

STANDARDS
START
AT HOME



A PARENT'S GUIDE TO EARLY LEARNING



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Acknowledgement

The Academic Development Institute expresses its appreciation to the Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc. for permission to use information found in the Parent Educator Resources and Parent Handouts from the *Born to Learn™ Curriculum, 3 Years to Kindergarten Entry* in the development of this guide.

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A whimsical, painterly illustration of a small, white house with a thick, brown thatched roof. A stone chimney on the left side of the roof has a wisp of white smoke rising from it. The house has a brown door and several windows with brown shutters. A stone path leads to the front door. The house is situated on a green hillside. In the foreground, a low stone wall with a wooden gate runs across the scene. The background features rolling green hills under a blue sky with soft, white clouds. The overall style is soft and artistic, with a focus on natural elements and a peaceful atmosphere.

Introduction: Early Learning Standards

Introduction: Early Learning Standards



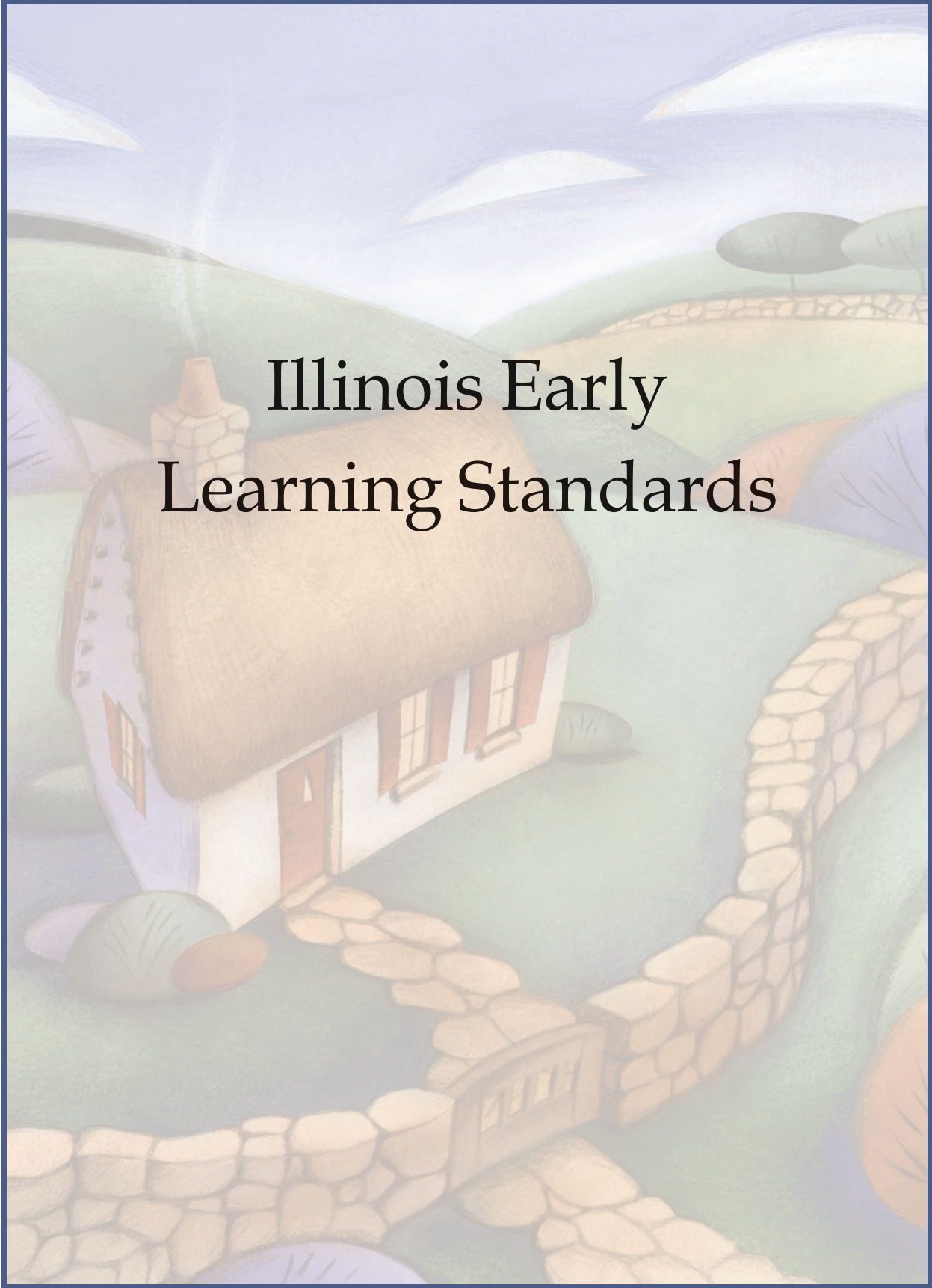
Many parents wonder what they can do to ensure that their preschooler will be successful when he or she enters school, especially now with so much emphasis on state testing and learning standards. Through play and everyday activities like cooking, cleaning, and grocery shopping, your young child is acquiring the information and skills needed to learn more difficult skills, including how to read, write, and solve problems. This guide is meant to help you understand that the lessons necessary to meet state learning standards begin in the home with your child's first and most influential teacher – **YOU!**

What does it mean to be ready for school? In response to this question, the Illinois State Board of Education and a group of teachers and parents developed the Illinois Early Learning Standards. These standards are for children 3 years old to kindergarten entry. Preschool teachers use these standards to plan lessons, to check children's progress, and to share progress with parents. The Early Learning Standards are based on the same learning goals and designed in the same format as the Illinois Learning Standards for kindergarten to grade 12. Because the Early Learning Standards parallel the K-12 standards there will be consistency for children as they move from preschool to elementary school. The Early Learning Standards cover 8 content areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Physical Development and Health, Fine Arts, Foreign Language, and Social/Emotional Development.

These standards are not necessarily to be used to determine if a child is "ready" to enter kindergarten, but they serve as goals for adults to use in supporting the development of preschool children. This guide will provide information, tips, and activities for each of the learning areas. All the activities are things you can do easily, and are fun and low-cost. As you do these activities with your child, please remember:

- Children learn best through play and hands-on experiences.
- Children are individuals and develop at different rates.
- Children have strengths in certain areas.
- Development in one area influences development in other areas.
- The child's interests drive learning.
- Learning takes place in the context of the child's perspective.
- Learning takes place in the context of relationships.

For more information on child development, early learning standards, and more resources for parent-child activities, please see the web resource list at the end of this guide.



Illinois Early Learning Standards



Illinois Early Learning Standards

Language Arts

Apply word analysis and vocabulary skills to comprehend selections.

- Understand that pictures and symbols have meaning and that print carries a message.
- Understand that reading progresses from left to right and top to bottom.
- Identify labels and signs in the environment.
- Identify some letters, including those in own name.
- Make some letter-sound matches.

Apply reading strategies to improve understanding and fluency.

- Predict what will happen next using pictures and content for guides.
- Begin to develop phonological awareness by participating in rhyming activities.
- Recognize separable and repeating sounds in spoken language.

Comprehend a broad range of reading materials.

- Retell information from a story.
- Respond to simple questions about reading material.
- Demonstrate understanding of literal meaning of stories by making comments.

Understand how literary elements and techniques are used to convey meaning.

- Understand that different text forms, such as magazines, notes, lists, letters, and story books, are used for different purposes.

Read and interpret a variety of literary works.

- Show independent interest in reading-related activities.

Use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization and structure.

- Use scribbles, approximations of letters, or known letters to represent written language.

Compose well-organized and coherent writing for specific purposes and audiences.

- Dictate stories and experiences.

Communicate ideas in writing to accomplish a variety of purposes.

- Use drawing and writing skills to convey meaning and information.

Listen effectively in formal and informal situations.

- Listen with understanding and respond to directions and conversations.

Speak effectively using language appropriate to the situation and audience.

- Communicate needs, ideas and thoughts.

Locate, organize, and use information from various sources to answer questions, solve problems, and communicate ideas.

- Seek answers to questions through active exploration.

Analyze and evaluate information acquired from various sources.

- Relate prior knowledge to new information.

Apply acquired information, concepts and ideas to communicate in a variety of formats.

- Communicate information with others.

Mathematics

Demonstrate knowledge and use of numbers and their representations in a broad range of theoretical and practical settings.

- Use concepts that include number recognition, counting and one-to-one correspondence.
- Count with understanding and recognize “how many” in sets of objects.

Investigate, represent, and solve problems using number facts, operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) and their properties, algorithms and relationships.

- Solve simple mathematical problems.

Compute and estimate using mental mathematics, paper-and-pencil methods, calculators and computers.

- Explore quantity and number.
- Connect numbers to quantities they represent using physical models and representations.

Solve problems using comparison of quantities, ratios, proportions and percents.

- Make comparisons of quantities.

Measure and compare quantities using appropriate units, instruments and methods.

- Demonstrate a beginning understanding of measurement using non-standard units and measurement words.
- Construct a sense of time through participation in daily activities.

Estimate measurements and determine acceptable levels of accuracy.

- Show understanding of and use comparative words.

Select and use appropriate technology, instruments and formulas to solve problems, interpret results and communicate findings.

- Incorporate estimating and measuring activities into play.

Describe numerical relationships using variables and patterns.

- Sort and classify objects by a variety of properties.

Interpret and describe numerical relationships using tables, graphs and symbols.

- Recognize, duplicate and extend simple patterns, such as sequences of sounds, shapes and colors.
- Begin to order objects in series or rows.

Solve problems using systems of numbers and their properties.

- Participate in situations that involve addition and subtraction using manipulatives.

Use algebraic concepts and procedures to represent and solve problems.

- Describe qualitative change, such as measuring to see who is growing taller.

Demonstrate and apply geometric concepts involving points, lines, planes and space.

- Recognize geometric shapes and structures in the environment.

Identify, describe, classify and compare relationships using points, lines, planes and solids.

- Find and name locations with simple words, such as “near.”

Organize, describe and make predictions from existing data.

- Represent data using concrete objects, pictures, and graphs.
- Make predictions about what will happen next.

Formulate questions, design data collection methods, gather and analyze data and communicate findings.

- Gather data about themselves and their surroundings.

Science

Know and apply the concepts, principals and processes of scientific inquiry.

- Uses senses to explore and observe materials and natural phenomena.
- Collect, describe and record information.

Know and apply the concepts, principles and processes of technological design.

- Use scientific tools such as thermometers, balance scales and magnifying glasses for investigation.
- Become familiar with the use of devices incorporating technology.

Know and apply concepts that explain how living things function, adapt and change.

- Investigate and categorize living things in the environment.
- Show an awareness of changes that occur in themselves and their environment.

Know and apply concepts that describe how living things interact with each other and with their environment.

- Describe and compare basic needs of living things.

Know and apply concepts that describe properties of matter and energy and the interactions between them.

- Make comparisons among objects that have been observed.

Know and apply concepts that describe force and motion and the principles that explain them.

- Describe the effects of forces in nature (e.g. wind, gravity and magnetism).

Know and apply the concepts that describe the features and processes of the Earth and its resources.

- Use common weather-related vocabulary (e.g. rainy, snowy, sunny, windy).
- Participate in recycling in their environment.

Know and apply concepts that explain the composition and structure of the universe and the Earth's place in it.

- Identify basic concepts associated with night/day and seasons.

Know and apply the accepted practices of science.

- Begin to understand basic safety practices.

Know and apply concepts that describe the interaction between science, technology and society.

- Express wonder and ask questions about their world.
- Begin to be aware of technology and how it affects their lives.

Social Science

Understand and explain basic principles of the United States government.

- Recognize the reasons for rules.

Understand election processes and responsibilities of citizens.

- Participate in voting as a way of making choices.

Understand the roles and influences of individuals and interest groups in the political systems of Illinois, the United States and other nations.

- Develop an awareness of roles of leaders in their environment.

Understand how different economic systems operate in the exchange, production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

- Identify community workers and the services they provide.

Understand trade as an exchange of goods and services.

- Begin to understand the use of trade to obtain goods and services.

Apply the skills of historical analysis and interpretation.

- Recall information about the immediate past.

Locate, describe and explain places, regions and features on the Earth.

- Locate objects and places in familiar environments.
- Express beginning geographic thinking.

Compare characteristics of culture as reflected in language, literature, the arts, traditions and institutions.

- Recognize similarities and differences in people.

Understand the roles and interactions of individuals and groups in society.

- Understand that each of us belongs to a family and recognize that families vary.

Physical Development and Health

Demonstrate physical competency in individual and team sports, creative movement and leisure and work-related activities.

- Engage in active play using gross motor skills.
- Engage in active play using fine motor skills.

Analyze various movement concepts and applications.

- Coordinate movements to perform complex tasks.

Demonstrate knowledge of rules, safety and strategies during physical activity.

- Follow simple safety rules while participating in activities.

Know and apply the principles and components of health-related fitness.

- Participate in developmental activities related to physical fitness.

Assess individual fitness levels.

- Exhibit increased endurance.

Demonstrate individual responsibility during group physical activities.

- Follow rules and procedures when participating in group physical activities.

Demonstrate cooperative skills during structured group physical activity.

- Demonstrate ability to cooperate with others during group physical activities.

Explain the basic principles of health promotion, illness prevention and safety.

- Participate in simple practices that promote healthy living and prevent illness.

Describe and explain the structure and functions of human body systems and how they interrelate.

- Identify body parts and their functions.

Explain the effects of health-related actions on the body systems.

- Act independently in caring for personal hygiene needs.

Demonstrate procedures for communicating in positive ways, resolving differences and preventing conflict.

- Use appropriate communication skills when expressing needs, wants and feelings.
- Use socially acceptable ways to resolve conflict.

Demonstrate skills essential to enhancing health and avoiding dangerous situations.

- Participate in activities to learn to avoid dangerous situations.

Fine Arts

Understand the sensory elements, organizational principles and expressive qualities of the arts.

- Dance: Investigate the elements of dance.
- Drama: Investigate the elements of drama.
- Music: Investigate the elements of music.
- Visual Arts: Investigate the elements of visual arts.

Understand the similarities, distinctions and connections in and among the arts.

- Describe or respond to their own creative work or the creative work of others.

Understand processes, traditional tools and modern technologies used in the arts.

- Dance: Participate in dance activities.
- Drama: Participate in drama activities.
- Music: Participate in music activities.
- Visual Arts: Participate in the visual arts.

Apply skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in one or more of the arts.

- Use creative arts as an avenue for self-expression.

Foreign Language

- Maintain the native language for use in a variety of purposes.
- Use and maintain the native language in order to build upon and develop transferable language and literacy skills.

Social/Emotional Development

Develop a positive self-concept.

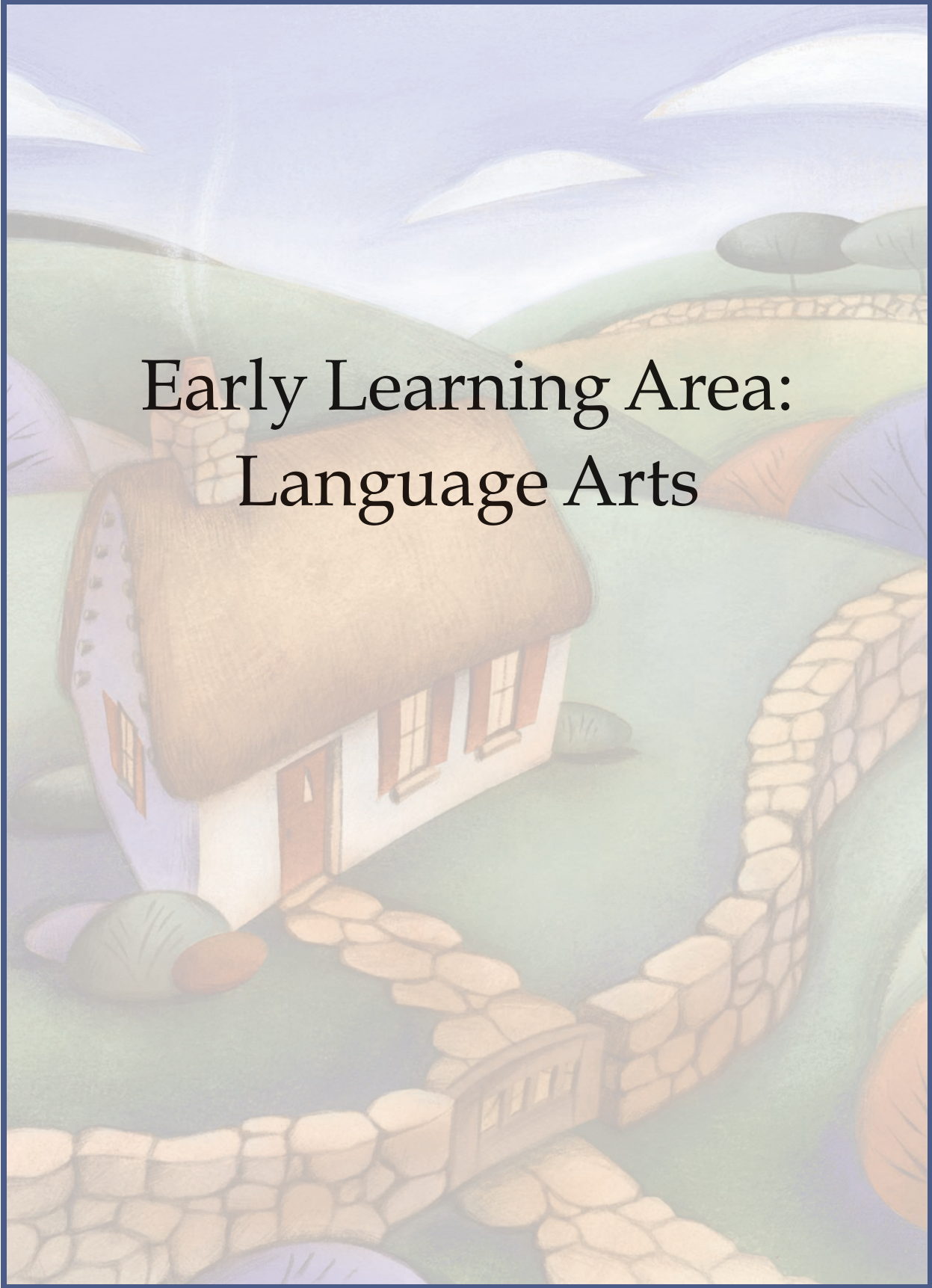
- Describe self by using several basic characteristics.
- Exhibit eagerness and curiosity as a learner.
- Exhibit persistence and creativity in seeking solutions to problems.
- Show some initiative and independence in actions.
- Use appropriate communication skills when expressing needs, wants and feelings.

Perform effectively as an individual.


- Begin to understand and follow rules.
- Manage transitions and begin to adapt to change in routines.
- Show empathy and caring for others.
- Use the classroom environment purposefully and respectfully.

Perform effectively as a member of a group.

- Engage in cooperative group play.
- Begin to share materials and experiences and take turns.
- Respect the rights of self and others.
- Develop relationships with children and adults



Early Learning Area:
Language Arts



Early Learning Area: Language Arts

Language development

Right from birth, talk clearly to your child to help prepare him to read. Listening to your child is important, too. Let him ask questions, tell you stories, and respond to your questions. Playing with the sounds of language will help him prepare for reading. Studies have shown that playing with rhymes and sounds is an important part of reading success. Remember that children develop at different rates, but don't wait to seek help if your child is having trouble speaking. Often, getting help at age 2, 3, or 4 allows a child to catch up with others his age before he enters school.

Tips for developing language skills

- * Talk about things your child likes and ask questions.
- * Give directions in small parts.
- * Help him make up words that rhyme, for example, "dog, fog, hog, log . . ."
- * Sing the ABC Song and other songs that emphasize rhymes, such as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star" or "This Old Man."
- * Learn a tongue twister together. (e.g., Peter Piper picked a peck...)
- * Help your child figure out answers on his own; sometimes you can help him understand something new by reminding him of something he already knows.
- * Encourage your child to talk with others ("Tell Grandma what we did today.").

Pre-reading

One of the most important skills your child can learn to succeed in school and life is how to read. Although children don't usually learn to read before they enter school, they do learn the pre-reading skills they will need in kindergarten. Three of the most important things your child needs to know before he can learn to read are:

1. That printed words mean something, and that pages in books are read from top to bottom and from left to right,
2. The names of the individual letters of the alphabet, and
3. Words are made up of individual speech sounds.

Tips for reading with your child

- * Read with your child often! Offer a variety of books (use your local library).
- * Run your finger along the words so he sees you are reading from left to right.

- * When reading, stop and ask, “What do you think will happen next?” Help him predict what will happen next using the pictures or what’s been read.
- * Encourage your child to “read” a favorite story from memory.
- * Have your child make up a story to go with the pictures.
- * Ask simple questions about what the child read (or heard being read).
- * Make sure your child sees you reading books, newspapers, mail, etc. This helps him know that reading is important to you.
- * Give your child foam or magnetic letters so that he can hold and touch them. Name the letters for him as he plays.
- * Encourage your child to “read” familiar signs like McDonald’s or STOP.

Pre-writing

To learn to write, a child needs fine-motor skills to hold and move a pencil. Writing also takes an understanding of the purpose of writing and how letters work together to make words. Most children follow a natural progression as they learn to write, beginning with scribbling. The scribbles will later become letters and finally words.

Tips for developing pre-writing skills

- * Offer your child a variety of writing materials (crayons, pencils, markers, and different sizes and types of paper).
- * Label toy containers or other items in the house with words or words and pictures.
- * Include “writing” when you play, such as taking orders in a “restaurant,” writing pretend telephone messages, and playing “school.”
- * Put your child’s ideas in print. Write down his own words about a picture he drew, or make a list of items he wants for his birthday.
- * Use interactive reading skills. Point to the words as you read a book to your child, talking about who wrote the book and who drew the pictures.
- * Be sure to expose your child to print in his native language and English if another language is spoken at home. Children can learn more than one language at a time.

Language Arts Activities

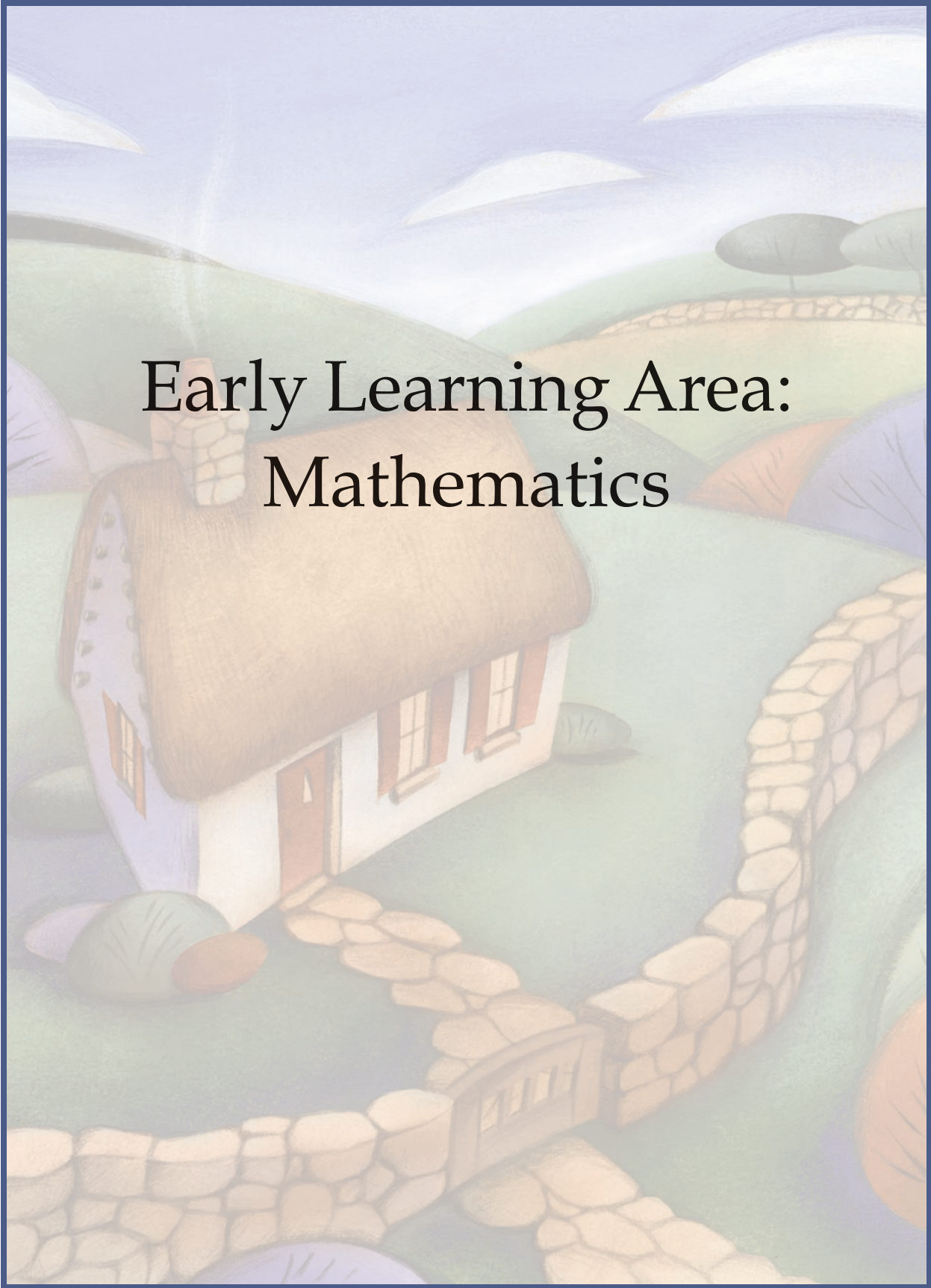
Activity:	Catch-A-Rhyme
What your child will learn:	Develop phonological awareness by doing rhyming activities; recognize separate and repeating sounds in spoken language
Materials:	A ball or beanbag
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have your child say any word, then toss a ball or beanbag to you or another player. 2. You must say a rhyming word as you throw it back. 3. Continue with the same sound for several tosses.

Activity:	Picture Labeling
What your child will learn:	Expressive language, describing, the relationship between written and spoken language.
Materials:	Paper and drawing/ writing utensils (markers, crayons, pencils, etc.)
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask your child to draw a picture. 2. Ask the child to tell you about his picture (try not to tell what you think it is). 3. Write the child's own words on the paper to show the link between spoken and written language. 4. Date the picture (to help review skill progress over time). 5. Display the picture with words proudly somewhere at home.

Activity:	Walk-a-Letter
What your child will learn:	Identifying letters; make letter-sound matches
Materials:	Sidewalk chalk OR masking tape
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make large letters on the sidewalk or driveway, using chalk or masking tape. You can spell his name, or just choose various letters. 2. Have the child walk on the letter and say the letter. 3. Say the sound the letter makes.

Activity:	Word Games
What your child will learn:	Phonological awareness (sounds), letter-sound matches, separate and repeating sounds in language.
Materials:	None needed—play these anywhere, including in the car.
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play a game listening to the different sounds in words: Do they sound the same? Do they rhyme? Map-cap, sat-hat. 2. Listen to the first sound in each word. Repeat and emphasize the sound for the child. Run, road. Box, button. 3. Clap the syllables in names or words. Su-san (clap, clap).

Activity:	Making Lists
What your child will learn:	Different forms of print; print represents written language; print conveys meaning.
Materials:	Paper, writing utensil; for option 1b: ads or magazines, scissors, glue.
Instructions:	<p>Ask your child to help you make lists.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If your child is unable to write yet, here are two ideas: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. When you write a list (e.g., for groceries), ask child for ideas and let your child watch while you write the word. b. Help your child cut pictures of needed items from coupon ads or magazines, then glue the pictures on paper in “list” form. 2. If your child can write: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage your child to help you make lists, even if he can only write a few letters. b. Encourage your child to try to copy words from cans or boxes when making lists. c. At the store, ask your child to help you read the list. For example, ask, “What letter is this?” (Child says, “B.”) Then ask, “Do you remember what we need that starts with the ‘B’ sound?” (Then make the “B” sound.)



Early Learning Area:
Mathematics



Early Learning Area: Mathematics

Mathematics

Math is much more than learning to count. Children need to learn about patterns and concepts like bigger and biggest. They need to learn about sizes, shapes, quantity, and number. Math also means being able to think about and solve problems.

Math concepts can be learned through everyday activities and play. Most preschoolers are not ready for worksheets or math class. Children learn best by solving problems that come up in daily life. For example, setting the table with a plate, fork, knife, and spoon at each place helps children learn to count.

Number Concepts

Usually children learn about number concepts through objects and pictures. Later, they can use the names for numbers (count) and then learn the symbols for numbers (1, 2).

Tips for learning about numbers

- *Be positive—your attitude about math will help your child.
- *Count out loud as you climb steps, button clothes, stack blocks, etc.
- *Use counting books with your child.
- *Sing songs or say rhymes that include numbers (e.g., One, two, buckle my shoe).

Shapes and Space

Understanding shapes will help your child learn geometry when she gets older. Young children usually learn about shapes and space in a specific order. They learn by:

1. Using solid shapes in play (such as round balls, square blocks, etc.),
2. Matching real objects to pictures of objects, then
3. Identifying shapes, and finally,
4. Naming pictures of shapes.

Math is learned in steps. If you miss a step, it becomes harder to understand later. Parents may start with naming pictures of shapes. If your child hasn't played with solid shapes, she may have trouble naming pictures. Even if your child memorizes the names of shapes, she may not have the understanding that will help later in school; for example, a square is a picture of the surface of a cube.

Tips for learning about shapes

- * Provide solid objects that represent shapes for your child to play with—blocks are cubes or rectangles, cans are cylinders, balls are spheres, etc.
- * Help your child trace around solid objects to see how they look on paper.
- * Talk about the location of objects. Use words like “on,” “under,” “near,” and “inside” to describe where you see shapes.

Classifying

Classifying means sorting things by something they have in common. Figuring out how things are alike or different is an important first step in matching and sorting objects. When a child notices differences in the way things look, sound, feel, smell, and taste, she is learning math skills.

Matching is one way to begin to classify objects. The objects do not have to be identical. When your child brings you her shoes, does she bring two that match? Children learn that shoes are worn as matching pairs.

Once a child can match two similar objects, then she can begin to sort objects. Sorting is grouping more than two objects together based on a similar trait, for example, sorting the toy cars from the toy trucks. Children first sort items by one trait (color or size). Then they begin to sort by more than one trait. Later they can sort by traits they cannot see, like “things we use in the kitchen.”

Tips for learning how to classify

- * Match and sort real objects first. When that becomes easy, use pictures of objects.
- * Collect interesting things (shells, rocks, leaves, etc.). Talk about how objects are alike and how they are different.
- * Classify stuffed animals by movement (hop vs. swim) or home (farm vs. jungle).
- * Have your child help you sort the laundry, or match the socks into pairs.

Patterns and Sequences

Determining patterns and ordering, or “sequencing,” are important for later math concepts like subtraction and division.

Comparing is the first step in patterning. Comparing is looking at two or more objects and finding how they are similar and different. When children compare, they often use words ending in -er, like bigger or faster. When children order or sequence, they use words ending in -est, like biggest or slowest.

Children begin sequencing by comparing a trait of two objects. After children understand comparing objects, they can begin to compare pictures. Then they can start ordering three items and move on to four or more. Finally, they can begin to predict the next step in a pattern; for example, they can predict that truck comes next in the pattern “car, car, truck, car, car...” Children also learn about patterns through repetition in books, music, and games. Learning to recognize and continue simple patterns provides a basis for more advanced math, especially algebra.

Tips for patterning and sequencing

- * Provide open-ended materials like blocks, Legos, beads, or dry macaroni to encourage your child to explore and create patterns.
- * Play rhythm games with claps, snaps, and pats.
- * Collect pairs of similar but different objects, then describe, e.g., “this book is bigger.”
- * Use everyday items (shoes, cans, rocks, etc.) and put them in order from smallest to largest.

Measurement and Time

Children learn about shape, size, volume, weight, and amount as they practice measuring in different ways and with different tools, including the measurement of time. Children are interested in measurements like how big, how tall, how many, and “how long until we get there?” Children who help in the kitchen can measure ingredients and learn about volume, or learn there are steps in preparing food. They can learn to solve problems like how many napkins are needed at the table, or about “one-to-one correspondence” as they give one apple to each person. They can also learn it takes a certain number of minutes to cook macaroni.

Children learn about time through routines and special events. A child learns the steps of routines, such as putting on pajamas, brushing teeth, and reading a book before bedtime. A child may count down the days until a holiday or other special event.

Tips for learning about measurement and time

- * Discuss weights of various foods when putting away groceries—the watermelon is heavy, but the popcorn is light.
- * Let your child put spoons or bowls in order of size, or nest and stack them.
- * Talk about how many teaspoons or cups of a certain item are needed in a recipe. See how many cups of water it takes to fill a bowl.
- * Help your child learn about time by using time words – “*yesterday* we went to the park; supper will be at *six o’clock*.”
- * Ask questions to help your child estimate or measure as she plays. “How many blocks do you think it will take to make your road reach the wall?” or “Will it take more rocks to fill up the bucket, or the basket?”

Mathematics Activities

Activity:	Counting Bean Bags
What your child will learn:	Counting, comparisons
Materials:	Coffee cans or buckets, permanent marker, bean bags (you can make bean bags by putting dry beans in the toe of a large old sock and knotting it tightly), paper and/or tape
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Place a large piece of tape or paper on the can or bucket. 2. Make dots on the tape or paper and have the child/ren count the dots. 3. Have them throw that many bean bags into the bucket. 4. Check together to see that the number of objects in the bucket matches the number of dots on its outside. 5. Ask your child, which container has more? Which has less?

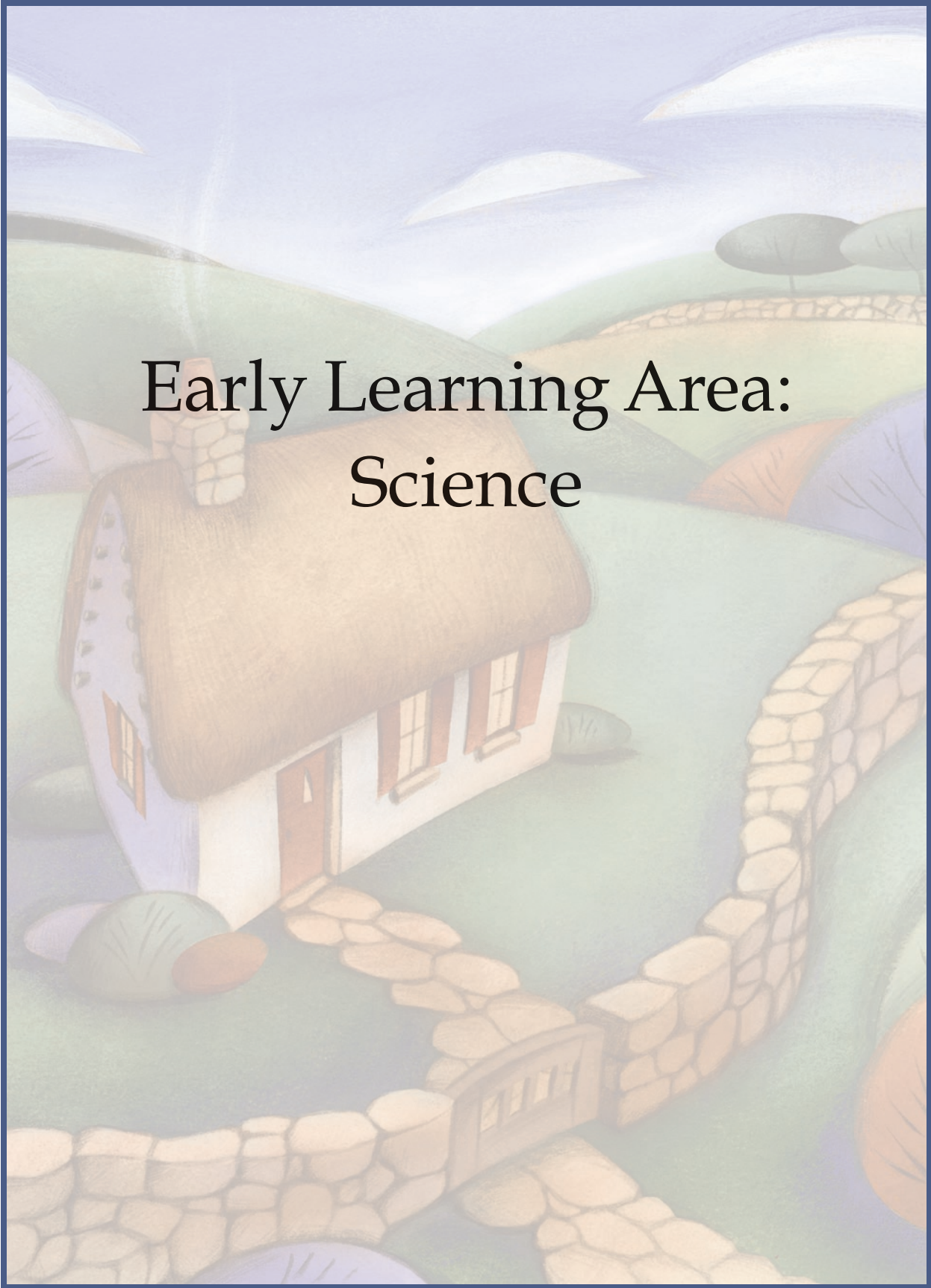
Activity:	Shape Hunt
What your child will learn:	Recognizing geometric shapes and structures in the environment
Materials:	Four empty toilet paper rolls, tape
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tape two toilet paper rolls together to make "binoculars," and repeat so you have one pair and your child has one pair. 2. Using your binoculars, go on a shape hunt around the house looking for different shapes. For example, a clock is a circle. 3. Count how many different shapes you can find; discuss with your child how many circles you found in the room or in the house; how many squares, etc.

Activity:	Sort the Noodles
What your child will learn:	Sorting; counting skills; classifying
Materials:	Bag of different colored dry noodles or macaroni, paper plates, crayons, or markers (optional if using macaroni: yarn or string)
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Label the plates with colors by coloring the plate. 2. Ask the child to sort the noodles onto the right plates, that is, all the green noodles go on the green plate, etc. 3. You and the child can count how many green noodles, etc. 4. (Optional) String the macaroni onto the yarn in a pattern. Ask, "What color comes next?" (Example: green, red, green, red, green.) Older children can make a more complicated pattern, e.g., green, red, red, green.

Activity:	Watch Me Grow
What your child will learn:	Gathering data about himself/herself; representing data using pictures or graphs; describing qualitative change
Materials:	Pencil, paper (optional)
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Measure and chart your child's growth by taping up a long paper as a growth chart, or just make pencil marks on the inside of a closet door. 2. Date each mark, and compare the growth over time. 3. Discuss the child's growth, using -er words like "taller."

Activity:	Object Math
What your child will learn:	Solving simple mathematical problems
Materials:	Small objects or toys
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use objects to try simple math problems with your child; for example, ask, "If I have one red car and one blue car, how many cars do I have?" 2. Move the objects and count them to try and help the child solve the problem. 3. Try subtraction by saying, for example, "You have two dolls; 1, 2; how many would you have left if you gave one to me?"

Activity:	Waiting Games
What your child will learn:	Gathering data about your surroundings; recognizing geometric shapes; recognizing patterns and order
Materials:	None
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you have to wait in line in a public place, help your child notice her surroundings. 2. Count and discuss order (e.g., "we are third in line"). 3. Look for shapes nearby. 4. Find simple patterns together (e.g., the colors of floor tiles).



Early Learning Area:
Science

Early Learning Area: Science

Science

Many skills that help your child learn science come from doing household tasks. By providing everyday materials and asking questions that require more than a “yes” or “no” answer, you help your child develop science skills (such as, “Do you think the block will float or sink?”). Be sure to give your child plenty of time to answer; he may need to think about it for a while. Don’t be afraid to point out your own mistakes to your child. Help him understand that we learn from mistakes, and they are often starting points for new experiments.

Experimenting with objects and movement helps teach children the basics of physics, as they explore how objects fall, roll, and bounce. Even a baby has some grasp of gravity when he drops his rattle and looks down, not up. As children grow older, they can begin to predict the results of their actions. They know that kicking a ball hard will make it go farther than if they just tap it with their foot.

Tips for developing science skills

- * Ask your child questions based on the five senses—What do you smell? Taste? Hear? See? What does it feel like when you touch it?
- * Discuss the weather with your child; ask, “What is it like outside today?”
- * Practice recycling; talk about how it helps our environment. Many local agencies offer free information and activities to help children learn about recycling.
- * Learn about the seasons through family traditions, books, songs, and community activities.
- * Encourage children to classify different living things. How are dogs and cats similar? How are they different? What animals live in the jungle? What lives in the water?
- * Discuss technology and what it does for us. Use a thermometer to check your temperature. Use a scale to weigh different items.
- * Chart your child’s growth over time, writing down his height, weight, and the date.
- * Take advantage of the many hands-on children’s museums; most offer free days.

Outdoor Scientists

Outdoor play offers many natural opportunities to learn science. Encourage your child’s natural desire to explore and experiment when playing outside. Use words like *wonder*, *predict*, *find out*, *try*, *tell*, and *observe* when talking to help your child begin to think like a scientist.

Tips for learning science through outdoor play

- * Discuss the effects of the elements (“What did the wind do to our leaf pile?”).
- * Trace your child’s shadow on the sidewalk with chalk, then do it again a few hours later. Why is it different? Notice shadows of other objects.
- * Let your child have a small area to dig in, and see what he can find living in the dirt, or look together at the roots of the grass he digs up.
- * Plant flower seeds together in a pot or in the yard, and watch them grow. Discuss what the plant needs to survive; observe the plant’s parts and how they change.
- * “Paint” with water outside, in sun and in shade. Which dries faster? What happens to the color of whatever object he paints?

Water and Science

Water play helps your child learn about science, including the different forms water takes (solid, gas, liquid). Water play also offers an opportunity to teach about safety (steam can burn; drowning can occur in only a few inches of water).

Tips for learning science through water play

Offer items to use in water play, such as strainers, scoops, measuring cups, corks, etc. (Use whatever you have; for example, if you don’t have a strainer, poke holes in a plastic cup; if you don’t have cork, use a ping pong ball or anything that floats.)

- * Compare—what floats and what sinks?
- * Observe which drains out faster—a cup with a hole in the bottom or in the side?
- * Blow or fan objects that float across the water. Can you make it change directions, or make it move faster or slower?
- * Experiment with different objects used to blow bubbles—a straw, a wire bent into an enclosed shape, etc. What happens if you blow soft or hard? What does the wind do to your bubbles?

Bubble Recipe:

Mix together the following:

¼ c. liquid dishwashing detergent (like Dawn)

½ c. water

1 tsp. sugar or corn syrup

Science Activities

Activity:	Colored Celery
What your child will learn:	To describe information; use senses to observe; to make comparisons
Materials:	Celery stalk, one glass, water, red or blue food coloring, and scissors or a knife (for adult use only)
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fill a glass half full with water. 2. Add 15 drops of food coloring and stir. 3. The adult should snip off the end of the large celery stalk. 4. Put the stalk in the water. 5. Leave the stalk in the water for 48 hours, and observe the celery occasionally. (Optional—write down observations.)

Activity:	Taste Testing
What your child will learn:	Use the senses to explore tastes
Materials:	Variety of foods: salty—saltine crackers or pretzels; sweet—chocolate or cookies; sour—lemon or pickle; bitter—unsweetened chocolate; spicy—nacho cheese or salsa; crispy—potato chip or lettuce; soft—bread or oatmeal; hard—carrot or cereal, paper and pencil
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Put the variety of foods in a bowl or on a tray. 2. As the child tastes each food, ask him or her to describe it. 3. Divide a paper in half, label one side “Likes” and the other side “Dislikes.” 4. As the child determines likes and dislikes, record the food in the appropriate column, then review the lists together.

Activity:	Freezer Fun
What your child will learn:	Collect, describe, and record data; become aware of changes in the environment
Materials:	Paper cups, water, a pen, a freezer
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fill 3 or 4 paper cups with different amounts of water, marking the water level on the outside of each cup. 2. Put the cups in the freezer. 3. Check the cups every 15 minutes for an hour. Observe changes. Ask questions like “Which one freezes faster?” “Where is the water compared to the mark on the cup?” 4. (Optional) Chart the results by drawing pictures on a graph.

Activity:	Nature Treasure Hunt
What your child will learn:	To collect and describe information; use senses to observe; to make comparisons
Materials:	Sack or masking tape (Optional: paper and glue)
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Go on an outdoor treasure hunt, collecting nature items in a bag or on a wide piece of tape placed upside down on your child’s wrist. 2. When you are done, take each item and ask the child to describe it. 3. (Optional) Sort and classify the items (e.g., things that grow on trees—leaves, twigs, etc.). 4. (Optional) Make a collage of the items by gluing on paper.



Early Learning Area:
Social Science



Early Learning Area: Social Science

Social Science

Social science is about people and how they work and play together. We don't often think of teaching a preschooler social studies. But learning how to get along with others and how others affect our lives will help prepare your child for social studies in school. A preschooler can learn to think beyond himself and about the others around him.

Having rules at home and specific results if they are broken will help your child adjust to school later. It will also start him on the path to being a good citizen. Explain values and rules clearly and simply. ("We share our toys so that everyone has fun.") You can also help your child begin to understand democracy by allowing her (when appropriate) to vote as a way of making choices. ("You can vote for pizza or chicken for dinner.")

Tips for learning social science

- * Develop a concept of history by discussing events in your child's own recent past. ("Remember when we went to grandma's house?")
- * Encourage children to negotiate and compromise when they play together. "Ok, I'll let you play with my doll if I can use your book."
- * Play follow-the-leader with your child; take turns being the leader.
- * Teach your child about money and how it is used. "Let's choose the chicken, because it is on sale. We'll have enough left to buy some ice cream."
- * Teach your child her phone number and address.
- * Teach your child a proper way to answer the phone.

Your conversation and actions teach your child to respect people. Help your child notice community workers (police, mail carriers, nurses, etc.) and what they do to help others. You can also help your child recognize that although everyone belongs to a family, not every family is the same. Discuss the ways people or families are similar. Help your child understand that you can respect a person and still disagree with something that person says or does.

As you travel around your neighborhood, talk about the geography of your environment. ("Do you remember where we went yesterday to mail our letter?") Books and television programs can also help your child realize that people live in many different places around the world and that those places look different and people live differently. The weather is different in other places; the types of houses people live in and the type of clothes they wear are different. Make sure your child understands that even though people might dress or speak differently than she does, they are similar in many ways, too.

Tips for promoting community and cultural awareness

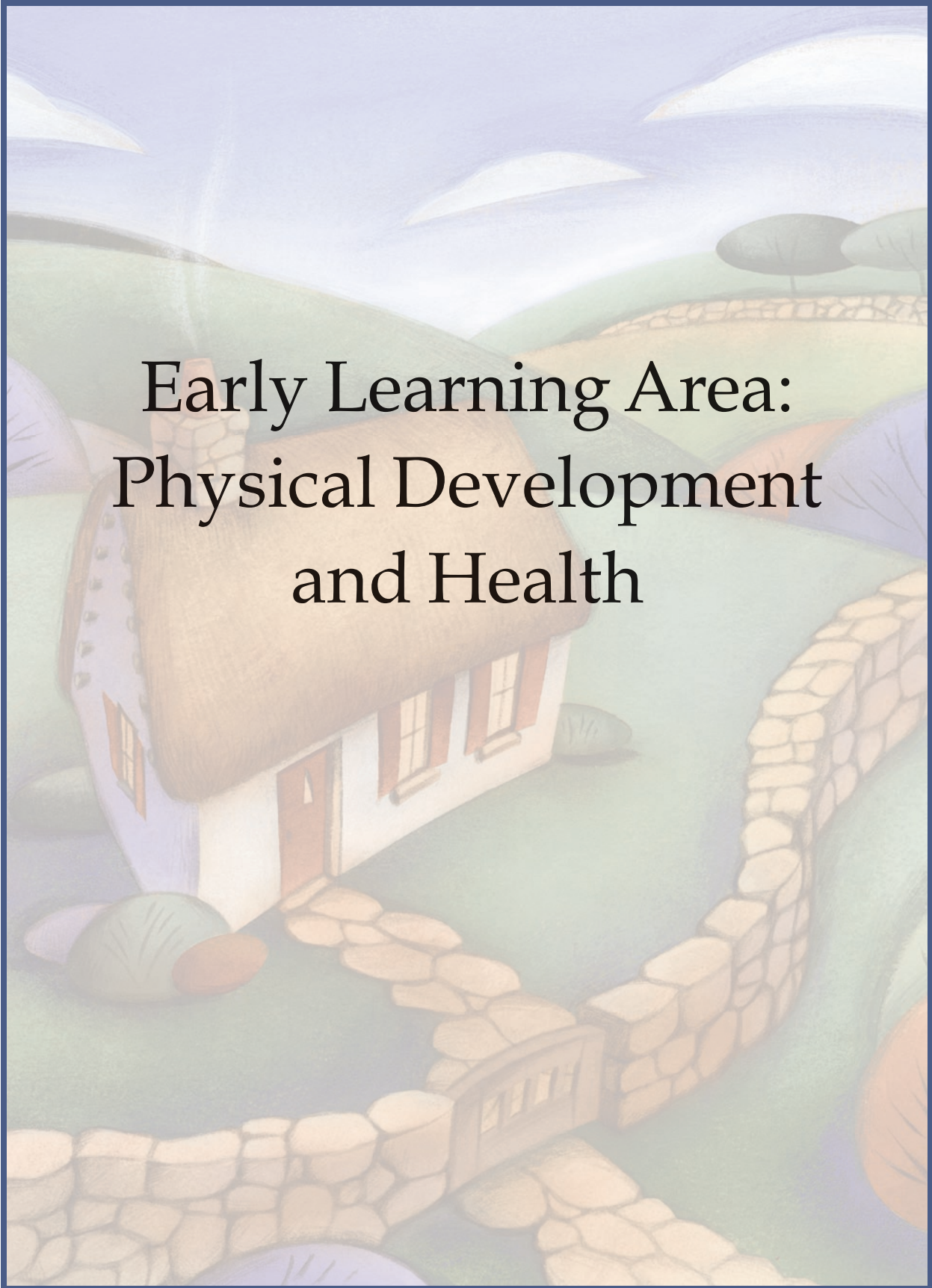
- * Encourage pretend play – grocery store, beauty / barber shop, post office.
- * Use a map to show your child the street you live on and how to find where you want to go.
- * Have a treasure hunt in the house and / or yard, and use a map to help the child find clues. Use pictures and arrows instead of words if the child is not yet reading.
- * Teach your child to say hello and goodbye in different languages.

Social Science Activities


Activity:	Which Room in the House?
What your child will learn:	Locating objects in the environment
Materials:	Laundry basket or a box, items from around the house
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Gather common objects from different rooms in the house. 2. Ask your child to identify each object and in which room it is usually found. 3. Let the child put the item back where it belongs.

Activity:	People Who Help Us Stay Well
What your child will learn:	Names of health care professionals, what they do in the community, and simple practices in caring for personal needs
Materials:	A stuffed animal or doll, a toy doctor kit or objects from the house, such as a toilet paper roll to look in the nose or ear, and a stethoscope made using yarn and a circle of construction paper
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Let your child choose a doll or stuffed animal. 2. Ask the child to pretend the toy has a physical problem—a bad cold, or toothache, or upset stomach. 3. Ask your child who would help the toy, and then allow him or her to pretend to care for the toy the way that person would (e.g., the dentist for the toothache). 4. Talk about specific visits to the doctor, dentist, or hospital, by asking your child to finish a story starter such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —“When I went to the doctor...” —“When I was sick at home...”

Activity:	Our Town
What your child will learn:	Identify community workers and the services they provide; begin to understand the use of trade to obtain goods and services; develop an awareness of the role of leaders
Materials:	Many options: old used clothes, hats, shoes, aprons, paper, cardboard boxes, play money, a basket or bag, and empty, clean food boxes
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play town, or any element of your town. Ask, "Who helps in our town? How? What do they do?" 2. Use paper for signs, taking orders, making play money, etc. 3. Use big boxes for furnishings or buildings, smaller boxes for cash registers, space helmets, etc. 4. Show your child how to barter or trade. It might be two things (one toy for another), or play money for objects, or even for a service: "I'll fix your toy truck for two play dollars." 5. If there are several children playing, encourage them to take turns as a leader. Ask, "What does a leader have to do? How?"



Early Learning Area:
Physical Development
and Health



Early Learning Area:

Physical Development and Health

Physical Development

The physical development of children is often referred to as gross motor and fine motor development. Gross motor refers to the development of the large muscles of the body, such as those used for walking, running, jumping, etc. Fine motor refers to the development of the small muscles of the body, including hands, fingers, toes, mouth, lips, tongue, and sphincter muscles that control elimination.

When your child has good control of his body, he feels confident to explore new ways to move and try more complex activities, including interacting with other children. Physical activities also provide an outlet for energy and a release for tension. Gross motor activities help burn calories and develop muscles, which gives your child better health. Fine motor activities help your child refine skills that will be necessary for school success like writing, tying shoes, buttoning, etc. Both gross and fine motor activities require much practice over time to become smooth and fully developed.

Tips for developing motor skills (gross or fine)

- * Keep activities enjoyable and safe! Enthusiasm is more important than skill level.
- * Allow your child to do well with one skill before trying a harder one.
- * Provide lots of chances for practice.
- * Show your child how to do a new skill if he is nervous or has a hard time with it.
- * Don't criticize or constantly correct your child. Mistakes are part of learning.
- * Join your child in motor activities as often as possible.
- * Provide opportunities for group physical activities, which help your child learn to follow rules and cooperate with others. Such activities may be available through preschools or daycares, the park district, library, YMCA, parent center, church, or synagogue.
- * Remember that it is not good for children to sit still for long periods of time when practicing fine motor skills.

Activities for developing gross motor skills

- Throw and catch balls and/or beanbags. Have your child throw harder and farther, in different directions, and at targets (chalk marks, big or little baskets, etc.).
- Count together the number of times your child can bounce a ball or jump up and down.
- Provide chances for your child to balance on surfaces that are different sizes and heights. Watch closely to prevent falls.

- Have your child imitate animals, vehicles, or machinery (e.g., hop like a bunny, crawl like a turtle, or move like a car with a flat tire).
- Provide rocking or riding toys at an appropriate height for your child.
- Try jumping in different directions, over small objects, down from surfaces that are of safe heights, and up onto sturdy surfaces.
- Build structures with large hollow blocks. You can make them with taped up cereal boxes.
- Play in sand or dirt. Digging, building a castle, and pushing trucks all build motor skills.

Activities for developing fine motor skills

- Encourage your child to scribble, draw, and “write.” Provide different types of paper and writing tools, such as various papers, index cards, or cardboard and pencils, crayons, chalk, nontoxic markers, and pens.
- Cut with blunt-end safety scissors. Cutting is a complex skill that requires much practice. It is easier to cut play dough, stiff paper or cards, or plastic straws than regular paper.
- Paint with water, tempera paint, watercolors, or finger paint. Different sizes of brushes and paper require your child to use different muscles.
- String spools, beads, Cheerios, macaroni, etc. on a shoelace, yarn, or pipe cleaner.
- Use play dough or clay, alone or with cookie cutters or other utensils.
- Play with blocks of various sizes and shapes. Block play enhances muscle control, eye-hand coordination, perceptual and sensory-motor development.
- Choose puzzles that are easy for your child and then build up to harder ones. Some libraries have puzzles that can be checked out just like books.
- Sort small objects. Picking out small items like coins, beads, or pieces of yarn from a tray of sand or salt is a fun “treasure hunt.” Supervise to make sure items don’t go in the mouth.
- Find things like sponges, turkey basters, and play dough to squeeze. Squeezing increases hand and finger strength.

Health and Safety

It is important to teach your child good health and safety practices from an early age and to model good health practices. This includes healthy eating, regular exercise, proper hand washing, and tooth brushing. You can teach your child the names of body parts, talk about what different parts do, and how to keep his body healthy.

Good health also includes emotional health. Help your child learn good ways to express his needs, wants, and feelings, as well as good ways to resolve problems.

Is also important to teach your child to avoid danger. Basic lessons like “don’t touch a stove” and “don’t cross the street by yourself” help keep your child safe.

Tips for developing good health and safety practices

- * Sing the alphabet song together while your child washes his hands. It takes 25-30 seconds for soap to kill germs, about the same amount of time the song takes.
- * Wash hands before eating, after toileting, and very often when anyone in the family is ill.
- * Make a game of naming body parts. Discuss what each part does. “Our ears help us hear—what do you hear?”
- * Teach your child to cover his coughs and sneezes, with a tissue whenever possible.
- * Check with your local health department for free resources to help your child learn good health habits.

Physical Development and Health Activities

Activity:	Let It Rip (Paper Tearing)
What your child will learn:	Develop hand muscles for future writing and cutting
Materials:	Any of the following: typing paper, construction paper, waxed paper, wrapping paper, tin foil, paper bags, or tissue paper (Optional: school glue, glue stick, or paste)
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have your child tear the paper—tear big pieces, little pieces, skinny pieces, round pieces, square pieces, very small pieces, and long pieces. 2. Pick up all the pieces. 3. (Optional) Have your child glue the pieces onto a large piece of paper or posterboard.

Activity:	Obstacle Course
What your child will learn:	Large muscle control; following rules when participating in group physical activities
Materials:	Some (not necessarily all) of these: boxes, ropes, string, chairs, table(s), plastic jugs, yard sticks, objects to jump / crawl over, etc.
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arrange an obstacle course in a large circle as space allows. 2. Have child(ren) follow you, the leader, as you move through the course, and do what you do. (Be creative!) 3. Try some of the following: step over a box, hop on chalk marks, walk between chairs, jump on masking tape shapes, crawl under a table, crawl around jugs, walk on a string.

Activity:	Smiling Faces and Healthy Teeth
What your child will learn:	Independence in caring for personal needs
Materials:	Mirror, toothbrushes, toothpaste
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standing in front of a mirror, help your child name and touch all the parts of her mouth: lips, teeth, tongue, gums. 2. Ask your child to try to smile without opening her mouth. 3. Brush your teeth together and share this rhyme: "Even if you're in a rush, don't forget to swish and brush." 4. Remember to rinse well. 5. Smile and show off your clean teeth!



Early Learning Area:
Fine Arts

Early Learning Area: Fine Arts

Fine Arts

Children generally love fine arts - dance, drama, music, painting, drawing, etc. The process of doing art is much more valuable for children than the final product. That is, what your child learns by doing art is more important than the piece of art itself. Participating in the arts helps her develop self-confidence, thinking skills, and learn to problem solve. It also helps her express feelings, be creative, and look at things from other people's point of view.

Music and Dance

Children have a natural desire to move to music. This movement has a positive effect on brain development. Both listening to and making music help children. Listen to different kinds of good music with your child. Classical music is more complex and is thought to build more connections in the brain. Music from different cultures can help your child learn about different people and places. Encourage your child to experiment with singing, dancing, and using simple instruments.

Tips for exploring music and dance/movement

- * Sing to your child. This is fun and helpful, even if you "can't carry a tune."
- * Encourage your child to move or dance along to all types of music.
- * Provide many types of music, via radio, CD's, or TV. There are many sing-along tapes, CD's, and videos for children. You can check these out at your public library.
- * Public television stations often show ballets, operas, symphony concerts, etc. Sit down with your child and enjoy a show you might not get to see somewhere else.
- * Play soothing music at naptime or bedtime.
- * Play marching music in the morning when getting ready or during clean-up time.

Drama

Encourage your child to act out a part, either as an actor or using a puppet. Drama gives children a chance to be creative and to think about how other people act and feel. Whether the character is real or pretend, you can help your child begin to think about how others feel. Ask, "How would you feel if you had to move to a new town?" Your child can also explore different jobs or family members' roles ("What would you do if you were the daddy?")

Tips for exploring drama

- * Listen to tapes that combine music and stories.
- * Make puppets out of socks or other household items and put on a play. Some libraries have puppets available to use while you are there.
- * Read a favorite book together, and then act out the parts of people in the book.
- * Develop a “prop box” with old used hats, jewelry, etc. to encourage dramatic play.
- * Larger cities and many universities offer free or low-cost plays or concerts just for children.

Visual Arts

Visual arts are a natural favorite for most children. Playing with playdough or clay, coloring, and painting are all great ways for children to explore their world and express themselves. However, do not confuse this “process art” with adult-directed crafts, such as a paper plate snowman. While such crafts may have some value (like developing fine motor skills), they should not replace open-ended, child-directed art opportunities. With process art, there is no right or wrong final product. Allow your child to solve problems, such as how she can get his paper to stick to the cardboard, or how to draw a puppy so everyone will know it is happy. Allow the child to tell you about the picture if she wants; sometimes she may prefer to keep her visual/emotional experience to herself. Remember—process is more important than product. Don’t worry about how it looks when she is done.

Tips for exploring visual arts

- * Provide different art materials on a regular basis. Many paints, crayons, etc. are cheap at discount stores. Playdough can also be made at home.
- * Remember, there is no “wrong way” to do art.
- * Try different ways to do art. If your child usually uses crayons, ask if she would like to use watercolors instead or try watercolor over crayon on a picture.
- * Involve your child in cleaning up; that is part of creating art.
- * Go to children’s museums or art museums; many offer free days.
- * Help your child notice the art in the world around him. “Wow! Those flowers have really bright colors” or “Did you see the painting on this ceiling?”

Fine Arts Activities

Activity:	Homemade Rhythm Band
What your child will learn:	Participation in music activities; concepts of rhythm and beat, fast, slow, loud, and soft
Materials:	(Various, depending on choice of instruments): Pot lids, coffee cans, oatmeal or salt canisters, paper plates, Pringles cans, film canisters, juice can, rice, dry beans, paper towel or toilet paper rolls, rubber bands, craft bells, tissue boxes, wax paper, wood blocks, sandpaper, tape, and glue; can decorate with art supplies
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make your own instruments. Be creative, but here are some starter suggestions: Shakers: Put beans or rice or even pebbles in a closed container (film or juice can) and tape it up securely. Drums: Tape a canister shut, or remove both ends of an oatmeal drum and stretch a balloon across the top, and secure it with a rubber band. For drumsticks, use an empty paper towel roll stuffed with newspaper and taped shut. Guitar: Wrap rubber bands around a tissue box, over the hole. You can attach a cardboard tube for the handle. Kazoo: Wrap wax paper tightly around one end of a cardboard tube, securing it with a rubber band. Poke a hole 1 inch from the wax paper end of the tube, and hum into the opposite end. 2. Play your instruments while singing simple songs; march around the house or yard. 3. Practice playing loud and soft. 4. Practice playing different beats and rhythms.

Activity:	Young Decorators
What your child will learn:	Painting for self-expression and creativity; helping around the home
Materials:	Area to paint, water-based paints, clean-up equipment
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If you have an old basement or other little-used area, or even an old piece of furniture, let your child help decorate it with various colored paints.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Try primary colored handprints over a white or light blue base, or sponge paint white clouds on blue, or simply let your child use her own creativity in making a design!

Activity:	Streamer Play
What your child will learn:	Participate in the elements of dance, music, and possibly drama; describe his /her own creative work or the creative work of others
Materials:	Streamers, yarn, or old fabric cut into strips; music; player
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play different types of music (fast, slow, classical, rock, country) and encourage your child to move and dance to the music. 2. Talk about the similarities and differences in the types of music. 3. Encourage your child to talk about which music he likes best and why, including how it makes him feel or what it makes him think about. 4. Your child may want to act out a part. (For example, "That music makes me think of elephants walking...boom, boom, boom. I can walk like an elephant!")

Activity:	Transition Songs
What your child will learn:	Using creative arts for self-expression and self-direction
Materials:	None
Instructions:	<p>Use songs to help with difficult transitions, including clean-up time, waiting your turn, etc. Use the following songs, or make one up and sing it to a familiar tune like "Row, row, row your boat."</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Barney's Clean-up Song: "Clean up, clean up, everybody everywhere. Clean up, clean up, everybody do your share." 2. Dragon Tales Waiting Song: Sing to the tune of Row, Row, Row Your Boat: Wait, wait, wait your turn. Waiting can be fun! Patience, patience, patience everyone.

A whimsical, painterly illustration of a small, white house with a thick, brown thatched roof. The house has a red door and several windows with red shutters. A stone path leads to the house, and a low stone wall surrounds the property. The landscape is rolling and green, with a blue sky and stylized clouds. The overall style is soft and artistic.

Early Learning Area: Foreign Language

Early Learning Area: Foreign Language

Foreign Language

If you or someone else in your home speaks a language other than English, your child has an excellent opportunity to become bilingual. Whether a child learns two languages at the same time or one language first and then a second, it is helpful to develop bilingualism early in a child's life.

Advantages of being bilingual: (see Baker, 2000, p. 2)

- Wider communication (extended family, community, international links, etc.)
- Literacy in two languages
- Broader cultural advantages, including less racism and greater tolerance
- Thinking benefits
- Raised self-esteem
- Security in identity
- Increased curriculum achievement
- Easier to learn a third language in the future
- Future employment benefits

There are several ways parents can use to help their children become bilingual. Three main strategies listed by Baker (p. xvii) are:

Strategy 1: Each parent speaks a different language to the child.

Strategy 2: The parents speak one language to the child who acquires a second language outside the home (at school).

Strategy 3: Both parents speak both languages to the child.

Tips for raising bilingual children

- * Do not neglect your native language. Your child can learn your language and English.
- * Begin with the native language if one language is to be learned first.
- * Use good grammar. Avoid slang words.
- * Make language learning fun and natural.
- * Provide many different language experiences in each language, including music, drama, and other activities.
- * Provide books in the target language to help with learning more words.

- * Be patient if one or both languages develop more slowly than other children who have only one language. This is common and most catch up by third grade.
- * Make sure your child knows if he is expected to speak a certain language to a certain person, in a certain place, or at certain times.
- * Find other people who speak your native language, as well as other resources, by using the internet services at your local library.

Recommended books and websites for parents raising bilingual children:

Arnberg, Lenore. (1987). *Raising Children Bilingually: The Preschool Years*. Clevedon, Avon, England: Bilingual Matters.

Baker, Colin. (2000). *A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to Bilingualism*. Clevedon, Avon, England: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.

Harding, Edith & Riley, Philip. (1986). *The Bilingual Family: A Handbook for Parents*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

<http://agoralang.com/index.html?agora/pub.html> – Index of materials for bilinguals

<http://dir.yahoo.com/Education/Bilingual> – good links regarding bilingual education

<http://hjem.wanadoo.dk/~wan42942/frameset.html> – Kids Bilingual Network; helpful for parents, also

<http://iteslj.org/Articles/Rosenberg-Bilingual.html> – article: “Raising Bilingual Children”

<http://www.bilingual-supplies.co.uk/links.html> – Links to resources and materials

<http://www.cal.org/> – the Center for Applied Linguistics

<http://www.multilingual-matters.com> – Multilingual Matters publishes books, journals, and a newsletter titled, “The Bilingual Family Newsletter”

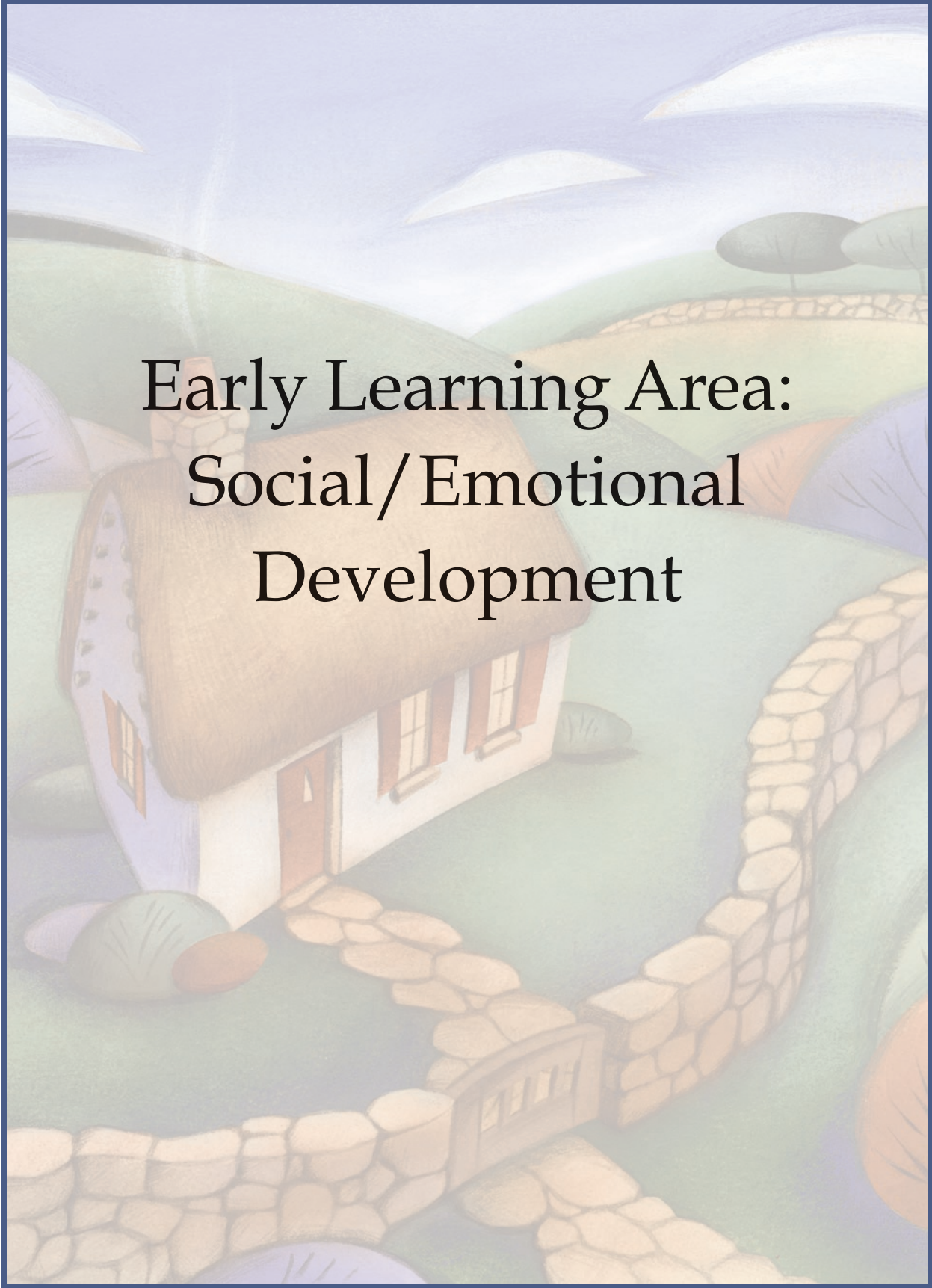
<http://www.nabe.org/> – National Association for Bilingual Education (USA) website

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/> – National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition and Language Instruction Educational Programs

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/resfor/parents/> – Resources for Parents and Community with many links to good articles and other websites

<http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/classics/preschool/> – downloadable book, *A Guide to Family Reading in Two Languages: The Preschool Years* by T. Andersson; also, for the elementary level, see *If Your Child Learns in Two Languages: A Parent's Guide for Improving Educational Opportunities for Children Acquiring English as a Second Language* by Zelasko & Antunez, available in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Haitian Creole at <http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/pubs/parent/>

<http://www.nethelp.no/cindy/biling-fam.html> – Bilingual Families Web Page by Cindy Kandolf; many links and practical help



Early Learning Area:
Social/Emotional
Development

Early Learning Area:

Social/Emotional Development

Emotional Development

Social development is being able to relate to other people. Emotional development is being able to understand and show feelings. Social/emotional development is a key part of learning. To be a good learner, it is important that your child:

- feels secure,
- develops a positive self-image,
- learns to express emotions, and
- interacts with others in a positive way.

A secure child will show curiosity as a learner and will try hard to solve problems. Give your child a chance to try things on her own instead of doing it for her. Give her chances to make choices and safely explore her environment. Set guidelines to help her learn to respect herself, others, and property. Your child also needs a chance to talk about what she wants, and how she feels without fear that she will be criticized or put down.

A child with a positive self-concept feels loved and secure. Show your child you love and respect her in a variety of ways: tell her, hug her, give small gifts, spend time with her, and give her your full attention.

Tips for healthy development of self

- * Encourage your child to describe herself.
- * Have your child fill in these blanks: When I _____, I feel _____.
- * Use books to explore emotions. Ask a librarian for help in finding such books on your child's level.
- * Talk about your child's feelings. Don't put your child down for feeling a certain way. (Remember children will react to things in different ways than adults.)
- * Be aware of situations that may cause stress for your child, including changes in routine, fears (real or imagined), a new baby, moving, absence of a family member, divorce, remarriage, or death in the family. Conflict or tension at home, feeling unloved, or physical or verbal abuse also cause stress.
- * Talk about values you care about: caring, cooperation, courage, fairness, honesty, respect, or responsibility.
- * Make a list of things your child can do by herself, and put it on the refrigerator.
- * Praise your child for trying new things.

Social Development

To do well socially, a child needs to be able to get along with others. Children learn about other people as they interact with them. They learn from their parents, other adults, brothers and sisters, and friends.

Encourage your child to cooperate with a friend as they play. When there is conflict, you may need to help them talk about their feelings and show them how to settle their differences. But when you can, allow the children to work out their problems on their own. Sometimes a question will help them to figure it out themselves. For example, you might ask, “What can you do so that you both have a turn to play with the doll?”

Researchers remind us that a child’s personality will affect how social they are; some children have lots of friends while others prefer one or two. An emotionally healthy child will show positive skills on a fairly regular basis. Here are some signs of healthy development:

- A positive mood
- A positive relationship with one or two peers
- Actions that show she really cares about others
- Not severely or always lonely
- Ability to express frustration and anger without harming others or property
- Not drawing too much attention to self
- An ability to show humor (McClellan & Katz, 1992).

Tips for promoting healthy socialization

- ❖ Provide times for social interaction, and coach your child on how to act. Give positive feedback for good behavior (e.g., “You and Jon are taking turns.”) and redirect negative behavior (e.g., “You use this blue truck while Jon uses the red one, or else you can do a puzzle until he is finished.”).
- ❖ Check into free play groups if your child isn’t usually with other children her age. Local parent centers, YMCA’s, religious groups, or park districts offer play groups.
- ❖ Role-play sharing and turn-taking with your child during a game of “Let’s pretend.”
- ❖ Help your child transition from one activity to another by singing a song that signals the next activity or setting a timer with a bell. (“You and Crystal can play until the bell rings in 5 minutes, then you need to wash your hands for lunch.”)

Social/Emotional Development Activities

Activity:	Puppet Play
What your child will learn:	Self-expression; listening skills
Materials:	Hand puppets. If homemade—variety of scrap art materials (such as: socks, aluminum foil, paper bags, mittens, plastic spoons; may accessorize with yarn, markers, buttons, etc.)
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make puppets with one or more of the above. Have fun! 2. Put on a puppet show together with your child, or take turns watching and listening.

Activity:	Feelings Book
What your child will learn:	Describe the feelings of oneself and others; motor skill practice
Materials:	Magazines or advertisements that can be cut up, scissors, glue, heavy paper or cardboard, hole punch, yarn or ribbon
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have the child cut or tear out pictures of people showing different emotions. 2. Glue the pictures onto cardboard squares or stiff paper. 3. Punch holes on one edge of each “page.” 4. Tie the book together with yarn or ribbon. 5. Let your child “read” the book and discuss how these people feel, and how she feels at different times. 6. Remind your child that feeling a certain way is not wrong, but must be talked about and acted out in good ways.

Activity:	Rolling with Laughter
What your child will learn:	Working together to cooperate and solve problems
Materials:	No materials needed; allow plenty of space
Instructions:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. You and your child should lay on your backs, arms at your sides and feet flat against your partner's feet...then roll.2. Try several times, because practice makes perfect.3. Next, try it holding hands instead of touching feet.4. Ask your child, "Is it easier or harder this way? Why?"

A whimsical, painterly illustration of a small, white house with a thick, brown thatched roof. The house has a small chimney on the left side, with a wisp of white smoke rising from it. The house is situated on a green hillside. In the foreground, a stone wall made of irregular, light-colored stones runs across the frame, with a simple wooden gate. The background features rolling hills in shades of green, blue, and purple, under a sky with soft, white clouds. The overall style is soft and dreamlike.

Online Resources

Online Resources

The internet is a valuable tool for finding all kinds of information, resources, and activities to help you as a parent or caregiver and your child as a learner. If you do not have a computer or internet access at home, please remember that nearly all libraries and many schools offer free internet access to parents and children. If you do not know how to begin, many librarians and other adults will be happy to help you get started. The following are some excellent websites with resources for parents:

www.adi.org – Academic Development Institute’s website.

www.ala.org/parentspage/ – Tips for parents to get the most benefit from the library.

www.earlychildhood.com - Includes “Art & Crafts,” “Ask Our Experts,” and more.

www.ed.gov/parents – Part of the Department of Education’s website, check out the “Prepare My Child for School” section, and, under “Publications for Parents,” scroll down for “Helping Your Preschool Child” and other resources.

www.familyeducation.com - Tips, activities, and more.

www.getreadytoread.org – Has information for parents and activities for children.

www.illinoisearlylearning.org – information, tip sheets, and more, available in English or Spanish. If you click on “Illinois Early Learning Standards,” then choose a section, each “benchmark” can be clicked to provide weblinks to resources related to that benchmark (activities to help children learn that specific skill).

www.kidshealth.org – Has information about health for parents, kids, and teens.

www.kidsource.com – Has articles, book reviews, and other information.

www.naeyc.org – The National Association for the Education of Young Children site offers resources for parents.

www.parentsoup.com – News, information, and advice.

www.patnc.org – Parents as Teachers National Center has information for parents and can help you locate a PAT program in your area.

www.pbskids.org – Has activities for children related to PBS shows and a link for parents.

www.preschoolexpress.com – Activities and ideas for preschool teachers, parents, and grandparents.

www.theparentreport.com – You can search by age group for information.

www.tnpc.com – Articles and information from The National Parenting Center.

A whimsical, painterly illustration of a small, white house with a thick, brown thatched roof. A stone chimney on the roof has a wisp of white smoke rising from it. The house has a brown door and several windows with brown shutters. It is situated in a lush, green landscape with rolling hills. A stone wall, built from irregular, light-colored stones, runs across the foreground and curves around the house. In the background, there are more hills, some with patches of orange and purple, and a few stylized trees. The sky is a soft, pale blue with wispy white clouds. The overall style is soft and dreamlike.

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