expected to perform their duties in alignment with the program philosophy?
- Refer to the program philosophy to ensure evaluation tools reflect the goals of the program.

Indicator 3c. Collaborates with all staff to build individualized professional learning plans based on performance review results and to support their desired career goals. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 3c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3d](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4b](#), and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 6b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Are professional learning plans developed in alignment with the program philosophy?
- In what ways are program staff involved in the identification of their career goals and the development of their individualized professional learning plans?
- Connect with local and state early childhood organizations or human resources consultants to identify effective professional learning plan templates for early childhood professionals.
- Refer to state and national competencies and consider staff members' specific roles when planning or selecting professional learning opportunities. For example, professional learning for home visitors should reflect the professional competencies outlined in Michigan Home Visiting Core Knowledge Areas and professional learning opportunities for early interventionists and special education specialists should reflect the competencies outlined in Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators.
- Program staff who feel supported in both their career development and their well-being are able to engage in higher quality interactions with children (Administration for Children and Families, 2021).
- Individualized professional learning plans developed in collaboration with program staff, combined with reflective supervision and ongoing feedback, are critical to retaining and developing current staff for promotions and leadership positions (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2019).

Indicator 3d. Utilizes the results of performance reviews and program evaluations to plan activities for program improvement and training. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 3c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4b](#), and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 6b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Review performance evaluations for common areas of improvement (those that have been identified in multiple staff members).
- Sort evaluation results, feedback, common performance improvement areas by themes (teaching practices, family partnerships, etc.).
- Prioritize areas of improvement based on effort, urgency, and available resources.

Goal 4 Professional Learning: All program staff are provided with and participate in a variety of ongoing professional learning activities, annually and as needed. ([NAEYC-ELPAS: 6.B; 6.D](#))

Indicator 4a. Program policies include specific expectations around professional learning activities for all program staff and identify the resources the program will provide to support those activities. (See also: [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 2a](#) and [Community Collaboration Indicator 3b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Refer to the program philosophy when developing program policies around professional learning expectations for program staff.
- Align program policies around professional learning with early childhood professionals' specific roles (such as requiring professional learning focused on infant brain development for those caring for infants) as well as requirements for maintaining and continuing teacher certification or other credentials.
- Put together a list of all professional learning resources provided by the program and distribute to program staff. For example:
 - A collection of up-to-date early childhood resources.
 - Membership to a regional library of early childhood resources.
 - Paid registration to local early childhood conferences or workshops.
 - Professional learning experiences provided through partnerships with other area early childhood programs.

Indicator 4b. Professional learning for all staff members is based upon program evaluations and goals, aligns with individualized professional learning plans, and is grounded in up-to-date and evidence-based practice. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 3c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3d](#), and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 6b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Refer to the program philosophy when selecting professional learning resources and opportunities for program staff.
- Does the professional learning for those caring for infants reflect current research around infant brain development?
- Do the professional learning opportunities for home visitors reflect professional competencies as outlined in *Michigan Home Visiting Core Knowledge Areas*?
- Refer to state and national competencies and consider staff members' specific roles when planning or selecting professional learning opportunities. For example, professional learning for home visitors should reflect the professional competencies outlined in *Michigan Home Visiting Core Knowledge Areas* and professional learning opportunities for early interventionists and special education specialists should reflect the competencies outlined in *Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators*.
- Does the program prioritize professional learning opportunities that align to Michigan Core Knowledge and Core Competencies for the Early Care and Education Workforce, and/or NAEYC Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educator?

Indicator 4c. Program-specific requirements for maintaining and continuing teacher certification or other credentials are met.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Align program policies around professional learning with early childhood professionals' specific roles (such as requiring professional learning focused on infant brain development for those caring for infants) as well as requirements for maintaining and continuing teacher certification or other credentials.
- Does the program maintain documentation of certifications or credentials earned by program staff?
- How does the program ensure program staff have completed requirements for maintaining certifications or credentials?
- In what ways does the program support program staff in earning and maintaining certifications and credentials?

Indicator 4d. All program staff receive ongoing professional learning relevant to the population(s) served – including multilingual learners, children and families from historically underserved or marginalized communities, anti-bias teaching practices, children experiencing trauma, children with disabilities, and culturally responsive teaching – enabling them to effectively include and support all children and families. (See also: [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 2b.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the professional learning for those caring for infants reflect current research around infant brain development?
- Do early childhood professionals caring for multilingual learners receive professional learning around multilingual language development, curriculum supports for multilingual learners, the relationship between language and culture, meaningful teaching and assessment practices for multilingual children, and how to work with families of multilingual children?
- How does the program ensure that early childhood professionals receive professional learning focused on the population(s) served by the program?
- How are early childhood professionals in the program prepared and supported to care for children experiencing trauma, children with disabilities, and children from diverse backgrounds or cultures?

Indicator 4e. Professional learning emphasizes and supports the importance of partnerships with families. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 1d](#), [Family Partnerships Indicator 4c](#), and [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 2c.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the professional learning for program staff support early childhood professionals in working with families of multilingual children?
- Does professional learning align with the program philosophy, as well as the program's policies and procedures around partnering with families?
- Are early childhood professionals provided with professional learning around developing partnerships with families?
- Does the program provide professional learning for staff on how to effectively communicate to all families, using strategies that meet the unique needs of each family?
- Does the program offer professional learning opportunities about communication skills, building trust, and family engagement?

Indicator 4f. All program staff are supported and encouraged to actively participate in local, state, or national professional organizations and organizations that advocate on behalf of young children and families. (See also: [Community Collaboration Indicator 3a.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How do staff act as early childhood advocates, such as participating in Great Start Collaborative activities and events or other events that promote public awareness of early childhood care and education?
- How are staff supported and encouraged to join and participate in early childhood organizations? For example:
 - Provide a stipend for membership and/or registration fees.
 - Post announcements about membership drives for early childhood organizations.
 - Release staff to attend meetings or conferences as well as to provide support for activities and events.
 - Celebrate staff engagement in professional organizations.

Indicator 4g. Early childhood professionals, program providers/administrators, and support staff are provided with paid time to participate in professional learning and opportunities to share their knowledge.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Incorporate professional learning opportunities into paid monthly staff meetings.
- Invite staff who have participated in professional learning opportunities to share their new knowledge with colleagues and families.
- In what ways does the program provide on-site or on-demand professional learning opportunities to staff? For example:
 - In-service events.
 - Monthly staff meetings.
 - Book/article studies.
 - A resource library of current materials related to early childhood care and education.
 - Coaching and mentoring.
 - Professional Learning Communities or Communities of Practice organized among staff.

Indicator 4h. The program maintains a collection of and/or provides access to up-to-date professional learning resources about topics including but not limited to early childhood research, special education, trauma-informed practice, multilingual learners, family engagement and involvement, anti-bias education, equity, cultural competency, child development/learning theories, and developmentally appropriate practices.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Put together a list of all professional learning resources provided by the program and distribute to program staff.
- Subscribe to magazines from early childhood organizations, such as *Teaching Young Children* and encourage staff to read relevant articles during paid times when they are not responsible for the direct supervision of children.
- Participate in the formation of a regional library of early childhood resources with other local early childhood programs.
- Provide access to live and recorded webinars focused on early childhood topics.

Goal 5 Staffing Models: The program's staffing models and practices are designed and implemented to improve outcomes for children. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.A; 1.B; 10.B)

Indicator 5a. Provides orientation to all program staff—including written copies of policies and procedures, as well as training around program goals and objectives, and basic methods of positive interaction with children and families. ([Program Philosophy Indicator 2a.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Do onboarding processes include extended time for new staff to observe the learning environment while outside of ratio?
- Does the onboarding process for new staff provide information and training on the program philosophy?
- Are new staff provided with a program or staff handbook, or other documentation of the program's philosophy and policies, as well as any established procedures staff are expected to follow?

Indicator 5b. Assigns and supervises trained staff who use appropriate engagement techniques, modify the learning environment, and utilize other strategies to ensure all requirements of Individualized Education Program (IEP), or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) are met. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1a.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Ensure program staff receive training and support for modifying the learning environment to meet the needs of children with disabilities or special needs, as well as to meet the requirements of an IEP or IFSP.
- Provide support, supervision, and coaching to early childhood professionals caring for children with IEPs or IFSPs, as well as other children with disabilities or special needs.
- Ensure program staff receive professional learning around supporting and welcoming children with disabilities and special needs.

Indicator 5c. Assigns an early childhood professional primary and consistent responsibility for a group of children and families to promote continuity of care and responsive caregiving. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 1c](#) and [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1b.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Are primary care groupings consistently established and maintained?
- Establish and maintain primary care groups for all ages, allowing children to develop trusting relationships with the adults who are consistently caring for them.
- Consider the unique needs of the child, the family, and the group when assigning children to primary caregivers. For example:
 - The temperament and personality of both the child and the caregiver.
 - Staff and family scheduling.
 - Communication styles and linguistic needs.

Indicator 5d. Provides early childhood professionals with paid time to complete their professional responsibilities outside the direct care of children, including lesson planning, family meetings, documenting observational assessments, and collaborating with colleagues and specialists.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Are early childhood professionals provided with scheduled, paid time for lesson planning, documenting observational assessments, and collaborating with colleagues?
- Does the program schedule paid time for early childhood professionals to meet with families while outside the direct care of children?
- Is there an established process for scheduling and covering time for early childhood professionals to complete lesson planning, documenting observational assessments, and other professional responsibilities?

Goal 6 Workforce Wellbeing: The program and/or program provider/administrator implements policies that support and promote workforce wellbeing. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 6.A; 10.E)

Indicator 6a. Provides consistent reflective, responsive supervision and mentoring of early childhood professionals and support staff. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2b](#) and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2d](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Are new staff assigned a long-term partnership with a more experienced coworker for guidance and mentoring?
- Do program providers/administrators regularly make time to observe the learning environment in order to provide constructive feedback and support?
- Individualized professional learning plans developed in collaboration with program staff, combined with reflective supervision and ongoing feedback, are critical to retaining and developing current staff for promotions and leadership positions (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2019).

Indicator 6b. Develops professional learning plans in cooperation with the early childhood professionals and support staff to support their desired career goals. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 3c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3d](#), and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Are professional learning plans developed in alignment with the program philosophy?
- In what ways are program staff involved in the identification of their career goals and the development of their individualized professional learning plans?
- Connect with local and state early childhood organizations or human resources consultants to identify effective professional learning plan templates for early childhood professionals.
- Refer to state and national competencies and consider staff members' specific roles when planning or selecting professional learning opportunities. For example, professional learning for home visitors should reflect the professional competencies outlined in *Michigan Home Visiting Core Knowledge Areas* and professional learning opportunities for early interventionists and special education specialists should reflect the competencies outlined in *Initial Practice-Based Professional Preparation Standards for Early Interventionists/Early Childhood Special Educators*.
- Program staff who feel supported in both their career development and their well-being are able to engage in higher quality interactions with children (Administration for Children and Families, 2021).
- Individualized professional learning plans developed in collaboration with program staff, combined with reflective supervision and ongoing feedback, are critical to retaining and developing current staff for promotions and leadership positions (Center for the Study of Child Care Employment, 2019).

Indicator 6c. Ensures that staffing practices allow early childhood professionals and support staff to take regularly scheduled breaks, based on hours worked, and to request brief as-needed, unscheduled “wellness” breaks away from the children.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program encourage staff to step away from direct contact with children when they feel overwhelmed?
- Is there an established process for covering regularly scheduled breaks for staff?

Indicator 6d. Provides, when possible, a dedicated space for staff breaks, with comfortable seating, water, and stress-reduction resources.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program have space available for staff to spend their breaks?
- Include water, comfortable seating, in the space designated for staff breaks.
- Provide stress-reduction resources, such as:
 - Space for meditation.
 - Small plants.
 - Over-ear headphones and devices prepared with quiet music, podcasts, or audiobooks.
 - Yoga mats and examples of relaxing poses.
 - Décor in natural materials and neutral colors.

Indicator 6e. Supports overall staff wellbeing through access to wellness and healthcare resources—including, and without associated stigma, those addressing mental health.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Do program providers/administrators know where to refer staff members who need additional mental or physical health support?
- Can the program arrange for informal wellness sessions staff can choose to “drop in” to during lunch breaks, such as yoga, meditation, book club, or other wellness practices?

Indicator 6f. Ensures staff have access to time off for health, family, and professional learning purposes, as well as clear policies and procedures for how to request paid or unpaid leave.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Do staff members feel empowered to take a sick day when they are ill without fear of reprisal?
- Do staff feel empowered to take time off to care for their family members as needed without fear of reprisal?

Indicator 6g. Supports and promotes an environment of open, constructive communication among staff, and between staff and administration through both policies and practices. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2b.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program make time for staff to make connections to each other through group discussions or joint lesson planning?
- Do staff feel safe that, in sharing personal information or workplace concerns with a coworker or administration, their privacy will be maintained?

Indicator 6h. Provides a safe working environment, including adult-sized furniture and training around safe ergonomic lifting, bending, and carrying techniques to avoid strain and injury.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Do learning environments include adult-sized seating for early childhood professionals and other adults?
- Provide training around safe ergonomic lifting, bending, and carrying techniques to all staff, and review this training regularly to avoid strain and injury.

Indicator 6i. Ensures equitable pay policies and salary scales, including different levels of pay based on levels of education and years of experience, and out-of-schedule raises for achieving higher levels of formal education such as early childhood degrees or specialized credentials.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Consult with local and state early childhood organizations, as well as human resources experts, to develop pay policies and salary scales that reflect the education and experience of program staff.
- Regularly review pay policies and salary scales to ensure they continue to be aligned with the local cost of living.
- How are program staff compensated for achieving higher levels of formal education, such as early childhood degrees and specialized credentials?



Program Evaluation

Annual **Program Evaluation** provides a framework for high-quality programs to evaluate their success in achieving the educational, care, quality, and operational goals of the program.

A variety of evaluation tools and strategies are available, including Michigan's *Great Start to Quality* self-assessment, to help program providers/administrators and other early childhood professionals in assessing their learning environments, adult-child interactions, and other aspects of their program. The program's documented Program Philosophy will serve as a guide for programs to determine which one (or more) of these tools best suits the program's goals.

The **Program Evaluation** goals are designed to define and describe the key aspects of a high-quality evaluation process. These goals are:

Goal 1 Evaluation Process: A selection of evaluation tools and strategies are used on an annual basis (at minimum) to ensure the needs of children, families, and staff are being met through a high-quality program.

Goal 2 Evaluation Data: The program uses the information gained from evaluation processes to develop and implement an improvement plan.

Goal 1 Evaluation Process: A selection of evaluation tools and strategies are used on an annual basis (at minimum) to ensure the needs of children, families, and staff are being met through a high-quality program. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.A; 10.B)

Indicator 1a. Multiple tools and strategies are used in the evaluation process to ensure all aspects of the program philosophy are being addressed. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 1d](#) and [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3b.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Select program evaluation tools from state-approved lists.
- Choose tools and strategies that will help identify areas of need – and success – for the program, such as:
 - Family survey
 - Staff survey
 - Child assessment data
 - State-approved program evaluation tools
 - Participation in accreditation systems
- How does your program protect people’s privacy and keep any identifying information confidential?
- Use the least disruptive tools needed—program evaluation will ideally not interfere with the program’s typical daily routines and processes.
- Reach out to local or state early childhood organizations for recommendations on program evaluation tools.
- Refer to the program philosophy, as well as any strategic plans that have been developed for the program, to ensure evaluation tools reflect the goals of the program.

Indicator 1b. Families, staff, and other stakeholders are involved in the program evaluation and ongoing program improvement processes. ([Program Philosophy Indicator 1c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3a](#), and [Family Partnerships Indicator 3a.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Consider using family and staff surveys to gather evaluation information.
- How do your families and staff share feedback throughout the year?
- Do you have an anonymous method for sharing feedback, for those who don’t want to be identified?
- Could you invite families to participate in a family advisory committee?
- Do you use exit interviews or surveys for staff or families leaving the program?

Goal 2 Evaluation Data: The program uses the information gained from evaluation processes to develop and implement an improvement plan. ([NAEYC-ELPAS: 2.A; 10.B](#))

Indicator 2a. Share the results of the evaluation with staff, families, and stakeholders and invite feedback and suggestions for improvement processes. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 1c](#) and [Family Partnerships Indicator 3a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- When sharing evaluation information, be sure to protect people's privacy and keep any identifying information confidential.
- What communication method will work best for your families and staff? An email or newsletter? An in-person or online meeting?
- How will your families and staff share their feedback with you?
- Share information with staff at a monthly staff meeting and brainstorm improvement goals.

Indicator 2b. Identify a short list of realistic, achievable goals to improve the program based on the results of the evaluation as well as the feedback and suggestions from staff, families, and stakeholders, with a clear timeline for completion.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Sort the results and feedback by themes (teaching practices, family partnerships, etc.).
- What outcome will you aim for with each area of improvement?
- What are the specific things that need to change?
- What are the resources you need?
- Prioritize which areas of improvement will be addressed based on effort, urgency, and available resources.
- Create clear and realistic deadlines for each goal.

Indicator 2c. Make a list of clear actions or steps to complete to achieve each goal, as well as who will be responsible for each step.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Ask yourself the who, what, when, where, and why of each goal.
- Create clear and realistic deadlines for each goal.
- Are there external resources you will need to meet the goals?

Indicator 2d. Communicate the program's improvement goals and progress to families, staff, and stakeholders. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 1c](#) and [Family Partnerships Indicator 3a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Regularly review the goals and assess progress throughout the year.
- How will you intentionally keep your staff, families, and stakeholders informed about the program's progress toward its goals?

Indicator 2e. Ensure staff and others are supported in completing their assigned tasks.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Make sure your staff have time to complete their tasks.
- Are there external resources you will need to meet the goals?
- Make a plan to check in regularly about progress and support needs.



Family Partnerships

Research has shown that early childhood professionals' partnerships with families are a key component of young children's learning and development, regardless of racial or cultural identities (Michigan Department of Education, 2020). For high-quality programs, prioritizing authentic partnerships with families involves building strong relationships, establishing mutual respect and understanding, sharing information about children's lives and learning experiences, and aligning family communication and engagement practices with the Program Philosophy.

The goals in the **Family Partnerships** section are aligned with the principles laid out in *MiFamily: Michigan's Family Engagement Framework* and are designed to promote authentic effective collaborations between families and high-quality programs. These goals are:

Goal 1: Relationships: The program supports relationships as the cornerstone of family partnerships.

Goal 2: Partnerships: Within the program, families are engaged and supported partners in their child's education.

Goal 3: Participation: The program's family engagement efforts include intentional inclusion of families in program improvement processes.

Goal 4: Intentional Inclusion: Within the program, family engagement efforts are tailored to address all families.

Goal 5: Welcoming Environment: A positive learning environment contributes to family engagement within the program.

Goal 1: Relationships: The program supports relationships as the cornerstone of family partnerships. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.A; 3.B; 4.E; 7.A)

Indicator 1a. Program staff consistently engage families in open and ongoing two-way communication about their child’s daily life, social and independent experiences, and their developmental progress. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 2a](#), [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 1a](#), and [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 1b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program engage in open and ongoing two-way communication with families?
- Does the program communicate with families on a daily basis via notes, text messages, or emails?
- Does the program provide individualized communication on children’s progress and experiences?

Indicator 1b. Program staff actively engage and build relationships with families through positive daily interactions.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program offer a welcoming environment to diverse families? Are there posters, toys, books, and other learning materials that represent the backgrounds and identities of all the children in the learning environment?
- Does the program communicate with families in their home language?
- Do staff warmly acknowledge families when they see them in the hallways, in a playgroup, or in the parking lot?

Indicator 1c. The program provider/administrator ensures that all families, but especially those who are new to the program, are able to build the foundation for a strong relationship with the early childhood professional(s) who will be caring for their child. ([Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 5c](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program offer one-on-one time between early childhood professionals and families, such as beginning of the year meetings, conferences, home visits, or transition meetings?
- Use home visits, meetings, phone calls, emails, or “tell me about your child” packets as ways of gathering information about children’s interests, the family’s goals for their child, and the family’s cultural values.
- Does the program offer one-on-one meetings between an early childhood professional and the families if the early childhood professional is new to the learning environment in the middle of the year?
- Does the program offer to meet with the family one-on-one if they have a concern about their child or the program?

Indicator 1d. The program provider/administrator ensures that staff receive professional learning focused on family engagement and communication skills and are able to use those skills to build trusting and supportive relationships with families. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4e](#) and [Family Partnerships Indicator 4c](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program offer professional learning opportunities about communication skills, building trust, and family engagement?
- Does the program provider/administrator mentor staff in how to communicate and build trust with families?
- Does the program provider/administrator observe staff in family engagement settings and offer feedback for improvement on communication?

Goal 2: Partnerships: Within the program, families are engaged and supported partners in their child's education. Program staff: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.A; 3.B; 4.E; 7.B; 7.C)

Indicator 2a. Consistently use informal methods of communication, based on each family's needs and preferences, to share information with families about their child's experiences and development. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 1a](#) and [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 1b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program determine what methods of informal daily communication work best for each family?
- Does the program use a variety of informal methods to communicate with families, such as sharing information during drop-off or pick-up times, through communication apps, phone calls, notes and texts?
- Do families know where to go to ask a question about something specific (i.e., payment questions, learning questions, health questions, etc.)?
- Does the program use informal communication methods to share information with families about children's learning?
- Encourage early childhood professionals to prioritize daily communication about children's experiences, as this allows families to ask their children more specific questions about their experiences in the learning environment, and to make connections between those experiences and what children are doing/saying at home.

Indicator 2b. Use regularly scheduled formal communication methods, based on each family's needs and preferences, to share information with families about their child's experiences and development. (See also: [Child Assessment Indicator 1d.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program determine what methods of formal communication work best for each family?
- Does the program regularly schedule formal communication methods with families about child's development, such as family-teacher conferences, monthly newsletters, child-led conferences, and IEP/IFSP meetings?
- Does the program set aside time for formal conferences, and are formal conferences arranged with families' schedules in mind? (This may mean offering evening or weekend conferences for some families, virtual conferences during the workday, and/or childcare during conference times.)
- How does the program ensure that formal communications with families are conducted in their preferred language?

Indicator 2c. Actively collaborate with families in decision making and goal setting for their child's education and learning both at home and in the program. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 4a](#), [Child Assessment Indicator 1d](#), [Child Assessment Indicator 2b](#), [Child Assessment Indicator 2c](#), and [Child Assessment Indicator 3c](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program collaborate with families about the child's developmental goals, expectations, and progress in the program and how to best meet the individual needs of the child?
- Does the program individualize learning for children on the lesson plan? Is the lesson plan posted in a highly visible area or sent home to the families?
- Does the program collaborate with families to create ways for them to support their children's developmental goals at home?

Indicator 2d. Build trusting and supportive relationships with families, and within those relationships, recognize opportunities to connect families to program or community resources. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2e](#) and [Community Collaboration Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program provide information to families about opportunities to participate in community early childhood organizations (e.g., Great Start Parent Coalitions, Michigan Alliance for Families, community foundations, and events)?
- Does the program list community resources in their newsletter?
- Does the program offer family education and empowerment opportunities? (This may include things like a lending library, hosting a family education meetings or events, or sharing healthy child-friendly recipes)
- Does the program offer families information on family empowerment and education opportunities in the broader community?
- Does the program use care and sensitivity when referring families to community resources that improve family wellness and stability? (This may include resources like local food banks, clothing closets, parenting support, nutrition, etc.)

Goal 3: Participation: The program's family engagement efforts include intentional inclusion of families in program improvement processes. ([NAEYC-ELPAS: 1.A](#))

Indicator 3a. Includes families in program evaluation and ongoing improvement processes. (See also: [Program Philosophy Indicator 1c](#), [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 3a](#), and [Program Evaluation Indicator 1b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program include families in program evaluations, such as with a family survey?
- How does the program incorporate family feedback?
- How are families notified of the results of the evaluation process?
- Does the program use exit interviews or surveys for families leaving the program? How does the program use this information to make improvements?
- Does the program ask for feedback from families at family meetings?
- Consider inviting families to participate in a family advisory committee to provide feedback and advocate for program improvement.

Indicator 3b. Invites families to provide feedback and suggestions for family engagement efforts. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 4a.](#))

- How does the program invite families to provide feedback on family engagement efforts, such as informal verbal communication, completing a survey or filling out a comment card?
- Does the program have an anonymous method for those who don't want to be identified?
- Does the program invite families to contribute suggestions for content or topics of interest for family engagement opportunities?
- How does the program invite families to participate in the planning process for family engagement activities?

Goal 4: Intentional Inclusion: Within the program, family engagement efforts are tailored to address all families. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.A)

Indicator 4a. Uses families' feedback to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of family engagement efforts and activities. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 3b.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program attempt to limit barriers to family engagement? (This may include offering interpreters in various languages, offering gas cards, or negotiating ride share opportunities.)
- Does the program hold family engagement events that are at convenient times and days for families?
- How does the program ensure that family engagement efforts and activities are sensitive to the socioeconomic differences of the program's families?
- When families are asked to contribute food or materials for activities or events, are there options that allow all families to participate?
- Does the program design family engagement events and activities that are reflective of the interests of the program's families?
- Does your program have a budget identified to support the program in addressing these barriers (gas cards for field trips, providing dinner at evening events, offering childcare during evening conferences)?

Indicator 4b. Ensures that program policies and procedures take into account families' differences, such as culture, family structure, socio-economic background, racial identity, gender or gender identities, abilities and disabilities, religious beliefs, and home languages. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2c.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does your program identify family differences?
- Do you offer families opportunities to share information about themselves, through formal and informal methods?
- Does your program use information about family differences in work schedules and transportation barriers when creating drop-off and pick-up policies?
- Does your program use information about family differences when creating policies or procedures around mealtimes?
- Does your program use information about family differences when creating policies or procedures around toilet-learning?

Indicator 4c. Ensures that staff are supported and encouraged to use effective communication strategies that meet the needs of each family. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4e](#) and [Family Partnerships Indicator 1d.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program provide professional learning for staff on how to effectively communicate to all families, using strategies that meet the unique needs of each family?
- How are staff supported in communicating with families in their preferred method? (This may look like providing email accounts for staff to communicate electronically, or providing duplicates of paper communication for two-household families.)
- Does the program provide support for staff who are communicating with families with home languages other than English? (This may include bringing in a translator/interpreter or fluent staff or family member, or using translation tools for written and verbal communication.)
- Does the program support staff in learning key words and phrases from the child's home language and their English equivalents?

Goal 5: Welcoming Environment: A positive learning environment contributes to family engagement within the program. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.A)

Indicator 5a. The learning environment is intentionally designed and arranged to be welcoming to families.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Does the program have welcoming entrance signs and directional signs, as well as daily schedules, posted in highly visible areas and in families' home languages?
- Are books and materials that reflect children's home languages, abilities and disabilities, family structures, cultures, racial identities, and other differences incorporated into the learning environment?
- Are drop-off and pick-up transitions structured to best meet children's and families' needs?
- The program might offer a library of children's books for families to borrow to extend their children's learning at home.

Indicator 5b. Families are invited and encouraged to participate in learning experiences, daily activities, and events as they are able.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program include families in a variety of program activities, such as helping to prepare learning materials, assisting with field trips, or participating in read-alouds?
- Are families regularly invited to participate in program activities?
- Inviting families to share their culture and traditions, or a favorite book, game, or activity supports their—and their children's—sense of belonging in the learning environment and the program.
- Are families invited to volunteer their time and talent to support the program and learning environment?



Environment of Care and Learning

Just as children's development and learning is a complex, integrated process encompassing all domains, so too are the components of a program's **Environment of Care and Learning**. The leaders of a high-quality program understand that the program's structure, how relationships are nurtured, the physical environment, and the activities and experiences offered to children are interdependent and must be considered together in planning and carrying out the program.

Certain elements must be present in care and learning settings for young children to create an environment that ensures robust development and fosters ideal learning experiences. The goals indicated in this section are fundamental to achieving high-quality experiences and strong outcomes for young children. Each is applicable regardless of the type of setting or curriculum, and applies in center-based and home-based programs, with mixed-age and age-specific groupings of children from birth to kindergarten.

Four major goals define and describe the hallmarks of a high-quality **Environment of Care and Learning**. Indicators for each goal provide guidance for adults working with children as well as those supporting, administering, or evaluating a program. The goals of the Environment of Care and Learning are:

Goal 1 Relationships and Interactions: The program's emotional and social environment supports a positive atmosphere where all children and families feel welcome.

Goal 2 Space and Materials: The program's physical environment is designed to promote high-quality, inclusive learning and interactions in all domains throughout the day.

Goal 3 Consistent Daily Routine: The daily schedule, routines, and transitions are predictable, supportive, and responsive to the individual and developmental needs of children.

Goal 4 Intentional Teaching: The process of assessment, planning, and implementation is an ongoing and intentional cycle designed to support all aspects of children's development and learning.

Goal 1 Relationships and Interactions: The program's emotional and social environment supports a positive atmosphere where all children and families feel welcome. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.A; 1.B; 1.C; 2.B; 3.B)

Indicator 1a. Belonging: Adults accept, support, and encourage the equitable participation, inclusion, and social engagement of all children, with respect to differences in culture, family structure, home language, racial identity, gender and gender identity, abilities and disabilities, religious beliefs, and socio-economic class. ([Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 5b](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2b](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2c](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2d](#), and [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How do adults support children to see themselves as valued individuals?
- How do adults consistently respond to children's emotional needs?
- Do adults have conversations with children?
- How do adults support children and families through transitions with sensitivity and respect? For example, transitions into the program, daily transitions from home to the program, and transitions out of the program to a new care and learning setting.
- Assign children to primary caregivers based on temperament, personality, and the unique needs of the child, the family, and the group, to enable a secure attachment between the adult and the child.
- Ensure that adults acknowledge children's efforts and accomplishments.
- Ensure that early childhood professionals have support for their connections with children from different cultures and/or with different home languages, including interpreters and translators, professional learning, and other resources.
- Ensure that adults understand, reflect, and respect children's culture:
 - By using the child's home language for communication as much as possible.
 - By partnering with families to learn about the child's culture and home language.
 - By incorporating that child's culturally accepted non-verbal cues, such as gestures, eye-contact, and body language into non-verbal interactions.

Indicator 1b. Adult-Child Relationships: Adults support the development of warm, positive, and trusting relationships between adults and children through intentional and respectful communication and actions. ([Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 5c](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2b](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2d](#), and [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How do adults support children in feeling as if they all belong and are valued in the program?
- How do adults ensure that their expectations for children align with their developmental abilities?
- Ensure that adults consistently model and support children's use of positive social skills, including:
 - Offering empathy
 - Demonstrating patience and flexibility
 - Identifying feelings
 - Using manners (e.g., thank you, excuse me, please)
 - Listening actively to both children and adults
 - Matching facial expressions, body language, and tone to words
 - Acknowledging the presence of others
 - Positioning themselves at a reasonable distance and at the eye-level of the child
- How do adults' interactions with children support their problem-solving skills and independence?
- How do adults support children in learning how to recognize and respond to stress and strong emotions in safe as well as developmentally and culturally appropriate ways?
- How do adults provide opportunities for children that lead to new perspectives, cooperation, collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of membership in small and large groups?

Indicator 1c. Peer Relationships: Adults support the development of warm, positive, and trusting relationships between children and their peers through intentional communication, modeling, and decisions about the learning environment. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2b](#) and [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2d](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How do adults support children's emerging verbal and non-verbal communication and language skills to express their feelings, thoughts, and needs in safe as well as developmentally and culturally appropriate ways?
- How do adults support positive peer interactions and foster friendships between children? How do adults ensure there is time and space for children to interact and be social with one another?
- How do adults ensure that their expectations about children's relationships and interactions with each other align with their developmental abilities?
- How do adults build a positive environment where children know the boundaries and expectations and children are kind to each other in actions and words? For example:
 - Intentionally teach interpersonal and conflict resolution skills.
 - Ensure children have ongoing opportunities to recognize and accept similarities and differences among one another.
 - Provide opportunities for children to discuss their understanding of their rights and responsibilities and those of others.
- Use the physical learning environment to encourage positive peer interactions, such as:
 - Ensure there are enough interest areas to allow children opportunities for social interaction.
 - Provide enough space within interest areas to allow children opportunities for social interaction.
 - Offer materials that reflect the children's current interests and promote social interaction.
- How do adults support children in learning how to resolve conflicts in safe as well as developmentally and culturally appropriate ways? For example: negotiating, helping, cooperating, and talking with the person involved.
- In what ways do adults partner with families to support positive social behaviors at home and in the program?

Indicator 1d. Positive Behavior Support: Adults support children’s developing self-regulation and interpersonal skills through age-appropriate expectations and positive, constructive, consistent, and intentional guidance. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2b](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2c](#), and [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2d](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Ensure the program’s policies make it clear that all children and families are welcome.
- How do adults support the inclusion and participation of all children? For example:
 - Assisting children, if necessary, in using and playing with materials.
 - Encouraging families to discuss their expectations and goals for their children.
 - Supporting each child in meeting the learning expectations for that child.
- How do adults help children understand the expectations in the learning environment?
- How do adults ensure that all children are welcomed and included in the social aspects of the learning environment? For example:
 - Adults reflect on their own words and behaviors to ensure they are not accidentally implying that a child is separate from the group.
 - Intentionally address situations where children are being left out of social relationships and interactions.
- How does the program promote an environment that supports and respects all children and families? For example, allowing children to respectfully discuss and ask questions about the differences and similarities between themselves and other children, including those with special needs.
- How does the program support staff in learning and implementing constructive classroom management skills and strategies? For example:
 - Modeling and encouraging expected behavior.
 - Redirecting children to more acceptable activities.
 - Intentionally teaching conflict resolution skills.
 - Ensuring the physical environment supports children’s positive interactions.
 - Ensuring that daily routines align with children’s developmental abilities and minimize factors that can lead to frustration and conflicts.
 - Respecting children’s individual temperaments, strengths, and needs when responding to their behaviors.
 - Providing opportunities for children to be successful and build a healthy sense of self-esteem.
 - Supporting children’s developing abilities to communicate, especially those who are multilingual.
- Invite families to discuss and answer questions about their children’s differences and similarities.

Goal 2 Space and Materials: The program's physical environment is designed to promote high-quality, inclusive learning and interactions in all domains throughout the day. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.C; 2.A; 3.A; 9.A; 9.B)

Indicator 2a. The indoor space is safe, welcoming, and aesthetically pleasing to children.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Ensure that displays in the learning environment are:
 - Carefully selected to limit visual stimulation,
 - Posted at children's eye-level,
 - Relevant to children's interests, and
 - Essential to the implementation of daily activities, such as the visual daily schedule.
- How is recent children's work prominently displayed in the learning environment?
- How do displays reflect every child's family, local community, abilities, home language, and cultural identity (e.g., recent family pictures or images of community landmarks, businesses, and buildings, etc.)?
- A family communication display is in a highly visible area, with current schedules and daily routines posted in families' home languages.
- The environment is well-lit (ideally with natural light), well-organized, and free of clutter.
- How does the decor include home-like touches and a variety of textures? The dominant color scheme of the environment is neutral or muted colors.

Indicator 2b. The indoor space is accessible and organized to promote individual, peer, and adult-child interactions. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1c](#), and [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1d](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the arrangement of the space consider how children travel through the environment from area to area, within areas, to the bathroom, to cubbies, etc., with planned traffic patterns?
- Ensure that those with limited mobility or mobility devices are able to easily navigate the indoor space.
- Ensure the space that is used for infants' tummy time and other floor activities is set away from traffic patterns and mobile play.
- How is the space arranged to maximize children's use and minimize "adult only" areas? Is the space free of clutter?
- The space is arranged with:
 - a large group area,
 - smaller, defined interest areas that invite exploration, and
 - space for children to choose to be away from the group.
- How does the organization of the environment take into account the placement of active and quiet areas (e.g., blocks and library areas, or), as well as areas that may need access to a sink (e.g., art and sensory table)?
- How is the environment organized with space planned for children sleeping (cribs and cot placement, as well as storage of cots as needed) and eating (high-chairs or other infant feeding chairs, if needed)?
- Child-sized tables (used for small groups and meals) are arranged within the defined interest areas.
- Ensure space is provided for storing each child's belongings.
- How are materials not currently in use organized and stored (ideally outside of the learning environment)?

Indicator 2c. Furniture, learning materials, and supplies for children's use are readily accessible, inclusive, promote independence, reflect children's identities, and support the needs, abilities, and wellbeing of the children. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1d](#), and [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- The furniture, equipment, and tools for children's use are child-sized and supportive of children's independence. How have these items been adapted for individual children's needs?
- How do learning materials, pictures, displays, and decor reflect every child's family, local community, abilities, home language, and cultural identity? For example:
 - Family pictures.
 - Images of community landmarks.
 - Dramatic play props that are inclusive of the community and cultures of the children.
 - Materials reflective of the events and traditions of the children, families, and community.
- How do learning materials throughout the environment, including technology tools and software, reflect a variety of learning strategies and support all domains of development?
- The learning materials, including technology tools and software, are relevant to children's interests, open-ended, and challenging but not frustrating.
- The learning materials are organized, plentiful, easy for children to access, and purposefully labeled and displayed.
- How frequently do adults rotate learning materials over time to reduce clutter and support children's increased abilities and changing interests?
- How do adults ensure that rotation of materials is balanced with time for children to repeat and expand on their previous experiences?
- Are the learning materials real items (vs. plastic toys or replicas) and/or made of natural materials whenever possible?

Indicator 2d. The outdoor space is welcoming, accessible, safe, and organized to promote individual, peer, and adult-child interactions. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1c](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1d](#), and [Physical and Mental Health Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How do the materials and structures in the outdoor space encourage children to interact with each other?
- How do the materials and structures in the outdoor space promote children's independence by allowing them to explore and grow?
- Those with limited mobility or mobility devices are able to easily navigate and engage with the outdoor space.
- Balls and other portable equipment are available in the outdoor space and/or adults bring materials to the outdoor space for children to engage with.
- There are outdoor spaces, experiences, and materials specifically designed for the needs, abilities, and wellbeing of infants and toddlers.
- There are outdoor spaces, experiences, and materials specifically designed for the needs, abilities, and wellbeing of preschool children.
- How is the outdoor space designed with space for various types of play, including running, using riding toys, pretend play, large motor games, and exploring nature?
- How does the outdoor space include areas for children to be seated or engage with tabletop activities?

Goal 3 Consistent Daily Routine: The daily schedule, routines, and transitions are predictable, supportive, and responsive to the individual and developmental needs of children. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.D; 1.E; 1.F; 2.A; 2.B; 3.D)

Indicator 3a. The daily schedule incorporates a balance of active and quiet, independent and guided activities. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1d](#) and [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the daily schedule accommodate children's needs? For example:
 - Active and busy experiences to quieter, calmer experiences (facilitating children's growing ability to self-regulate).
 - Follows infants' individual schedules.
 - Limit infants' time spent in devices like swings and bouncy seats.
 - Limit time children are expected to sit and attend to adult-led activities.
 - Adults support new children and families in adapting to the schedule as needed.
 - Adults take home routines and schedules into consideration, integrating them into the daily schedule whenever possible.
- In what ways does the daily schedule ensure children can engage in adult-led, small group, and independent activities?
- Are meal and snack times unhurried with ample time for children to engage with adults and each other? Also, for infants, are meals and snacks offered on-demand?

Indicator 3b. The daily schedule ensures children have extended blocks of time to carry out their own intentions. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1c](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1d](#), and [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- In what ways is children's extended play supported in the learning environment? For example:
 - Substantial blocks of time for play are embedded in the daily schedule.
 - Children are able to choose from all interest areas during choice time.
 - Activities and materials are available for enough time that children can choose to repeat and expand on their previous experiences.
 - Infants' time spent in devices like swings and bouncy seats is limited.
 - Time children are expected to sit and attend to adult-led activities is limited.
- How do adults participate and actively scaffold learning during extended play experiences? For example:
 - Adults follow children's lead and engage naturally in children's play as an active participant.
 - Adults offer reflective "I wonder..." questions to support children in solving problems or thinking more in more detail about their play.
- How does the schedule ensure opportunities for children to plan and reflect on their play? For example:
 - Offer opportunities for children to make choices about "what to do today."
 - Invite children to tell about what they did in the block area during a lunchtime conversation.

Indicator 3c. The daily schedule ensures children have extended blocks of time to engage in structured and unstructured outdoor experiences. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1c](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1d](#), and [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2d](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How do adults incorporate outdoor experiences into their daily plans for learning and development? For example:
 - Sidewalk chalk and other cooperative art experiences.
 - Retelling stories through dramatic play.
 - Tummy time with safe materials to explore.
 - Parachute and/or bubble play.
 - Scavenger hunts and other nature investigations.
 - Red Light Green Light and other outdoor large motor games.
- In what ways do adults provide children with a variety of outdoor play opportunities individually and in groups? For example:
 - Sand and water play.
 - Riding and push-pull toys.
 - Opportunities for large motor play.
 - Infants spend limited time in strollers or other devices that restrict their movement.
 - Open-ended sensory exploration.
 - Social play and interactions.
- Balance adult-led outdoor experiences with child-led and unstructured play.

Indicator 3d. Transitions are unhurried and purposeful. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1d](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Ensure that the structure and order of the daily schedule limits the number of transitions throughout the day.
- Individualize transition times as needed, with one-to-one nurturing interactions and other supports to reduce frustration and confusion. For example:
 - Transition smaller groups or individual children to avoid overstimulation.
 - Move children's in-progress work or projects to a safe storage space.
 - Respond to infants and younger children's individual schedules.
- In what ways do adults limit the amount of wait time for children in the transition between activities? For example:
 - Stagger small groups through transitions as they are ready (*When you finish cleaning up... After you put on your coat...*).
 - Provide early transitioners an active role in the transition (pass out plates, zipper helper, etc.).
- How do adults intentionally plan and manage transitions throughout the day? For example:
 - Communicate upcoming transitions.
 - Sing songs or play games like Simon Says.
 - Set out a "wait time" activity for children to engage in while they wait for the rest of the group to finish.

Indicator 3e. The daily schedule is posted and intentionally used to guide daily routines and interactions. See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1d.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How is the schedule displayed for both children and adults/families? For example:
 - A visual schedule is posted at children's eye-level.
 - A detailed schedule is posted in the family communication space.
- How does the children's visual schedule:
 - Reflect children and their families?
 - Support children's ability to understand what's coming next?
- Use pictures, symbols, and text to present information in ways that children can understand?
- In what ways do adults use the displayed visual schedule? For example:
 - Refer to and point out upcoming events or activities on the visual schedule when talking with children.
 - Encourage children to look at the pictures on the visual schedule to identify what is happening next.
 - Review the visual schedule with children on a regular basis to help them internalize the daily routine.

Goal 4 Intentional Teaching: The process of assessment, planning, and implementation is an ongoing and intentional cycle designed to support all aspects of children’s development and learning. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.D; 1.E; 1.F; 2.A; 3.E; 3.F; 3.G; 4.D)

Indicator 4a. Observe and Assess: Use an ongoing authentic assessment system: observations of children in the learning environment, as well as information gathered from families, and collections of work samples that reflect children’s interests, growth, development, and learning. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 2c](#), [Child Assessment Indicator 3a](#), [Child Assessment Indicator 3b](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How do adults document their observations of children’s interests, growth, development, and learning? For example:
 - Anecdotal notes.
 - Time sampling.
 - Frequency tallies of behaviors.
 - Work samples.
 - Chart/matrix of learning goals and opportunities throughout the day.
- How are adults supported in examining their (potential) personal biases and beliefs that might be influencing their observations and assessments?
- Plan strategies for regularly observing children throughout all parts of the day, including:
 - Children working independently.
 - Children working with others.
 - Large group.
 - Small groups.
 - Outdoors.
 - Transitions (arrival, departure, moving between activities).
- How are children’s individual accomplishments and levels of development, interests, cultural background, temperament, home languages, and learning styles used as a basis for assessment? For example:
 - Introduce materials that support current learning goals to interest areas that children return to over and over.
 - Include materials in children’s home languages.
 - Rotate in new, challenging materials while also keeping some materials that children are familiar and confident with.
 - Take into consideration children’s current emotional state and mindset before beginning to document assessments.

Indicator 4b. Reflect and Plan: Using assessment data, prepare strategies to scaffold and support children’s learning, growth, and development across all domains. ([Child Assessment Indicator 3d.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How are early childhood professionals supported in using data to plan activities and experiences on a regular basis? For example:
 - Set aside blocks of time each week to focus on reflecting and planning.
 - Use shorter periods during nap times or the end of the day to reflect and plan for one domain at a time.
 - Ensure time for teaching teams to meet and plan together.
 - Participate in professional learning around developmental trajectories, organizational strategies, and/or using the program’s specific assessment systems.
 - Discuss observations and assessments with families to better understand their goals for their children.
- How do learning plans support:
 - Children’s interests and temperaments?
 - Children’s individual learning and development goals?
 - A balance of adult-led and child-led experiences?
 - Positive reflections of a wide range of cultures and identities?
 - Families’ goals for their children?
- Encourage brainstorming and idea sharing to support early childhood professionals in adapting activities and introducing alternate strategies, modeling, and materials to make tasks manageable for children of varying developmental needs.
- Support early childhood professionals in preparing learning plans that can be flexible based on children’s interests.
- What strategies do early childhood professionals use to make connections between children’s prior learning and new experiences?

Indicator 4c. Implement: Using prepared learning plans, scaffold and extend children's thinking and learning.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Interactions between early childhood professionals and the children in their care are a key element in supporting children's learning and development.
- How are early childhood professionals supported in intentionally adapting their interactions with children based on assessment data?
- What strategies do early childhood professionals use to scaffold and extend children's thinking and learning? For example:
 - Intentionally introducing new materials or new ways to use materials.
 - Presenting concepts in ways that connect and are relevant to the lives of children.
 - Presenting new concepts through concrete, hands-on materials and making concrete materials available as needed to reinforce concepts.
 - "Wondering" aloud and using "self-talk" by talking through their actions.
 - Involving children in planning, implementing, and evaluating some activities.
 - Revisiting previously presented concepts several times throughout the year, using various methods and materials.
 - Using purposeful questioning to encourage children to think differently or more deeply about a topic or activity.
 - Asking open-ended questions to learn more about children's plans and thinking.
 - Seeking predictions from children about what they think will happen next.
 - Prompting children to make connections to themselves and their world.
 - Providing new information and/or modeling skills and strategies.



Child Assessment

Goals in the **Child Assessment** section are designed to ensure the appropriate use of screening and assessment tools in the high-quality early childhood program. Maintaining up-to-date information about children's growth, development, and learning is a key factor in understanding children's needs and how to scaffold and support their learning and development going forward.

Developmental screening tools can be used to understand baseline information about children, as well as whether a referral for developmental assessment is needed in order for a child to receive the additional supports they may need.

In high-quality early childhood programs, assessment of learning is a key component of the lesson planning and implementation process. Only after observing children's interactions with the world around them, including adults, other children, and materials in the learning environment, as well as planned and unplanned experiences, will an early childhood professional be able to design or adapt future goals and experiences to meet the needs of the children in their care.

The goals in the Child Assessment section are:

Goal 1 Assessment and Screening Tools: The program implements policies and procedures for the appropriate use of evidence-based, culturally, and linguistically relevant, and comprehensive tools for developmental screening and assessment of learning.

Goal 2 Developmental Screening: The program uses appropriate processes to identify children who may require additional supports, specialized programs, and other interventions.

Goal 3 Assessment, Documentation, and Planning: In collaboration with families, the program uses information gained from a variety of sources to address individual needs and plan learning experiences for individual children and groups.

Goal 1 Assessment and Screening Tools: The program implements policies and procedures for the appropriate use of evidence-based, culturally, and linguistically relevant, and comprehensive tools for developmental screening and assessment of learning. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 2.A; 4.A; 4.B; 4.C)

Indicator 1a. Selects screening and assessment tools from state-approved lists.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Reach out to local, state, and national early childhood organizations, such as your local Great Start to Quality Resource Center, college Child Development program, etc., for recommendations on assessment and screening tools.
- Is the tool you are looking into evidence-based? Does it have validity and reliability?
- Research tools to learn about how they have been tested with various cultures, learning needs and languages.
- How will early childhood professionals embed assessments into their daily routine to minimize stress and intrusion into routines?
- Seek assistance from professionals knowledgeable in both assessment and child development when selecting and using screening and assessment tools.

Indicator 1b. Assures that the people conducting or interpreting the results of any screening or assessment have received appropriate professional learning specific to the tool being utilized.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How will you ensure that staff understand how to use any assessment tools and how to interpret the resulting data?
- Does the tool come with specific professional learning for staff?
- Paid tools, such as CORE and GOLD, typically include access to specific professional learning experiences with the fee. Unpaid tools may also have professional learning resources available.
- Check with your local Great Start to Quality Resource Center, MiRegistry, and other organizations for support.

Indicator 1c. Uses tools only for the purpose(s) intended –

- developmental screening (screen for potential need for supports)
- developmental assessment (diagnostic tool for specialized supports)
- assessment of learning (information for intentional planning of learning experiences for individual children and groups, as well as evaluation of program success)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Do program providers/administrators understand the difference between screening and assessment tools?
- How is this difference communicated to staff and families?
- Does the program use the results of assessments of children's learning to support the evaluation of their selected curriculum?
- Ensure the program uses the appropriate tool for the age of the child. Many publishers have multiple tools for different age groups.
- Be cautious in determining how to use screening tools—these are designed to identify any potential needs for supports, not to make decisions about placement assess progress, achievement/readiness test to exclude children from programs in which they are legally entitled to participate, or for any other high-stakes purposes.

Indicator 1d. Consistently partners with families to discuss the results from screening or assessment, and how to best meet the needs of the child. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 2b](#) and [Family Partnerships Indicator 2c](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- What methods of communication are used to share screening or assessment results with families? How often?
- Are staff equipped/trained to explain the purpose of the screening/assessment tools, how the results impact the child and how the curriculum will be individualized to meet the child's needs?
- Consider using a combination of methods to share information about children's progress and challenges with families, including work samples, photos, frequent informal conversations, and formal conferences, with translation or interpretation as needed.
- Provide families with regular opportunities to review their child's records and respond to requests/questions about children's progress in a timely manner.

Goal 2 Developmental Screening: The program uses appropriate processes to identify children who may require additional supports, specialized programs, and other interventions. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 4.A; 4.C; 4.E; 7.C; 8.A)

Indicator 2a. Uses a developmental screening tool for all children upon program entry and then, at minimum, following the requirements of the program and/or recommendations of the particular tool being used.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Develop policies around how frequently the program will use developmental screening. For example, at the beginning of the year, end of year, mid-year, upon entry to the program, or following the guidance of the tool itself.
- Determine what tool best suits the needs of the program, families, and children. For example, some families and children will be best served by a tool that has been designed to be bilingual.
- How will you train staff on the selected tool and the process for using it?

Indicator 2b. When a family and/or early childhood professional brings a concern about the development of a child, consults the family and, if approved, conducts a developmental screening, and uses the results to determine next steps. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 2c.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program engage in conversation with the concerned party (the early childhood professional or family member) to ensure all details of the concern are documented?
- How does the program provider/administrator determine next steps in conjunction with the family?
- When sharing the results of a screener with a family, focus on sensitivity to what the results might mean for the family and child. Even if the family brought the concern originally, these results may still be life changing.
- Reach out to experts when necessary to support the interpretation of screener results.
- If additional assessment and evaluation are needed, make sure to get written consent from the family before making any referrals or engaging with any specialists.

Indicator 2c. In partnership with families, refers children to specialists when concerns and/or screening results indicate the need for additional assessment and evaluation. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 2c.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Reach out to Early On (for 0-3) or Build Up Michigan (for 3-5) for referral support through their website.
- Ensure that the referral is made as soon as possible once screener results and next steps have been discussed with the family.
- After the referral is made, continue to engage with and support the family and child throughout the referral and evaluation process.

Goal 3 Assessment, Documentation, and Planning: In collaboration with families, the program uses information gained from a variety of sources to address individual needs and plan learning experiences for individual children and groups. The program: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.D; 1.E; 1.F; 2.A; 3.E; 3.F; 3.G; 4.C; 4.D; 4.E)

Indicator 3a. Uses ongoing observation of children engaging in experiences and interactions as the primary method of child assessment. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 4a.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Ensure that early childhood professionals in the program have training/professional learning around observational assessments.
- Make sure early childhood professionals observe all children, focusing on all domains.
- Support early childhood professionals with time/coverage to record their observations.

Indicator 3b. Uses a variety of evidence-based methods to document children's growth, development, and learning over time. For example:

- observation and anecdotal reports
- teacher questions
- family observations
- parent/family, provider, and child interviews
- products and samples of children's work
- teacher-constructed or standardized checklists
- children's self-appraisals

(See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 4a.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How will you organize child assessments? Will your program use a digital system to record anecdotal notes, work samples, and other documentation, or will you use paper-based portfolios?
- How will you ensure that children's portfolios (paper-based or digital) include evidence from all domains of learning?
- When not using formal, evidence-based assessments, early childhood professionals may consider gathering assessment information in other formats such as: running records, frequency counts, class list records, time samples, work samples, and anecdotal notes.

Indicator 3c. Uses observational information to make immediate accommodations to address children's needs. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 2c.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Ensure early childhood professionals address the individual needs of infants and toddlers (e.g., need for food, changing, repositioning).
- Encourage early childhood professionals to take cues from children's moods and behaviors and be flexible with planned experiences—if children seem wiggly or distracted during an extended large group gathering, switch to a movement activity; if a toddler climbs on shelves, set up an indoor climber; etc.
- Be clear about next steps for early childhood professionals when a child's immediate needs cannot be addressed in the moment. For example:
 - If a child is throwing chairs, what are the next steps to get that child the emotional support they need when the early childhood professional needs to care for the other children in the room?
 - What are the steps for an early childhood professional to address the needs of a toddler who needs a taller chair to accommodate their height?
 - When a family member mentions at drop-off that a child has not slept well, what steps might an early childhood professional take to ensure that the child's emotional and physical needs will be met?

Indicator 3d. Uses the documentation of children's growth, development and learning to plan experiences for individual children and groups. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 4b.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Ensure that early childhood professionals have time to review assessment information when planning experiences.
- Provide professional learning focused on developmental progression and learning trajectories.
- Encourage early childhood professionals to use assessment information to know when to add more or different materials to the environment.
- Support early childhood professionals in interpreting assessment information to share with families on a regular basis, and to use family feedback as an additional data point for planning experiences.



Physical and Mental Health

Children's health and wellbeing are the foundation of their learning and development. Children rely on adults to make safe and healthy choices for them while they learn to make the decisions on their own. High-quality programs provide a safe environment that promotes positive physical, nutritional, and social-emotional health for all children.

The goals in the **Physical and Mental Health** section are designed to support high-quality programs in establishing healthy practices that protect children, families, and staff. These goals supplement and do not replace Michigan's *Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers*, *Licensing Rules for Family and Group Child Care Homes*, and the federal *Americans with Disabilities Act*. These goals are:

Goal 1 Policies and Procedures: The program implements policies and procedures to meet and support children's physical, nutritional, and social-emotional health, and safety needs.

Goal 2 Professional Learning: The program supports staff in understanding their role in children's physical, nutritional, and social-emotional health, and safety.

Goal 1 Policies and Procedures: The program implements policies and procedures to meet and support children’s physical, nutritional, and social-emotional health, and safety needs. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.C; 1.D; 1.E; 1.F; 2.B; 2.C; 2.K; 5.A; 5.B; 5.C; 10.D)

Indicator 1a. Children’s health and wellbeing are addressed through the routines and practices implemented in the learning environment, including active outdoor time, culturally and linguistically responsive practices, and partnerships with families. (See also: [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1a](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 1b](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2c](#), [Environment of Care and Learning Indicator 2d](#), and [Family Partnerships Indicator 1a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- In what ways do policies and procedures around child and staff illnesses support children’s health? Are child and staff illness policies clear and consistently implemented? Are staff paid for sick time?
- Consider partnering with local health departments or other organizations to provide children with vision and hearing screenings, as well as dental health checks.
- How do the program’s policies, procedures, and practices ensure that children’s needs are met as they arise (e.g., resting when tired, being comforted when upset)?
- In what ways are materials and equipment adapted (as needed) to meet children’s needs, including those with special health, physical, or developmental needs?
- How is the daily routine balanced or adapted based on children’s needs, including those with special health, physical, or developmental needs? How does the program support children’s mental and social-emotional health in the daily routines and practices?
- How does the program address children’s allergies and implement practices and procedures that ensure their safety?
- How does the program ensure that children’s dietary needs and restrictions – including cultural considerations – are respectfully addressed and accommodated?
- How are children offered the opportunity and encouraged to taste a variety of foods? In what ways do adults model trying new foods? In what ways are children offered opportunities to learn how food grows and/or where their food comes from?
- How does the program ensure sun safety for children?
- How is oral care incorporated into the daily routine?

Indicator 1b. The program partners with families in meeting children's needs. (See also: [Family Partnerships Indicator 1a](#) and [Family Partnerships Indicator 2a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program provide families with information about:
 - Available community resources and support?
 - The program's mealtime routines?
 - The nutritional value of the program's food selections?
 - The source of the program's food selections (i.e., local growers/producers)?
 - How the program supports children's wellbeing and social-emotional health?
 - All health and safety policies and procedures that apply to the program?
- Can the program develop partnerships with community agencies, consultants, and organizations to ensure children have access to resources and services?
- How does the program provide families with information and support around child development, learning trajectories, and the social-emotional competence of children?
- What procedures does the program have in place to welcome and accommodate families who are currently breastfeeding their children?
- What procedures does the program have in place to support and accommodate families who choose to use cloth diapers?

Goal 2 Professional Learning: The program supports staff in understanding their role in children's physical, nutritional, and social-emotional health, and safety. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 1.A; 1.D; 1.E; 1.F; 2.C; 2.K)

Indicator 2a. The program ensures staff are knowledgeable about children's physical development and health. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4a](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How are staff provided with professional learning around children's need for:
 - Movement and unstructured physical activity?
 - A cycle of activity (busy to quiet)?
 - A balance of indoor and outdoor time?
- What methods are used to ensure staff understand children's nutritional needs and appropriate feeding practices?
- In what ways are staff supported in understanding and engaging in appropriate food safety practices while preparing and serving food?
- In what ways are staff supported in understanding and preventing the spread of illness/disease in the learning environment?

Indicator 2b. The program regularly provides professional learning opportunities focused on children’s mental, social, and emotional health. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4d.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- In what ways are staff supported in understanding and preventing the suspension and expulsion of children?
- How are staff provided with professional learning around:
 - Trauma-informed practice?
 - Culturally responsive teaching?
 - Emotional and behavioral challenges related to typical and atypical child development?

Indicator 2c. Staff are trained and supported in their communication and partnerships with families. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4e](#), [Family Partnerships Indicator 1d](#), and [Family Partnerships Indicator 4c](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- What strategies do staff use to ensure they are documenting objective and supportive observations of children’s behaviors, learning, and development, and communicating those observations to families with sensitivity and respect?
- In what ways are staff supported in this process? For example:
 - Clearly communicated procedures.
 - Ongoing professional learning.
 - Coaching and mentoring.
- In what ways does the program ensure staff are well-informed about how to effectively build trusting relationships with families?
- How are staff supported in communicating with families in their home languages?
- Are translators/interpreters made available for family communication, as needed?
- How frequently are staff provided with professional learning and support around inclusive practices and how to adapt their practices based on children’s and families’ culture, diversity, and disabilities?



Community Collaboration

The **Community Collaboration** goals encourage high-quality programs to foster a sense of partnership and collaboration with their community. Developing professional relationships with local agencies and other community organizations will extend the program's ability to meet the needs of children and families, as will taking an active role in the early childhood community.

Each of these aspects of **Community Collaboration** benefit the program, families, and children in a variety of ways. Connecting families with needed services or resources, accessing enrichment events and experiences, and expanding the program's professional learning opportunities are just a few of these benefits.

The goals in the **Community Collaboration** section are aligned with National Association for the Education of Young Children Accreditation Standard 8: Community Relationships and Head Start Program Performance Standard Part 1302 Subpart E: Family and Community Engagement Program Services. These goals are:

Goal 1 Partnering with and Supporting Families: The program provider/administrator actively participates in gathering information about community services families may utilize, sharing information about those services with families, and whenever possible, supporting families in gaining access to services.

Goal 2 Connecting with the Community: The program collaborates with the local community to provide access to services and opportunities that benefit families, children, and the program.

Goal 3 Participating in the Early Childhood Community: The program is an active member of the professional community of early childhood care and education.

Goal 1 Partnering with and Supporting Families: The program provider/administrator actively participates in gathering information about community services families may utilize, sharing information about those services with families, and whenever possible, supporting families in gaining access to services. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS: 8.A](#))

Indicator 1a. Shares information with families about available and relevant community resources that address their diverse needs, using their preferred languages and communication methods. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 2e](#) and [Family Partnerships Indicator 2d](#).)

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Collaborate with translation services to ensure printed information being shared with families is accessible to language diverse families.
- How does the program advocate with and provide families with the tools they need to access services?
- Empower families by connecting them with information, support systems, and resources they may need.
- Share information about community resources such as health screenings, food programs, parenting sessions, before- and after-school childcare, care for sick children, counseling, and adult learning opportunities such as GED programs.
- When sharing information about community resources, how does the program ensure families understand eligibility requirements?
- How does the program share information about culturally and linguistically diverse community programs?

Indicator 1b. Partners with families, educational institutions, and other early childhood programs to promote smooth transitions between programs. (See also: [Community Collaboration Indicator 2b.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- To support families' and children's transitions into the program or between learning environments, how do early childhood professionals reach out to families? For example, with welcoming messages, photos of their new learning environment, and/or arrange for visits and tours.
- How does the program welcome new children and families, supporting them in acclimating to the learning environment, routines, and procedures, as well as building relationships and a sense of belonging?
- Cooperate with special education personnel from school districts and other agencies to address the needs of children with disabilities through transitions between programs.
- Does the program have a policy or established procedure for obtaining family permission to share child and family information with other agencies and institutions?
- For children transitioning out of the program to attend kindergarten, early childhood professionals might create and read social stories or picture books about kindergarten, or help children create a list of questions they might have about kindergarten. Programs may consider inviting a kindergarten teacher to visit the prekindergarteners as a "guest expert" for the children.
- Consider ways to share information with families about local schools, as well as what questions families may want to ask to help them decide between different options, such as flyers, resource fairs, a list of contacts at local schools, home visits, and/or family meetings.

Goal 2 Connecting with the Community: The program collaborates with the local community to provide access to services and opportunities that benefit families, children, and the program. ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 8.B; 8.C)

Indicator 2a. Develop partnerships with community agencies, consultants, and organizations to build and maintain a comprehensive system of services for children and families. (See also: [Community Collaboration Indicator 1b.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- In what ways can the program collaborate with community agencies and organizations to make it easier for families to access resources? For example:
 - Streamlining the referral process.
 - Sharing physical space with well-baby clinics, food pantries, or clothing banks.
 - Inviting referral specialists and/or mental health counselors to be available on site, etc.
- In what ways can the program collaborate with community agencies and organizations to ensure ongoing access to the program? For example, training for staff on working with children with special needs, funding, options for transportation to and from the program, etc.
- How does the program cooperate with Early On, special education personnel, and other community service agencies so that children receive the services they need?

Indicator 2b. Build relationships with community groups, agencies, and the business community to extend and enhance the learning experience.

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- How does the program collaborate with local businesses and community groups to provide enriching experiences for the children? For example:
 - Inviting firefighters or nature groups to talk about their work.
 - Working with a local printing business to receive donations of their unusable paper roll ends.
 - Planning field trips to an orchard, the library, a train station, or a restaurant.
 - Fundraising with a local car dealership to purchase a new playscape.
- In what ways can the program collaborate with volunteers to enhance children's experiences? For example, translators and interpreters to support multilingual families, senior citizens to help in infant learning environments or volunteer as "substitute grandparents," and older children acting as reading partners.
- Does the program have the capacity to mentor students in early childhood field placement programs?
- How does the program promote and participate in community programs for children and families? For example, a program provider/administrator may volunteer to read for storytime at the library, set up an activity booth at the local children's health fair, or make a presentation for a child development class at the local community college.
- How does the program connect enrichment experiences to children's learning and development?

Goal 3 Participating in the Early Childhood Community: The program is an active member of the professional community of early childhood care and education. The program provider/administrator: ([NAEYC-ELPAS](#): 6.B; 8.C)

Indicator 3a. Acts as an advocate for early childhood care and education. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4a.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Participate in a Great Start Collaborative and/or other community early childhood support or networking groups, when available.
- Encourage families, staff, and other members of the community to become involved in early childhood-focused groups, as well.
- How do staff act as early childhood advocates, such as participating in Great Start Collaborative activities and events or other events that promote public awareness of early childhood care and education?
- In what ways does the program provider/administrator learn and stay informed about:
 - Local, state, and national early childhood efforts and policy changes
 - Current research
 - Standards and best practices
- How is that information used to:
 - Benefit the children and families in the program?
 - Promote an understanding of the importance of early childhood care and education in the community?

Indicator 3b. Creates and promotes opportunities for professional learning. (See also: [Administrative Support, Staffing, and Professional Learning Indicator 4f.](#))

Strategies and Questions to Consider:

- Organize and/or participate in joint professional learning opportunities with other early childhood programs. For example:
 - Share costs for a paid training or speaker.
 - Organize a post-conference event for staff to share knowledge and ideas with staff from other programs.
 - Plan book studies with other programs.
 - Extend Professional Learning Communities or Communities of Practice to other programs.
 - Provide opportunities for staff to communicate with those from other centers about sharing room or travel arrangements for conferences.
- In what ways does the program provide on-site or on-demand professional learning opportunities to staff? For example:
 - In-service events
 - Monthly staff meetings
 - Book/article studies
 - A resource library of current materials related to early childhood care and education
 - Coaching and mentoring
 - Professional Learning Communities or Communities of Practice organized among staff
- How are staff supported and encouraged to join and participate in early childhood professional learning opportunities and organizations? For example:
 - Provide a stipend for membership and/or registration fees.
 - Post announcements about conferences and other professional learning opportunities, as well as membership drives.
 - Release staff to attend meetings or conferences as well as to provide support for activities and events.
 - Provide paid time to participate in meetings, activities, events, or conferences.
 - Celebrate staff engagement in professional organizations and participation in learning opportunities.
 - Invite staff who have participated in professional learning opportunities to share their new knowledge with colleagues and families.



Appendices

Recommendations for Supporting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Things to think about...

1. Emphasize an asset-based view of children's differences.

Intentionally promote the dignity and value of each child, as well as their unique strengths.

2. Evaluate activities, interactions, and materials with equity in mind.

Consider how activities, interactions, and materials in the learning environment might build up *or tear down* the strengths of diverse populations in Michigan, particularly those children and families from historically marginalized and underserved communities.

Eliminate content or language that is stereotypical, demeaning, exclusionary, or judgmental.

3. Reach out, connect with, and partner with families.

Partnering with families opens a bridge of communication that will help the early childhood professionals better understand the families and their children.

Program providers/administrators should connect with families, as well, and to reach out to community groups based on the child and families' culture, language, or disability. These groups may be able to provide translation services, differentiation information, or other supports.

Early childhood professionals also need to recognize and be prepared to provide different levels or types of support depending on what each child needs. Some children may need more or different kinds of attention or support for learning particular concepts or skills.

- Differences in culture, family structure, language, racial identity, gender and gender identity, abilities and disabilities, religious beliefs, and socio-economic class *benefit and strengthen* the community by providing variety in perspectives, strengths, and learning opportunities for everyone.
- Children need to see themselves and their experiences positively reflected in the staffing, as well as the design and implementation of the curriculum, interactions, learning environment, and materials. They also need to see *others* and *their* experiences.
- What is valued – and what is *not* valued – is demonstrated by what is included in the learning environment...and what isn't included.
- Building trust helps make it possible for families to be involved and engaged in the program according to their level of comfort.
- Beyond simply tolerance of children's differences, the demonstration of empathy is a huge part of working with children from different cultures, family structures, socio-economic backgrounds, or with different racial identities, gender or gender identities, abilities and disabilities, religious beliefs, and home languages.

Examples: ACCESS, Autism Society, The Arc Michigan, Michigan Hands and Voices, Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Telamon, refugee service organizations...
- Program providers/administrators and program staff are encouraged to reflect on their practices and behaviors, recognizing that even as we strive to learn and grow, our subconscious biases and attitudes about children with disabilities, immigrants, gender identities, etc. will still come through in how they respond to the children in different situations—understanding themselves will help them check their own biases.

Recommendations for Supporting Multilingual Learners

Things to think about...

1. Name the children.

Specifically reference “multilingual learners” or “children learning more than one language at the same time” when discussing goals or supports that are meant to be inclusive of those children.

Multilingual children have distinct advantages as well -- as they get older, knowing multiple languages is seen as a benefit rather than a “deficit.” They will also benefit from the distinct brain development that occurs in multilingual learners (allowing them to learn additional languages more easily and retaining the plasticity longer than monolingual children).

2. Emphasize an asset-based view of multilingual learners.

Having many languages and cultures represented in a classroom is an asset -- a valuable resource to build all children’s understanding of the world around them.

Multilingual Learners: Children learning more than one language at the same time or learning a second language while continuing to develop their first/home language.

3. Set goals that reflect multilingual children as whole children (like any other child).

Multilingual children are learning science and social studies and math and social-emotional skills *while* they are learning language(s).

Like other children, multilingual learners...

- Learn best through active, participatory learning -- intentional, hands-on, play-based activities using open-ended, real materials throughout the day.
- Learn through their experiences in all parts of their lives.
- Approach learning in different ways, with each child bringing a unique set of attitudes, habits, and preferences.

4. Focus as much as possible teaching and assessing in ways that don’t require specific language understanding.

Strive to recognize and accept children’s language development in both English and their home language(s).

Multilingual children are learning English while also learning home language(s)—and they may name some items in English and other items in a home language. Children may also speak in multiple languages within the same sentence or conversation as they develop the understanding of which language is best understood in each setting. A child who doesn’t respond in English may still understand what’s being said.

To assess for understanding, observe children rather than asking for verbal validation so they can show what they know. Also, whenever possible, use home languages for assessment—children’s understanding may be more clearly conveyed in their home language(s).

Key Info: Multilingual children develop social language before academic language, so they may be able to “chat” with peers long before being able to answer questions about the life cycle of a frog.

5. Support multilingual children in speaking and developing both English and their home language(s).

Research shows that children benefit from continuing to learn and speak their home language even while learning English. Children and families should not be told to stop speaking their home language.

Key Info: In terms of language development, multilingual children's skills and understanding will match their exposure to English, so an older multilingual child may still be developing English language skills that their English-only peers have already mastered.

6. Specifically consider multilingual learners when observing children and setting learning goals.

The term *Multilingual Learners* refers to a large and diverse population:

- Proficient English speakers who also speak another language.
- Limited English speakers who are building English fluency.
- Native Americans who are learning their heritage languages.
- Families who have been in the US for generations but maintain their heritage language.
- Infants/toddlers who are learning both their home language and English simultaneously.
- Preschool-age children who have already developed some language skills in their home language and now need to begin to learn English.
- Recent immigrants, where the whole family is fluent in and primarily speaks another language and all are learning English.

7. Specifically consider multilingual learners when arranging the learning environment, partnering with families, and establishing processes and procedures.

Repetition and routine are very important for all children, but particularly multilingual children, acting as non-verbal cues, as well as helping them learn the language through association between what's being said and the repeated visuals or routines.

Encourage program providers/administrators to connect with families, as well, and to reach out to community groups based on the child and families' culture, language, or disability. These groups may be able to provide translation services, differentiation information, or other supports.

Other staff and families in the program may also be more fluent and willing to translate—providers/administrators need to build relationships, community mentorship. Early childhood professionals may also utilize translation technologies (with caution) where possible—particularly around environmental print.

- Programs should display classroom labels in children's' home languages as well as in English.
- Program staff need to be supportive of children's developing English skills -- as well as their use of their home language(s).
- Empathy is a huge part of working with multilingual children and families.

Examples: ACCESS, Autism Society, The Arc Michigan, Michigan Hands and Voices, Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Telamon, refugee service organizations...

- Program providers/administrators and program staff are encouraged to reflect on their practices and behaviors, recognizing that even as we strive to learn and grow, our subconscious biases and attitudes about multilingual learners, immigrants, etc. will still come through in how they respond to the children in different situations—understanding themselves will help them check their own biases.

Helpful Resources for Early Childhood Professionals

Adult-Child Relationships and Interactions

- **Key Elements of High-Quality Early Childhood Learning Environments: Preschool (Ages 3-5)** from the Michigan Department of Education: https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/gsrp/standards/Key_Elements_of_High-Quality_Early_Childhood_Learning_Environments_Preschool_Ages_3-5.pdf?rev=e2bd1168c1be47e8a650c596ed3c65cf

Careers

- **Increasing Qualifications, Centering Equity: Experiences and Advice from Early Childhood Educators of Color** from the National Association for the Education of Young Children and The Education Trust: https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/user-74/increasing_qualifications_centering_equity.pdf
- **Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MiAECY):** <https://www.miaeyc.org>
- **MiRegistry:** <https://www.miregistry.org>
- **MiRegistry: Career Pathway for Early Childhood and School Age Professionals** from the Michigan Department of Education: <https://www.miregistry.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/Career-Pathway.pdf>
- **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):** <https://www.naeyc.org>
- **Power to the Profession:** <https://powertotheprofession.org/>
- **T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Michigan Scholarship Program:** <https://www.miaeyc.org/professional-development/t-e-a-c-h-scholarships/>

Early Intervention & Special Education

- **Alt+Shift** (provides resources and professional learning, as well as a lending library, focused on assistive technology, augmentative and alternative communication, accessible materials, and math for children with disabilities) <https://www.altshift.education> and https://www.altshift.education/sites/default/files/2021-07/ProgramsBrochure_July_2021_0.pdf
- **Build Up Michigan** (early intervention support for 3- to 5-year-old children): <https://buildupmi.org>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s Developmental Milestones:** <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
- **CDC Milestone Tracker App:** <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones-app.html>
- **Early On Michigan** (early intervention support for infants and toddlers): <https://www.1800earlyon.org/>
- **Early On Michigan @ MDE:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/special-ed-05/early-on-michigan#:~:text=If%20you%20think%20your%20infant,online%20referral%20form%3A%20Referral%20Form>
- **Early On Michigan Developmental Milestones:** <https://www.1800earlyon.org/milestones.php>
- **Michigan Alliance for Families** (special education support for families): <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org>
- **Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/special-education>

- **Michigan Hearing and Vision Screening Programs:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/childrenfamilies/familyhealth/hearing-laughter-seeing-smiles->
- **Zero to Three Early Intervention:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development/early-intervention>

Early Learning & School Readiness

- **Child Care Technical Assistance Network Infant/Toddler Resource Guide:** <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/infant-toddler-resource-guide>
- **Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) from NAEYC:** <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/dap/contents>
- **Early Head Start (EHS-HB):** <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/programs/article/early-head-start-programs>
- **Family Spirit Home Visiting Program** (for indigenous families): <https://caih.jhu.edu/programs/family-spirit>
- **Getting You and Your Child Ready for Kindergarten: Transition to Kindergarten FAQ:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/parents/pre-k/transition-to-kindergarten-faq>
- **Great Start Readiness Program:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/gsrp>
- **Institute for Education Studies (IES) Early Childhood Education:** https://ies.ed.gov/topics/earlychildhood.asp?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=
- **Michigan Head Start:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/hssco>
- **MI Kids Matter** (family and caregiver support): <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter>
- **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):** <https://www.naeyc.org>
- **Play and Learning Strategies (PALS):** <https://playandlearning.org>
- **Program for Infant and Toddler Care (PITC):** <https://www.pitc.org>
- **Steps Initiative** (early learning support for families): <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/community/steps>
- **Talking is Teaching:** <https://talkingisteaching.org>
- **What Works Clearinghouse™ Resources for Educators:** <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Resources/ResourcesForEducators>
- **Zero to Three Early Development & Well-Being:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development>
- **Zero to Three Early Learning:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-learning>

Early Literacy

- **The Connection: Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten and the WIDA Early English Language Development Standards** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/connection-michigan.pdf>
- **Early Literacy Professional Learning:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/academic-standards/literacy/early-literacy-professional-learning>
- **Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy: Prekindergarten** from the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) General Education Leadership Network (GELN) Early Literacy Task Force: https://www.gomaisa.org/downloads/gelndocs/pre-k_literacy_essentials.pdf

- **Essential Instructional Practices in Language and Emergent Literacy: Birth to Age 3** from the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) General Education Leadership Network (GELN) Early Literacy Task Force: https://www.gomaisa.org/downloads/literacy_essentials/emergentliteracy_b-3_061919.pdf
- **Family Engagement to Support Early Literacy**: https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Literacy/Family-Engagement-for-Literacy/Family_Engagement_to_Support_Early_Lit.pdf?rev=75758bddd115446483f7f90831c1453f&hash=559B7F090313DB2C0E02CFC72B5D902E
- **Literacy Essentials**: <https://literacyessentials.org>
- **Talking is Teaching**: <https://talkingisteaching.org>
- **WIDA Early Years Can Do Descriptors** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/CanDo-Descriptors-Early-Years.pdf>
- **WIDA Early Years Guiding Principles of Language Development** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/Guiding-Principles-of-Early-ELD.pdf>

Equity

- **Focus Bulletin: Promoting Equity for Young Multilingual Children and Their Families** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/FocusBulletin-Promoting-Equity-Young-Multilingual-Children-Their-Families.pdf>
- **Increasing Qualifications, Centering Equity: Experiences and Advice from Early Childhood Educators of Color** from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and The Education Trust: https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/user-74/increasing_qualifications_centering_equity.pdf

Family Engagement and Partnerships

- **Family Engagement to Support Early Literacy**: https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Literacy/Family-Engagement-for-Literacy/Family_Engagement_to_Support_Early_Lit.pdf?rev=75758bddd115446483f7f90831c1453f&hash=559B7F090313DB2C0E02CFC72B5D902E
- **Focus Bulletin: Promoting Equity for Young Multilingual Children and Their Families** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/FocusBulletin-Promoting-Equity-Young-Multilingual-Children-Their-Families.pdf>
- **Great Start Collaboratives and Parent Coalitions**: <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/community/gspc> and <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/community/gspc/great-start-collaboratives-and-parent-coalitions-search-page>
- **MiFamily: Michigan's Family Engagement Framework** from the Michigan Department of Education: https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/family_engagement/mifamily_family_engagement_framework.pdf?rev=2f578d2828974a4da0c8863ab176916d
- **MI Kids Matter** (family and caregiver support): <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter>
- **Steps Initiative** (early learning support for families): <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/community/steps>
- **WIDA ABCs of Family Engagement: Key Considerations for Building Relationships with Families and Strengthening Family Engagement Practices** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/ABCs-Family-Engagement.pdf>
- **Zero to Three Family Support**: <https://www.zerotothree.org/policy-and-advocacy/family-support>

Home Visiting

- **Center for Quality Family Support** (Michigan's state office for the Parents as Teachers and Healthy Families America programs): <https://micqfs.org>
- **Early Head Start (EHS-HB)**: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/programs/article/early-head-start-programs>
- **Family Spirit Home Visiting Program** (for indigenous families): <https://caih.jhu.edu/programs/family-spirit>
- **Healthy Families America (HFA)**: <https://www.healthyfamiliesamerica.org>
- **Home Visiting Evidence of Effectiveness (HOMVEE)**: <https://homvee.acf.hhs.gov>
- **Michigan Home Visiting Initiative**: <https://www.michigan.gov/homevisiting/>
- **Nurse Family Partnership (NFP)**: <https://www.nursefamilypartnership.org>
- **Parents as Teachers** (home visiting program): <https://parentsasteachers.org>
- **Play and Learning Strategies (PALS)**: <https://playandlearning.org>
- **Zero to Three Home Visiting**: <https://www.zerotothree.org/policy-and-advocacy/home-visiting>

Learning Environments

- **Key Elements of High-Quality Early Childhood Learning Environments: Preschool (Ages 3-5)** from the Michigan Department of Education: https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/gsrp/standards/Key_Elements_of_High-Quality_Early_Childhood_Learning_Environments_Preschool_Ages_3-5.pdf?rev=e2bd1168c1be47e8a650c596ed3c65cf
- **Licensing Rules for Family and Group Child Care Homes** from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs: https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/lara/CCLB/lara_BCAL_PUB-724_0715.pdf?rev=90da4cbf478c4f0ebaa3416cb7453b14
- **Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers** from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs: https://www.michigan.gov/lara/-/media/Project/Websites/lara/CCLB/BCAL_PUB_8_3_16.pdf?rev=9f82338ff1b44a468112dc40b80b4627&hash=9DDBA3A87142DB06DD052E0B61A50AEF
- **Responsive Teaching and Learning Environments for Dual Language Learners** from the Office of Head Start: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/responsive-teaching-learning-environments-dual-language-learners>

Math

- **Development and Research in Early Math Education (DREME)**: <https://dreme.stanford.edu>
- **Essential Instructional Practices in Early Mathematics: Prekindergarten to Grade 3** from the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) General Education Leadership Network (GELN) Early Mathematics Task Force: <https://www.gomaisa.org/organizations/general-education-leadership-network-geln/math-task-force/>
- **5 Evidence-Based Recommendations for Teaching Math to Young Children** from What Works Clearinghouse™: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/practiceguide/wwc_empg_numbers_020714.pdf
- **Help Children Learn to View and Describe Their World Mathematically** from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Regional Educational Laboratory Program (REL): <https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/2021/02/12/REL-MDE-Math-Math-World.pdf?rev=92090ffd3cbc47a994e39a6c03d5389c>
- **Learning Trajectories [LT]²** by Doug Clements and Julie Sarama: <https://www.learningtrajectories.org/early-math/birth-to-grade-3>

- **Math Essentials:** <https://mathessentials.org>
- **Reinforce Math Concepts by Integrating Math Throughout the Day** from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Regional Educational Laboratory Program (REL): <https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Year/2021/02/12/REL-MDE-Math-Int-Math.pdf?rev=2c28f4d537054fb2bd442e686a83a4df>
- **Support Geometry, Patterns, Measurement, and Data Analysis Using a Developmental Progression** from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Regional Educational Laboratory Program (REL): <https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Year/2021/02/12/REL-MDE-Math-GPM-DA.pdf?rev=2de5eac64c81499aa5b3a03986d3fe63>
- **Support Number and Operations Using a Developmental Progression** from the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Regional Educational Laboratory Program (REL): <https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Year/2021/02/12/REL-MDE-Math-Number-Operations.pdf?rev=c025743bc6e2460fae8b84362076d8fd>
- **Teaching Math to Young Children Practice Guide Summary** from What Works Clearinghouse™: https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Docs/practiceguide/wwc_empg_summary_020714.pdf

Milestones

- **Build Up Michigan** (for 3- to 5-year-old children): <https://buildupmi.org>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Developmental Milestones:** <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
- **CDC Milestone Tracker App:** <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones-app.html>
- **Early On Michigan** (for infants and toddlers): <https://www.1800earlyon.org>
- **Early On Michigan Developmental Milestones:** <https://www.1800earlyon.org/milestones.php>

Multilingual & Dual Language Learners

- **The Connection: Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten and the WIDA Early English Language Development Standards** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/connection-michigan.pdf>
- **Dual Language Learners Toolkit** from the Office of Head Start: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/dual-language-learners-toolkit>
- **Focus Bulletin: Promoting Equity for Young Multilingual Children and Their Families** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/FocusBulletin-Promoting-Equity-Young-Multilingual-Children-Their-Families.pdf>
- **Michigan Support for Multilingual Learners:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/pdgb5/multilingual-learners>
- **Responsive Teaching and Learning Environments for Dual Language Learners** from the Office of Head Start: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/responsive-teaching-learning-environments-dual-language-learners>
- **WIDA Early Years Can Do Descriptors** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/CanDo-Descriptors-Early-Years.pdf>
- **WIDA ABCs of Family Engagement: Key Considerations for Building Relationships with Families and Strengthening Family Engagement Practices** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/ABCs-Family-Engagement.pdf>
- **WIDA Early Years Guiding Principles of Language Development** from WIDA: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/Guiding-Principles-of-Early-ELD.pdf>

Physical and Mental Health

- **Infant Dental Care:** https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Folder3/Folder33/Folder2/Folder133/Folder1/Folder233/Infant_Oral_Health.pdf?rev=2153b5d58f1442f093f7006b3f48f9f7
- **Maternal Infant Health Program (MIHP):** <https://www.michigan.gov/mihp>
- **Michigan Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Program:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/childrenfamilies/ehdi>
- **Michigan Free Health Check-ups:** <https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/mdhhs/Adult-and-Childrens-Services/Children-and-Families/Healthy-Children-and-Healthy-Families/mdch-healthcheck-JUN28.pdf?rev=08a94cb8cba04edc9fd41a2d4e5524d1>
- **Michigan Hearing and Vision Screening Programs:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/childrenfamilies/familyhealth/hearing-laughter-seeing-smiles->
- **Michigan Model for Health Early Childhood (Pre-K):** <https://www.michiganmodelforhealth.org/curriculum/early-childhood-pre-k>
- **Safe Sleep:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/safety-injury-prev/safe-sleep2>
- **Trauma and Toxic Stress Resources:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/childrenfamilies/tts>
- **Zero to Three Early Development & Well-Being:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development>
- **Zero to Three Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development/infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health>

Policy and Regulations

- **Child Care Licensing Information:** <https://www.michigan.gov/lara/bureau-list/cclb>
- **Licensing Rules for Family and Group Child Care Homes** from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs: https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/lara/CCLB/lara_BCAL_PUB-724_0715.pdf?rev=90da4cbf478c4f0ebaa3416cb7453b14
- **Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers** from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs: https://www.michigan.gov/lara/-/media/Project/Websites/lara/CCLB/BCAL_PUB_8_3_16.pdf?rev=9f82338ff1b44a468112dc40b80b4627&hash=9DDBA3A87142DB06DD052E0B61A50AEF
- **MiRegistry:** <https://www.miregistry.org>
- **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):** <https://www.naeyc.org/>
- **U.S. Department of Education Early Learning:** <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/earlylearning/index.html>
- **Zero to Three:** <https://www.zerotothree.org>

Professional Learning

- **Development and Research in Early Math Education (DREME):** <https://dreme.stanford.edu>
- **Early Literacy Professional Learning:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/academic-standards/literacy/early-literacy-professional-learning>
- **Great Start to Quality Resource Centers:** <https://greatstarttoquality.org/resource-centers/>
- **Learning Trajectories [LT]²** by Doug Clements and Julie Sarama: <https://www.learningtrajectories.org/early-math/birth-to-grade-3>
- **Literacy Essentials:** <https://literacyessentials.org>

- Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children (MiAEOYC): <https://www.miaeyc.org>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): <https://www.naeyc.org/>
- WIDA Early Years: <https://wida.wisc.edu/memberships/early-years>
- Zero to Three: <https://www.zerotothree.org>

Program Administration

- Child Care Licensing Information: <https://www.michigan.gov/lara/bureau-list/cclb>
- Concerns in Child Care: <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/programs/concerns-in-child-care>
- Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) (National TA Center) Tools on Preschool Inclusion: <https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/tools.asp>
- Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) Indicators of High-Quality Inclusion: <https://ectacenter.org/topics/inclusion/indicators.asp>
- Early Head Start (EHS-HB): <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/programs/article/early-head-start-programs>
- Great Start Readiness Program: <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/grsp>
- Great Start to Quality (professional development, quality ratings, and support for families seeking childcare): <https://greatstarttoquality.org>
- Great Start to Quality Resource Centers: <https://greatstarttoquality.org/resource-centers/>
- *Licensing Rules for Family and Group Child Care Homes* from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs: https://www.michigan.gov/-/media/Project/Websites/lara/CCLB/lara_BCAL_PUB-724_0715.pdf?rev=90da4cbf478c4f0ebaa3416cb7453b14
- *Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers* from the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs: https://www.michigan.gov/lara/-/media/Project/Websites/lara/CCLB/BCAL_PUB_8_3_16.pdf?rev=9f82338ff1b44a468112dc40b80b4627&hash=9DDBA3A87142DB06DD052E0B61A50AEF
- Licensing Rules Technical Assistance: <https://www.michigan.gov/lara/bureau-list/cclb/providers/tech-cons>
- Michigan Head Start: <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/hssco>
- MiRegistry: <https://www.miregistry.org>
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC): <https://www.naeyc.org>
- *Program Philosophy Statement* from the New York Early Childhood Professional Development Institute: <https://www.earlychildhoodnyc.org/resourceguide/resources/Program%20Philosophy%20Statement.pdf>
- *Sample Program Philosophy Statements for Preschools* from the Santa Clara County Office of Education Inclusion Collaborative: <https://ccids.umaine.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/26/2015/01/Sample-Program-Philosophy-Statements.pdf>
- *School Readiness: Community Partnerships* from the Office of Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC): <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/article/community-partnerships>
- *State of Michigan Child Development and Care Program (CDC) Handbook*: https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/ogs/cdc-2/provider_docs/cdc_handbook.pdf?rev=3a046b232602404099b0a30cc4430f26&hash=60FB641EF1D3EEF92D7646C0595AAB9F

School Readiness & Early Learning

- **Child Care Technical Assistance Network Infant/Toddler Resource Guide:** <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/infant-toddler-resource-guide>
- **Early Head Start (EHS-HB):** <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/programs/article/early-head-start-programs>
- **Family Spirit Home Visiting Program** (for indigenous families): <https://caih.jhu.edu/programs/family-spirit>
- **Getting You and Your Child Ready for Kindergarten: Transition to Kindergarten FAQ:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/parents/pre-k/transition-to-kindergarten-faq>
- **Great Start Readiness Program:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/gsrp>
- **Michigan Head Start:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/hssco>
- **MI Kids Matter** (family and caregiver support): <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter>
- **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC):** <https://www.naeyc.org>
- **Play and Learning Strategies (PALS):** <https://playandlearning.org>
- **Program for Infant and Toddler Care (PITC):** <https://www.pitc.org>
- **Steps Initiative** (early learning support for families): <https://www.michigan.gov/mikidsmatter/community/steps>
- **Talking is Teaching:** <https://talkingisteaching.org>
- **What Works Clearinghouse™ Resources for Educators:** <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/Resources/ResourcesForEducators>
- **Zero to Three Early Development & Well-Being:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development>
- **Zero to Three Early Learning:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-learning>

Social and Emotional Development

- **Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL):** <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu>
- **Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood to Grade 12 Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Competencies and Indicators** from the Michigan Department of Education: https://www.michigan.gov/mde/-/media/Project/Websites/mde/Year/2018/04/12/SEL_Competencies-ADA_Compliant_FINAL.pdf?rev=4dce065b45434ea1a37896006aa1a2b2&hash=1096B4E76E36FE603548D61047F35CD8

Special Education & Early Intervention

- **Alt+Shift** (provides resources and professional learning, as well as a lending library, focused on assistive technology, augmentative and alternative communication, accessible materials, and math for children with disabilities) <https://www.altshift.education> and https://www.altshift.education/sites/default/files/2021-07/ProgramsBrochure_July_2021_0.pdf
- **Build Up Michigan** (early intervention support for 3- to 5-year-old children): <https://buildupmi.org>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Developmental Milestones:** <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>
- **CDC Milestone Tracker App:** <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones-app.html>
- **Early On Michigan** (early intervention support for infants and toddlers): <https://www.1800earlyon.org/>

- **Early On Michigan @ MDE:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/early-learners-and-care/special-ed-05/early-on-michigan#:~:text=If%20you%20think%20your%20infant,online%20referral%20form%3A%20Referral%20Form>
- **Early On Michigan Developmental Milestones:** <https://www.1800earlyon.org/milestones.php>
- **Michigan Alliance for Families** (special education support for families): <https://www.michiganallianceforfamilies.org>
- **Michigan Department of Education Office of Special Education:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/services/special-education>
- **Michigan Hearing and Vision Screening Programs:** <https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/adult-child-serv/childrenfamilies/familyhealth/hearing-laughter-seeing-smiles->
- **Zero to Three Early Intervention:** <https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development/early-intervention>

Technology

- **Michigan Integrated Technology Competencies for Students: Age Band Articulation** from the Michigan Department of Education: <https://www.techplan.org/edtech-initiatives/mites/>
- **Media Literacy in Early Childhood Report: Framework, Child Development Guidelines, and Tips for Implementation** from the Erikson Institute: <https://www.erikson.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/TEC-MediaLiteracy-Report.pdf>
- **Selected Examples of Effective Classroom Practice Involving Technology Tools and Interactive Media** from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media: https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/topics/PS_technology_Examples.pdf

Glossary of Terms

Accessible/Accessibility: Attention to the materials and adaptations in the physical environment, so children with special needs have equitable opportunities to learn, including adaptations that are required in order to be in compliance with federal and state laws regarding accessibility.

Accommodation or Adaptation: Changes to the physical environment or alterations to materials made so a child with a disability, or any child, has an equitable opportunity to learn, including those changes required in order to be in compliance with state and federal laws regarding accessibility.

Advisory Council: A group convened to advise program leaders regarding planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of the program. The advisory council is typically comprised of adult family members and interested community members.

Program Provider/Administrator: Program leaders who are responsible for administering, supervising, and leading program services, activities, and instructional and caregiving staff.

American Sign Language (ASL): A language of signs, gestures, and expressions, with its own grammatical structure, that is used by many in the deaf community; it is typically the deaf person's primary language while written English is routinely the secondary language (making ASL users bilingual).

Anti-bias curriculum or anti-bias education: An approach to education that explicitly works to raise awareness of, challenge, and eventually end bias and its impacts on children.

Anti-racism: An approach that entails actively identifying and opposing racial discrimination.

Assessment/Assessment of Learning: A process for collecting information from observations, interviews, portfolios, projects, and other sources that is used for the intentional planning of learning experiences for individual children and groups, as well as the evaluation of program success.

Assessment Tools, Measures, or Methods: specific processes and resources for collecting data about children's learning.

Assistant/Associate Teacher: A person who works under the supervision of a teacher, lead teacher, or other early childhood professional.

Assistive Technology: Any item, piece of equipment, product, or system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities and promote participation and learning of anyone with disabilities.

Attribute (Mathematics): A characteristic or feature of objects that allows for sequencing or classifying, such as length, shape, or color.

Bias: An attitude, prejudice, or stereotype that favors one group over another (NAEYC 2022).

Child-Initiated: Experiences chosen and directed by children including engaging in play or learning with peers and/or responsive adults.

Concepts of Print (Communication, Language, and Early Literacy): Print concepts, or concepts of print, are foundational knowledge about how print, in general, and books, in particular, "work", such as understanding that print carries meaning and that print is authored; that graphics and print relate; that print is made up of letters which are associated with sounds; and includes, but is not limited to, knowledge and parts of text (e.g., front cover, table of contents, diagrams), where to start reading within a text, directionality, orientation of letters, concept of word, capitalization, and ending punctuation.

Counting (Mathematics): The action of finding the number of elements of a finite set of objects.

Critical Thinking: The mental process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information to reach an answer or draw a conclusion.

Culturally Responsive Teaching: Demonstrating an awareness and respect for the customs, heritage and values of families and children; demonstrating and responding with a positive attitude for learning about various cultures and languages.

Curriculum: The overall design of instruction or opportunities provided for learning. A curriculum may include materials and textbooks, planned activities, lesson plans, lessons, and the total program of formal studies or educational experiences provided by a teacher or school.

Developmentally Appropriate: Practices and materials that align with a child's level of development.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice: All aspects of the program that address children's development and learning based on three important kinds of information:

- Knowledge about age-related human characteristics that permits general predictions within an age range about what activities, materials, interactions, or experiences will be safe, healthy, interesting, achievable, and also challenging to children;
- What is known about the strengths, interests and needs of each individual child so the adults can adapt for and be responsive to inevitable child variation; and
- Knowledge of the social, cultural and language contexts in which children live to ensure that learning experiences are meaningful, relevant, and respectful for the participating children and families.

Developmental Assessment: A diagnostic tool used to determine the need for specialized supports.

Developmental Screening: A brief, relatively inexpensive, standardized assessment tool or procedure designed to quickly determine whether a child should be referred for further assessment, for the potential need for additional supports.

Directionality (Communication, Language, and Early Literacy): The sequence in which written language is intended to be read or written, which may vary according to language. For example, in English, print's directionality flows from left to right and top to bottom, and in Arabic, print's directionality flows from right to left and top to bottom.

Disability: A condition that makes it more difficult or limits a person's ability to do certain activities or participate in the world around them in certain ways.

Diversity: Within the field of education, diversity refers to differences that make a person unique, which may include interests, attitudes, attributes, culture, experience, socioeconomic status, family composition, racial identity, region, and others, bearing in mind that among those who share a certain characteristic (e.g., culture) there will also be diversity (e.g., Everyone from the same region is not the same, though there may be some commonalities among those who live in the same general area).

Domains: The various aspects of children's learning and/or development. Individual domains are closely interrelated and development in one domain influences and is influenced by development in other domains and terms used to describe them may vary.

Early Childhood Professionals: Individuals who provide care and education for children from birth to age five.

Early Literacy: Young children's development of concepts related to phonological and print awareness. These skills and early behaviors precede the development of reading and conventional writing.

Early On®: Michigan’s comprehensive statewide program of early intervention services for infants and toddlers with special needs, from birth through age two, and their families (Part C of IDEA).

Evidence-Based Practice: Designing program practices based on the findings of current best evidence from well-designed and respected research and evaluation, such as making decisions about curriculum and adult-child interactions for infant groups based on recent brain development research.

Executive Functioning Skills: The conscious control of thought and action.

Expressive Language: The ability to put thoughts, feelings, and actions into words to express oneself through spoken or sign language.

Family/Family Members: Family members include biological parents (custodial and non-custodial), adoptive parents, foster parents, step-parents, grandparents and other relatives of significance to the child, and all siblings (half, step, full). In addition, any individual that the family defines as a part of their family, who has extensive contact with the child, and/or is a significant person in the child’s life, could be included.

Family Partnership: Refers to respecting family members as equal partners in all phases of the child’s experiences in the program. Families are integrated into the program through opportunities to plan and participate in all stages of their child’s learning, development, and program implementation. Supportive opportunities encourage family members to expand their knowledge of child development, increase parenting skills, family literacy, extend children’s learning at home, and utilize community resources.

Goal: In this context, a subgroup of the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality* which designate a smaller thread within a Domain or Section.

Home Language: The language that is primarily spoken in the child’s home; may also be referred to as the first language or native language of the child.

Inclusion: The principle of enabling all children, regardless of their diverse abilities, to grow and learn through active participation in natural settings within their communities. Natural settings include the home and local early childhood programs.

Indicator: In this context, an individual aspect of a particular *Early Childhood Standards of Quality* Goal, typically developing at a unique pace in comparison to other Indicators within the Goal.

Individualized Education Program (IEP): Each public school child identified with a disability who receives special education and related services must have an Individualized Education Program, a legal document ensuring access to the general education curriculum and providing a planned program of intervention goals and supports to address the needs of the child. The IEP provides opportunities for teachers, parents, school administrators, related services personnel, and the individual student (when appropriate) to work together to ensure success and improve educational results for the child with disabilities.

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP): Refers both to a process and a written document required to plan appropriate activities and interventions that will help a child with special needs (birth through age two) and his or her family progress toward desired outcomes. It is reviewed and updated yearly and describes how the child is presently doing, what the child’s learning needs are, and what services the child will need.

Intervention/Early Intervention: A system of coordinated services for children with disabilities and/or at-risk for developmental delays which promotes and enhances growth and development and supports families during the critical early years, birth to age 3.

Invented Spelling (Communication, Language, and Early Literacy): A writer’s approximation of a word’s spelling, relying exclusively or primarily on the writer’s knowledge of sound-letter relationships.

Learning Environment: The physical, social, and emotional environment in which care and learning take place. This includes relationships and interactions between adults and children as well as between children and their peers, the indoor and outdoor physical spaces, the arrangement of those spaces, the materials within those spaces, the daily routine and program structure, and the assessment, planning, and teaching practices of the program.

Manipulatives: Objects designed so children can perceive some concept by manipulating them.

Mental Health: The developing capacities of young children to experience, regulate, and express emotions; to form close and secure interpersonal relationships; and to explore the environment and learn. These capacities are considered alongside and within the context of family, learning and care environments, community, and cultural expectations. Child mental health is synonymous with healthy social, emotional development, behavioral and social dispositions of child well-being.

Mentorship: A relationship-based system between colleagues in similar professional roles, with a more experienced individual (the mentor) serving as an example and sometimes providing guidance for the less experienced individual (the mentee) in order to build the skillset, capacity, and/or effectiveness of the mentee.

Multilingual Learners: Children learning more than one language at the same time or learning a second language while continuing to develop their first/home language.

Operation (Mathematics): In this context, a calculation that combines two numbers to produce another number, in particular the four operations addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, together with basic associative, commutative, and distributive properties.

Oral Language (Communication, Language, and Early Literacy): System through which we use spoken words to express knowledge, ideas, and feelings. Language is influenced by culture and context, and includes the components of form, content, and use.

Personal Cultural Context: the combination of a person's specific economic class, gender identity, ethnicity, abilities and disabilities, racial and cultural identity, and religion, which affect the way they see and experience the world around them.

Phonological Awareness (Communication, Language, and Early Literacy): Conscious attention to the sounds in spoken language, typically understood to include a broad range of skills that involve distinguishing, identifying, and manipulating units of oral language (words, syllables, onsets and rimes, and phonemes).

Primary Care Group: A group of children under the care of a single primary caregiver or early childhood professional. To the maximum extent possible, the child's primary care group is made up of the same children over an extended period of time to enhance stable relationships, promote pro-social behavior, and enable positive interactions and early friendships.

Professional Learning: Refers to opportunities for program staff to receive ongoing training and education to increase their preparation and skills to educate and care for children. These include in-service training, workshops, college courses and degree programs, teacher exchanges, observations, coaching, seminars, mentoring, and credentialing programs.

Program Staff: Any person who has a role in the operation of the program.

Receptive Language: The process of taking in language through the sense of hearing or sign and making meaning from what is communicated.

Reflective Supervision: A set of supervisory practices characterized by active listening and thoughtful questioning by both staff and supervisors with the goal of assuring that staff's work is of the highest possible quality, and that program outcomes are met. These goals are reached through the development of a supervisory relationship that is supportive and collaborative, and one that allows everyone in the program the opportunity to learn from their work with families and with one another. Reflective supervision can take various forms including individual, group or peer supervision.

Responsive Care and Teaching: Being 'responsive' includes knowing each child, responding to cues from the child, knowing when to expand on the child's initiative, when to guide, when to teach and when to intervene.

Self-Regulation: A set of internal skills individuals use to manage their own choices and actions rather than being publicly regulated by other people.

Support Staff: Persons, whether paid or volunteer, employed by the program in such positions as food service, clerical, custodial, and transportation.

Transition: Procedures and activities that support the family and facilitate the child's introduction to new learning environments, such as:

- From home to an early care and education setting.
 - From preschool to kindergarten.
 - From one center, program, or school to another.
 - From one grade or group to another.
 - From one city, state, or country to another.
- Within the program's daily schedule, transition also refers to the process of changing from one activity or place to another.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL): A set of principles is intended to assist educators and others to design flexible learning opportunities that provide children with multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement. Such curricula reduce barriers to learning and provide learning supports to meet the needs of all learners. Educational technologies can be valuable resources in addressing these principles. These principles are typically applied in K-12 settings, but have implications for programs serving younger children (www.cast.org).

Whole Child: A unique learner comprised of interacting dimensions, such as cognitive, physical, behavioral, social and emotional. The whole child lives within multiple and interconnected environments including home, school, and community.

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