

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Approaches to Learning (Birth to First Grade)

Definition

Approaches to learning is about how children learn in different ways and focuses on the development of positive attitudes towards learning:

- Curiosity, engagement and persistence;
- Creativity and imagination;
- Diversity in learning.

Rationale

- Children's learning is connected to their feelings of success and willingness to keep trying when something is hard;
- How children learn is influenced by temperament and the child's personality and preferences;
- Children learn best through hands on experiences and nurturing interactions that promote the joy of learning.

How Can I Help My Child Learn at Home and in the Community?

Infant

- Take your baby on walks and let her sit on the grass. Notice what she is interested in;
- Put your child on the floor with interesting toys to encourage him to explore.

Toddler

- Although it takes more time, allow your toddler to "do it himself" before offering help;
- Give your toddler real and pretend toys that are part of everyday life such as pots and pans, spoons and bowls.

Preschooler

- Talk to your child about how we are all different. Read books about different cultures, places and homes;
- Share recipes for favorite foods and try different kinds of foods with your child.

Remember – Your Child Learns and Grows Across all Five Domains!

When you support your child in trying an activity that is hard, for example cutting with scissors (persistence) you are teaching your child to handle frustration (social competence) and promoting fine motor skills (motor development).

What should I do if I have a concern about my child's development?

- Talk to your early learning program provider;
- Talk to your doctor. If you and your doctor are still concerned;
- Call Wisconsin First Step 1-800-642-7837 (24 hour service, a parent specialist is available M-F, between 8AM and 4PM);
- If you think your child is a child with a disability, call your County Birth to 3 Services or your Local School District 3 through 5 Services.



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What Does My Child Know? What Can My Child Do?

The Milestone Moments published by the Center for Disease Control provides detailed information of what to expect at each milestone in your child's development. The information below includes a sampling of the skills included in the Milestone Moments.

Infant

- Pays attention to faces;
- Begins to act bored (cries, fussy) if activity doesn't change;
- Follows moving things with eyes from side to side;
- Watches faces closely;
- Looks around at things nearby;
- Shows curiosity about things and tries to get things that are out of reach;
- Watches the path of something as it falls;
- Looks for things he sees you hide;
- Explores things in different ways, like shaking, banging, throwing;
- Finds hidden things easily.

Toddler

- Points to get the attention of others;
- Shows interest in a doll or stuffed animal by pretending to feed;
- Finds things even when hidden under two or three covers;
- Builds towers of four or more blocks;
- Follows two-step instructions such as "Pick up your shoes and put them in the closet";
- Names items in a picture book such as a cat, bird, or dog.

Preschooler

- Does puzzles with three or four pieces;
- Turns book pages one at a time;
- Builds towers of more than six blocks;
- Screws and unscrews jar lids or turns door handle;
- Uses scissors;
- Starts to copy some capital letters;
- Plays board or card games;
- Tells you what he thinks is going to happen next in a book;
- Counts ten or more things;
- Can draw a person with at least six body parts.

Additional Resource

[Temperament – Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Temperament Tool](#)

The Infant Toddler Temperament Tool includes a short online survey that allows parents and caregivers of infants and toddlers to recognize and explore their own temperament traits and those of a child for which they provide care. The IT³ generates results, which support parents and caregivers in understanding how adult and child similarities and differences in temperament traits may affect "goodness of fit." Along with these results, the IT³ generates simple best practice tips adults can use to foster the unique temperament of each child within their care.

<http://www.ecmhc.org/temperament/>

Sources: Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, Third Edition, Developmental Continuum, February 2011
Center for Disease Control and Prevention Developmental Milestones <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>