



WYOMING'S

EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

BIRTH THROUGH KINDERGARTEN:

A practice-based tool for early childhood educators

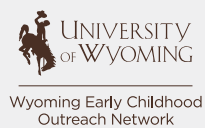
WYOMING'S EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

BIRTH THROUGH KINDERGARTEN:

A practice-based tool for early childhood educators

Standards Update Facilitated by:

University of Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network under the supervision
of the Wyoming Early Childhood State Advisory Council



This publication was made possible by grant number 90TP0082-01-00. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official view of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME.....	4
INTRODUCTION.....	7
GET TO KNOW THE STANDARDS.....	10
RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS.....	13
Emotional Development.....	14
Social Development.....	16
Culture, Family, and Community.....	18
COMMUNICATION.....	21
Communication.....	22
Literacy.....	24
COGNITION.....	29
Approaches to Learning.....	30
Mathematics.....	34
Scientific Reasoning.....	36
PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT.....	39
Physical Development.....	40
Daily Living Skills.....	42
CONCLUSION.....	44
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	45
REFERENCES.....	47
FULL STANDARDS.....	48
REMOVABLE STANDARDS POSTER	

WELCOME

As a Wyoming early childhood educator and caregiver, your work matters! When you develop relationships with children, create learning environments, and provide meaningful experiences, you are laying the foundation for their future success. Early learning standards offer a helpful framework to guide the decisions you make with children each day.

A DIFFERENT APPROACH

This document is an update to the Wyoming Early Learning Guidelines and Foundations, published in 2013 and 2015 by the Wyoming Early Childhood State Advisory Council. The Early Learning Guidelines and Foundations were a follow-up to work in 2001, when Wyoming was among the first states in the country to adopt preschool standards. A lot has changed in the 20 years since the original standards were released by the Wyoming Department of Education, but one thing remains the same: Wyoming continues to lead the way in adopting innovative approaches to standards development.

OUR PROCESS

Inspired by our work with the national non-profit Leading for Children that led to the creation of Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality, this standards update followed a similar course. Using funding from the Federal Preschool Development Grant, the University of Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network led an eight-month collaborative process involving three levels of committees, all focused on ensuring the voices of educators and caregivers were at the center. We started by developing a vision and mission to drive our work.

Vision:

All Wyoming early childhood educators know the Early Learning Standards, understand their importance, and use them daily to create high-quality educational experiences for Wyoming's children.

Mission:

Create a Wyoming Early Learning Standards document that communicates the value of early childhood standards, embraces a strong image of teachers, and empowers educators to incorporate standards in their practice.

We built upon the strength of the Wyoming Early Learning Guidelines and Foundations, reviewed national standards (including the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework), looked at standards from states across the country, and considered the most current research in early childhood. This included a deep dive into equity, Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Trauma Informed Practice, and Universal Design for Learning.



[Click for more details about the standards update process.](#)

This document was created by a group of extremely passionate educators from around the state of Wyoming. We collaborated on ideas, worked together, and created something that gives teachers across the state the reins.

- Addison Rolf, The Neighborhood School, Cheyenne

THE RESULT

This is not a typical standards document. Its focus is on empowering you to use standards in your daily practice. You will notice that in addition to the updated standards, this resource is packed full of stories from the field, reflection questions, teacher tips, and other tools to support you and guide your decision making.





“ It truly feels like a tool for educators to hold and use as their own.

- Kathy Nelson, Wyoming Child and Family Development, Wheatland

You might notice changes in the way the standards are presented, as well as updated language and new concepts. These changes represent the most current research in the field of early childhood education.

To highlight a few:

- One document containing all standards from birth through the kindergarten year

With the understanding that early childhood* starts at birth and extends well into elementary school, it was essential to map standards in a single location across all ages: birth through kindergarten. Historically, development has been represented as a progression through stages. We now understand that development is more fluid and not directly linked to age distinctions. There is not a clear gap between the development of toddlers and preschoolers. Neither is there a clear gap between preschoolers and kindergartners. In order to support all children most effectively, teachers need access to a tool that recognizes the full spectrum of development.

“ The new Early Learning Standards provide a roadmap for quality instruction that can link the many facets of instruction for children, birth through kindergarten and beyond. Using this roadmap will help to build a strong foundation for children to succeed.

- Lisa Garner, Kindergarten Teacher, Afton

- Replacing indicators

Indicators are frequently included in standards documents to describe how children may demonstrate a particular skill. Providing detailed indicators, however, can lead teachers to believe that there is only one way for a child to meet a standard. This limits teachers' choices and creativity and narrows their view of the whole child.

Knowing this, indicators have been replaced with a roadmap for skills progression that is informed by teacher observation and expertise and is representative of children's proficiency at all ages birth through kindergarten. *(Please see "Measures of Proficiency" on page 8 for more details.)*

“ Without indicators, teachers develop confidence in their practice because they get to decide when, where, and how they're seeing standards being met.

- Britnee Geringer, Holy Name Catholic Preschool, Sheridan



[Click for the CDC list of Developmental Milestones by age, as well as, screening and referral information.](#)

* Early childhood: The first period in child development, beginning at birth. Although developmental periods do not rigidly correspond to chronological age, early childhood is generally defined as including all children from birth through age 8 (NAEYC, 2020, p. 36).

- **Applying an Equity Lens**

Current issues in early childhood emphasize the importance of being responsive to children’s unique needs, experiences, cultures and abilities. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) states, “Our goal is to nurture a more diverse and inclusive generation of young children who thrive through their experiences of equitable learning opportunities in early learning programs” (NAEYC, 2019, p. 4). To fulfill our professional obligation to advance equity for all children, we have embraced and embedded connections to the following throughout the document:

Click for more information



- **Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)**

The Developmentally Appropriate Practice Position Statement by NAEYC presents methods that promote each child’s optimal development and learning through a strength-based, play-based, joyful, engaged learning experience. Elements of DAP include core considerations, principles, and guidelines for practice.



- **Universal Design for Learning (UDL)**

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) shifts teachers’ focus from reacting to problems and making adaptations for individuals with different learning needs to creating an environment where all children can succeed from the start. UDL includes identifying and removing barriers to learning and using teaching practices that provide multiple means of representation, action and expression, and engagement.



- **Trauma Informed Practice (TIP)**

In today’s world, the experience of trauma in young children’s lives is more prevalent than ever before. Trauma Informed Practice outlines the critical need for all children to have supportive relationships with attuned and caring adults, a feeling of safety and security, and space and time to experience and learn to regulate their emotions.

YOUR INVITATION

Because this is not a typical standards document, the way you engage with it will be different. Just like Wyoming’s Coherent Path to Quality, **this document is incomplete without you.**

You are invited to:

- challenge your current notion of standards and be open to new possibilities
- acknowledge and draw from your unique set of knowledge, skills, and experiences
- use reflection and dialogue to integrate the standards into everything you do
- consider ways the standards can inform your planning, be used in your daily routines, help you document children’s learning, and communicate with families
- evaluate how your program expectations align and complement these standards



INTRODUCTION

WHO ARE STANDARDS FOR?

Early learning standards are for anyone who touches the life of a young child. Children progress and acquire new skills constantly and across all settings. Standards provide important information for families, healthcare professionals, those working in community settings, home visitors, childcare providers, preschool and kindergarten teachers, Head Start, TANF, child development centers, elementary schools, and those working in after-school programs. Standards are also for concerned citizens and policy makers who want what is best for Wyoming's children.

“ **These standards unify us, all of us who have an impact on young children, by creating a vision of what each child is capable of and how we can help them get there.**

- Janae Asay, Forward Footsteps Childcare, Green River

WHEN ARE STANDARDS MET?

Standards are met any time a child is learning. Relationships, daily routines, and meaningful play provide the structure for learning experiences. By more intentionally using these normal and natural parts of children's lives, we resist the misconception that standards are only met when they are formally taught or assessed. **Relationships** provide essential learning opportunities for children. They also enhance learning in all domain areas. **Play** integrates and supports children's development across all content areas and provides the window we need to see evidence of their learning. **Routines** offer daily opportunities for children to practice skills and build relationships within a consistent, predictable framework.

HOW CAN STANDARDS HELP?

Because children are always learning, standards have a place in every part of their lives.

Standards help adults strengthen relationships by offering a deeper understanding of children. Adults gain new insights into children's lives as they see the complex developmental tasks of childhood reflected across specific domains. Standards help adults see children as fully human and deserving of rich, meaningful experiences and connections to others.

Standards help adults support routines by identifying key skills children are developing that allow them to engage in daily life independently and with others. They help adults recognize children's strengths and needs so they can support them with greater intention and organize routines so that children have daily opportunities to learn and thrive.

Standards help adults support children's play by providing appropriate expectations and guidance for observation, reflection, and learning with children. They offer a roadmap to which adults can refer as they plan and support children's next steps in their play.

THE TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN

Transitions are a part of children's lives every day. However, some transitions take on greater significance because they impact children and families in profound ways. Starting kindergarten is one of those transitions. Research shows a wide gap between the environment and expectations in kindergarten and children's previous experiences, which places a significant burden on young children and families. Local communities, childcare programs, preschools, and school districts can and should help young children carry the burden of change that has historically been placed upon them. An important implication is that kindergarten teachers need the flexibility to make changes to the environment and instructional strategies to better meet kindergartners' learning needs. When school administrators understand the science of child development and the basic principles of early learning, they can better support kindergarten teachers. **Embracing early learning principles is not a rejection of academics. Young children achieve important academic outcomes when teachers employ early learning principles and developmentally appropriate practices.**

Wyoming's Early Learning Standards have been designed to support the transition to kindergarten by mapping development across the transition through the kindergarten year. The Common Core State Standards* for Kindergarten are represented across all domains. Therefore, this document is not an additional requirement for kindergarten teachers, but a tool to help them match the demands of kindergarten with the needs of children. We invite everyone involved in the transition to kindergarten to use the Wyoming Early Learning Standards to help facilitate critical conversations that will better support the transition for all children.



[Click the QR code to read more about supporting children's transitions.](#)

* Common Core State Standards are a set of high-quality national academic standards in mathematics and English language arts/literacy (ELA). These learning goals outline what a student should know and be able to do at the end of each grade. In June 2012, Wyoming adopted Common Core State Standards.

ORGANIZATIONAL ELEMENTS

Wyoming’s Early Learning Standards include elements that support their interpretation and use with children. Each element connects the standards to practice and to the current evidence base on what young children need to learn and thrive.

1. Standards Language

Wyoming’s Early Learning Standards are arranged in four domains: Relationships and Interactions, Communication, Cognition, and Physical Health and Development. Within each domain are subdomains, and within each subdomain, standards and benchmarks are found. This progression describes in increasing detail the general developmental expectations for young children’s learning from birth through kindergarten. (See Fig. 1)

2. Measures of Proficiency

Rather than suggest a limited list of potential indicators of proficiency within each benchmark, this document offers a tool to guide teachers in identifying their own measures of proficiency based on their observations of children. This ensures that children can be observed and assessed appropriately across all ages and in their unique settings.

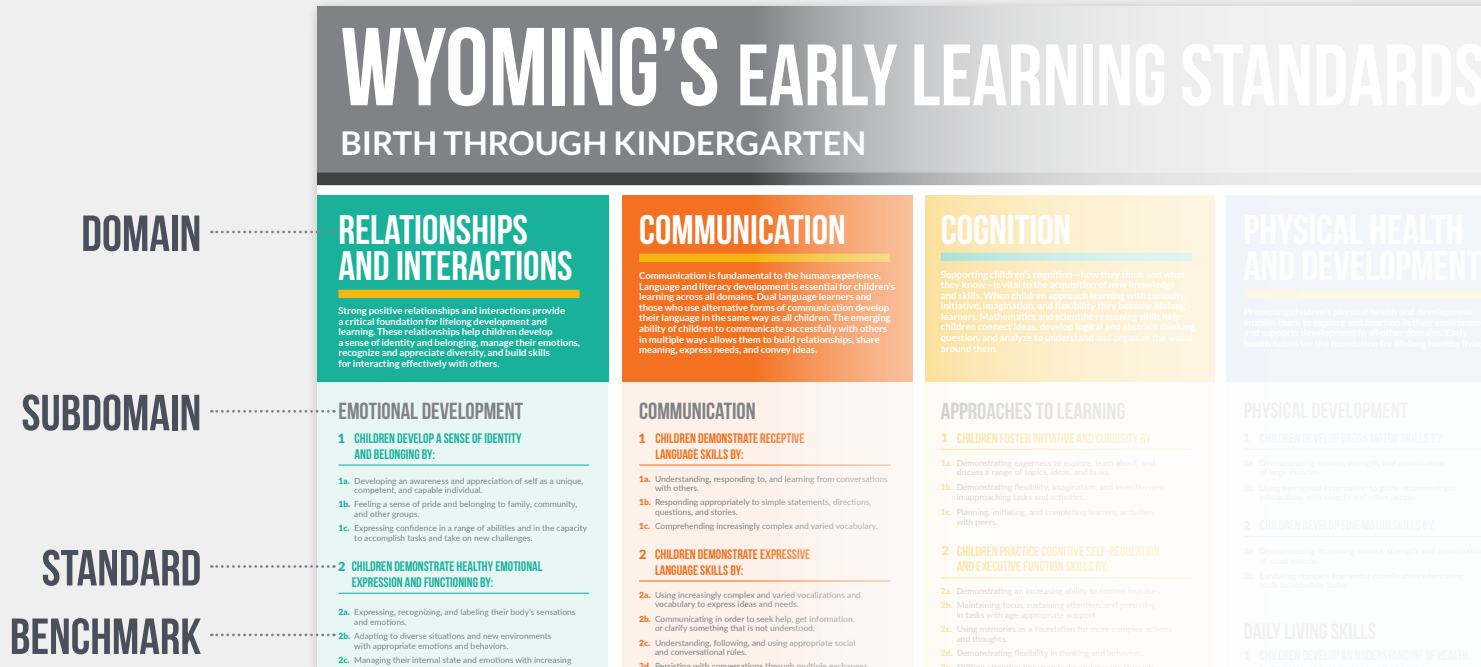
Children demonstrate new abilities in a variety of ways. Infants and toddlers, for example, often demonstrate precursor or **emerging** skills that are an essential first step in skill **acquisition**. As children begin to demonstrate more established skills, teachers may notice that they

start to **generalize** a skill across places, people, and situations. Teachers may find that older preschoolers and kindergartners demonstrate greater **fluency** as they perform tasks more smoothly and efficiently and with increasing complexity. With this understanding, teachers can see that no benchmark is ever completed. All children can continue to improve in their generalization and fluency of any standard over time.

Each subdomain includes an example of a selected benchmark identifying ways children may demonstrate proficiency at different levels. These examples are organized using the categories listed below. “Examples of Proficiency” are not intended to be the final answer or a checklist, but an invitation for you to engage in dialogue with others and consider different ways children demonstrate proficiency in each benchmark. As you engage in this process, you will be able to more confidently identify what proficiency looks like for the children you care for and teach.

Emergence	Precursor skills or skills essential for acquisition
Acquisition	Ability to demonstrate a skill or knowledge
Generalization	Demonstrating a skill or knowledge across time, place, people, and materials
Fluency	Demonstrating a skill or knowledge smoothly and efficiently or with increasing complexity

Fig. 1





3. Stories from the Field

Within each subdomain you will find real examples of Wyoming children and adults using the standards as part of their daily interactions. You will see standards used in classrooms, family home childcare settings, on home visits, in families, and across all ages birth through kindergarten. As you read these stories, take time to think about what you are noticing. Look for connections between the example and your teaching.



4. Equity Connection

Each story from the field highlights practices that support equity. You will find an Equity Connection linking the story to Developmentally Appropriate Practice, Universal Design for Learning, or Trauma Informed Practice on each subdomain page. Visit the equity resources referenced in the connection, learn more about the principles, and consider how you support equity in your work with children as you read the examples.



5. Teacher Tips

Teacher Tips are simple suggestions that can help teachers do great work and use the standards more effectively. They are found on each subdomain page and provide evidence-based strategies linked to a suggested practice. As you implement the strategies using the "try it" suggestions and reflect on your experience, you can increase in knowledge and confidence in your work with children.



6. Coherent Path to Quality Connection

Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality is a companion document for the Wyoming Early Learning Standards. The first of its kind in our state, the Coherent Path to Quality is a shared vision of what high quality learning looks like for Wyoming's children. Throughout this document, you will find connections to the Coherent Path to Quality, and you are encouraged to use both tools together.



[Click to download a copy of Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality.](#)



[Click to order your hard copy of Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality on the Wyoming Quality Counts Website.](#)

GET TO KNOW THE STANDARDS

As you get to know Wyoming's Early Learning Standards you will be able to use them to benefit you and the children and families you serve.

Here are some strategies you can use to become familiar with Wyoming's Early Learning Standards.

CHUNK IT OUT: Focus on one section of the standards for a designated time, such as one domain or standard each week. Study the standard and think about how you can encourage children to practice those skills.

FOCUS ON A CHILD: Choose a child to focus on as you read through the standards. Note if you have seen the child demonstrate the skills identified in each benchmark.

FACILITATED READING: Use a red, yellow, and green highlighter as you read the standards. Highlight benchmarks in green that you feel confident recognizing and planning for. In yellow, highlight benchmarks that you feel less comfortable with or would like to work on next. In red, highlight benchmarks that feel challenging or you were unaware of.

CUT AND SORT: Make a copy of the standards (using the insert or the copy in the back of this book) and cut them into separate chunks by standard and benchmark. Lay out the pieces beginning with the standard. Then try to sort benchmarks under each standard. Check your work and see how you did.

CLASSROOM MAP: Draw a map of your childcare space or classroom. Label each area (e.g. blocks, dramatic play, outdoors, bathroom, snack or lunch table, etc.). Write down the standards you would be most likely to see children demonstrate in each location.

THE GIST: The standards are organized by domain, subdomain, standard, and benchmark. Read each standard and write down the gist of each subdomain. The gist is how you would summarize that section/subdomain in a sentence or two.

CONNECT STORIES TO STANDARDS: Read each of the stories in the document and identify the standards within a single subdomain that

were demonstrated by the child or children in the story. As an additional challenge, identify multiple standards demonstrated across subdomains.

DOCUMENT LEARNING: Take three photos or videos of children learning in your classroom. Make time to review each photo and identify all the standards you see children demonstrating across domains. As an additional challenge, identify standards that are consistently demonstrated across all three experiences.

AGE GROUP COLLABORATION: Find a colleague that teaches children of the same age. Select a subdomain you find challenging. Together, identify how children of that age group would demonstrate proficiency on each standard under that subdomain. Use the Measures of Proficiency (p. 8) as a guide if you need help. Select another subdomain and complete the task again.

LESSON PLAN REVIEW: Look at your lesson plans from a recent week or month. Identify the standards that were addressed in your plans. Next time you plan a lesson, link your ideas to a standard.

SHARING WITH FAMILIES: Make a plan to share information about standards with families (e.g. highlight one standard at a time in a newsletter or on a parent information board). Ask families if this information is helpful. Share what you did and what you learned from families with a colleague or at a team meeting.

TEACHING PARTNERS: With a colleague who teaches the same children, select three children you would like to assess under a single subdomain. For each standard, share evidence of how each child is demonstrating proficiency. Select another subdomain and complete the task again.

TRY IT OUT: Come up with your own strategy to get to know the standards better. Share your idea with a colleague and give it a try.



RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS

Strong positive relationships and interactions provide a critical foundation for lifelong development and learning. These relationships help children develop a sense of identity and belonging, manage their emotions, recognize and appreciate diversity, and build skills for interacting effectively with others.





EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN DEVELOP A SENSE OF IDENTITY AND BELONGING BY:

- 1a. Developing an awareness and appreciation of self as a unique, competent, and capable individual.
- 1b. Feeling a sense of pride and belonging to family, community, and other groups.
- 1c. Expressing confidence in a range of abilities and in the capacity to accomplish tasks and take on new challenges.

STANDARD 2

CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE HEALTHY EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND FUNCTIONING BY:

- 2a. Expressing, recognizing, and labeling their body's sensations and emotions.
- 2b. Adapting to diverse situations and new environments with appropriate emotions and behaviors.
- 2c. Managing their internal state and emotions with increasing independence.
- 2d. Handling impulses and behavior with support from adults.

CONFIDENT POKÉMON™ ARTIST

A group of children in Shelby's preschool class was very interested in Pokémon. They talked frequently about Pokémon characters and the different things each character can do. They attempted to draw Pokémon characters but expressed frustration that they did not look exactly like the cartoon characters. Shelby typically avoided traditional coloring pages in order to encourage children's independence and creativity. However, she realized that offering this group a little more support could help them gain confidence in their drawing abilities. She decided to print outlines of the children's favorite Pokémon characters and invite them to try tracing. During free play, she presented this idea to the group. Four-year-old Bree was thrilled! While she and two other friends tried out tracing, Cooper, also four, was nearby watching closely. After tracing the outline of a Pokémon, Bree asked Shelby, "Like mine?" and pointed to her drawing. Shelby responded, "I see how you used the picture to get all the outside lines on there. Are there any other details you want to add to it?" Bree thought for a moment, looked at the printed picture, and said, "I think I want to color it red." Shelby pointed out where the markers were, and Bree got to work adding color to her drawing. She added red, pink, and yellow and then returned her focus to tracing the Pokémon's mouth. Shelby observed Bree's feeling of accomplishment as she worked and noticed that she was eager to take on new challenges by adding details to her drawing. A few minutes later, Cooper spoke. He said that he didn't know how to trace the Pokémon. Shelby, having seen Bree's success, asked Bree if she could teach Cooper how to do it. Bree happily agreed. She showed Cooper how to hold the paper down so he could see the lines and then traced over them while describing each step. Cooper watched and listened closely. Afterward, Cooper colored in the outline for his first Pokémon character.



EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 1A	Developing an awareness and appreciation of self as a unique, competent, and capable individual.
Emergence	Notices and looks at self in a mirror, or responds to their name.
Acquisition	Recognizes self in a picture and talks about individual characteristics such as physical traits and interests.
Generalization	Feels capable and shows confidence in different settings, such as home, school, and in the community.
Fluency	Differentiates characteristics in self and others, or draws a picture of self with specific physical traits.

NOTES:



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: EXPLORATORY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Exploratory learning experiences engage children in hands-on investigation and exploration of materials, ideas, and concepts. They spark curiosity, invite investigation, and nurture learning (*Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality*, p. 42).

What can we learn from this story about how to nurture learning and allow children to explore ideas and concepts?

In what ways do you nurture learning and encourage exploration?



EQUITY CONNECTION: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

Shelby supported the creation of a caring, equitable community of learners (*DAP Guideline 1—Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners*) by encouraging Bree to help Cooper as he learned a new skill and by celebrating each child's accomplishments. Including tracing materials to support the children's interests and make connections to their experiences at home helped foster a sense of belonging, purpose, and agency (*DAP Principle 6—Fostering a sense of belonging, purpose and agency*). It also allowed for greater independence and provided a learning experience that was meaningful, accessible, and responsive to each child (*DAP Principle 4—Considering differences in cultural context and experiences*).



TEACHER TIP: OBSERVATION

Jablon, Dombro, and Dichtelmiller (2007) describe observation as “watching to learn.” When we pay attention to the things children do, listen to what they say, and look closely at what they create, we are able to make informed decisions to support their learning. As you use the Wyoming Early Learning Standards, your observations will become more intentional, and you will be able to link your observations to next steps in your planning. It takes effort to make time to observe and reflect on children's learning. However, this commitment always pays off with greater insight for teachers and better outcomes for kids.



TRY IT!

Carry sticky notes or a small notebook and a pen with you for a day. When you observe a child doing something you want to remember, write it down. At the end of the day, look at your notes. What did this help you remember? What information would you like to share with families? What did you learn that can help you plan for tomorrow or next week? How did this strategy for recording your observations work for you? Try out other ideas for recording observations until you find one that works best for you.



SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS BY:

- 1a. Showing trust, developing emotional bonds, and interacting comfortably with adults.
- 1b. Communicating with familiar adults and accepting or requesting guidance.

STANDARD 2

CHILDREN BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS BY:

- 2a. Engaging in and maintaining positive interactions and relationships with other children.
- 2b. Engaging in age-appropriate social play (e.g., parallel, associative, cooperative).
- 2c. Using problem-solving skills to resolve conflicts with other children.

STANDARD 3

CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR BY:

- 3a. Recognizing and labeling others' emotions.
- 3b. Expressing care and concern toward others.
- 3c. Recognizing how actions affect others.
- 3d. Asserting themselves and communicating preferences in age-appropriate ways.
- 3e. Participating collaboratively with a group.

INFANT INTERACTION



Lauren cares for children from birth to five-years-old in her family home childcare program. After reading the new Wyoming Early Learning Standards, she noticed an opportunity to encourage development in the two infants she cares for. One day while the older children were happily playing with dolls, she put the infants down on their tummies facing one another. At first, they studied each other carefully. Then Zane, a nine-month-old, smiled and started army crawling toward the three-month-old, Saylor. Saylor, who can be fussy when put down on her tummy, quietly watched Zane approach. Lauren scooted Zane back to see what he would do next. Zane again crawled straight for Saylor, wanting to get closer. Lauren wondered if she should distract Zane toward something else, but remembering what she had read, recognized this as an opportunity to support social development in both children. Instead of distracting Zane, she repeated this game multiple times, moving him back and letting him crawl toward his friend. Zane began to giggle, and Saylor was enraptured by the face getting closer and then further away. Noticing the interaction, some of Lauren's two-year-olds came to take a look. They soon joined in the game by lying on their tummies in line with the infants. The older children laughed, smiled, and played peek-a-boo with the infants. Later, Lauren went back to the standards to help her identify social and emotional benchmarks that she observed for all four children involved.

EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 2C	Using problem-solving skills to resolve conflicts with other children.
Emergence	Responds physically to express a need or want with another child.
Acquisition	Follows an adult's cues to negotiate with a peer.
Generalization	Independently offers a solution to resolve a conflict with a peer.
Fluency	Offers and follows increasingly complex plans to solve a problem, or anticipates a problem and responds before it escalates.

NOTES:



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS

Authentic relationships are honest and real. They convey the message “I am real with you and it is safe for you to be real with me” (*Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality*, p. 6-7). Simple rules are experienced across all relationships: adult-child, child-child, and adult-adult.

In this story, what relationships are being supported authentically?

How can you support authenticity across each of these relationships?



EQUITY CONNECTION: TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

Lauren's choice to allow the two infants to interact rather than distract them with a different activity demonstrated sensitivity to their need to establish a relationship in a safe environment supported by a caring and responsive adult. She allowed them space and time to learn about each other and express their emotions. All of the children were involved in a relaxed and caring interaction that benefitted children of all ages in her care. This intentional creation of a safe, interactive social space is an example of Trauma Informed Practice. These practices are good for all children, not only those who have experienced trauma.



TEACHER TIP: UNDERSTANDING BEHAVIOR

Young children tell us how they feel, what they know, and the things they need through their behavior. When we see children's behavior as a form of communication, we can observe with curiosity and look for the message behind the behavior. Behaviors that adults find challenging are children's responses to the environments we create for them. As we observe children's behaviors with respect and care, we are given new insights into ways we can improve the environment and our teaching so that all children can succeed. When a child is experiencing a challenge, rather than trying to make the behavior stop as quickly as possible, we can see it as an opportunity to teach and strengthen our relationship with them. Don't forget that just like adults, children are allowed to have a bad day! A thoughtful response from a caring adult is often all a child needs. [Click to learn more about understanding behavior.](#)



TRY IT!

Think of a recent moment with a child who was experiencing a challenge in the classroom. How did you respond? What was the message behind the child's behavior? Were you able to meet the child's needs? How can you leverage the child's strengths and interests to support positive behaviors in the future? Is there something you can change in your environment, routines, or teaching that can help the child succeed? Document positive changes you notice in the child's behavior that can help you plan for tomorrow or next week.



CULTURE, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURE, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY BY:

- 1a. Demonstrating self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.
- 1b. Expressing comfort and joy with human diversity, using accurate language for human differences, and forming deep, caring connections across all dimensions of human diversity.
- 1c. Developing an awareness of the functions, contributions, and diverse characteristics of their own family and others.
- 1d. Recognizing and describing physical features of the classroom, home, and community.
- 1e. Developing an understanding of the basic principles of how communities function.
- 1f. Recognizing unfairness (injustice), using language to describe unfairness, and understanding that unfairness hurts.
- 1g. Demonstrating a sense of empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions.

LEARNING ABOUT ONE ANOTHER



Britnee teaches three- to four-year-olds in a private religious preschool program. At the beginning of each year, she likes to focus on helping children and families feel included in her classroom community. One way she does this is by sending home a piece of construction paper that children are encouraged to fill with photos or drawings or other representations of the things and people they love. With their families' help, children complete the activity and bring the paper back to school to share with their classmates. Each child takes a turn sharing their favorite things with the class in whatever way they are comfortable, some with help, others independently. Following the presentation, each child's poster is placed on display in the classroom. Britnee encourages the children to notice and talk about the things they see that are the same and different and share the things they are learning about their friends. She keeps the activity open-ended so children and families can participate in any way they want. This year, one preschooler drew his favorite superheroes with his mom's help, while others shared photos and drawings of friends, family, and pets. These posters stay up all year and are frequently referred to in class. Britnee has noticed how much families enjoy this project and how proud the children are to share the things they love with their friends. The classroom community is strengthened and all families are celebrated as children learn more about each other.

EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 1E	Developing an understanding of the basic principles of how communities function.
Emergence	Notices and recognizes the members in their family, community, or care setting, or responds to their needs by attempting to comfort them.
Acquisition	Responds to adults when asked to help, or participates actively in daily routines.
Generalization	Participates in maintenance of shared spaces in the school or community, or understands and follows different expectations in different settings.
Fluency	Expands their community to include new settings and a larger geographical area, or participates in a leadership role in familiar settings.

NOTES:



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: RESPECTFUL EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

This simple rule is about everyone feeling welcome, involved, and empowered. Respectful environments are inclusive and are a place where you feel seen, heard, and valued (*Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality*, p. 25).

What do you notice about how Britnee welcomes all children and families into her program?

What are you currently doing to create a respectful environment for your children, families, and educators?



EQUITY CONNECTION: UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Britnee allowed each child and family to respond to her invitation in whatever way they wished. This meant each child and family created something meaningful and connected to their unique interests and experiences (*UDL Principle 3 - Provide multiple means of action and expression*). Britnee also gave children the opportunity to share with the group in the way they were most comfortable and with the support they needed (*UDL Principle 1 - Provide multiple means of engagement*).



TEACHER TIP: RELATIONSHIPS FIRST

Based upon years of research on the brain and learning, we can definitively state that your most important task as an early childhood educator is to establish strong, supportive relationships with children. The Harvard Center on the Developing Child (2004, p. 1) states, "Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development." When you focus on relationships first, using standards becomes easier. And, when you use standards to help you observe, reflect, and plan for children's learning, your relationships with children will become stronger. [Click to learn more about the importance of relationships.](#)



TRY IT!

On a sheet of paper, write the names of all of the children in your care. Reflect on your relationship with each child one at a time. Consider the following questions:

- How strong is your relationship with that child?
- When was the last time you connected with the child one on one?
- What do you know about the child? What do you wish you knew?
- What is one small thing you can do to strengthen this relationship?
- Notice and celebrate your growing relationship with each child.



Oh, lovely mud
said the cow

and she

COMMUNICATION

Communication is fundamental to the human experience. Language and literacy development is essential for children's learning across all domains. Dual language learners and those who use alternative forms of communication develop their language in the same way as all children. The emerging ability of children to communicate successfully with others in multiple ways allows them to build relationships, share meaning, express needs, and convey ideas.





COMMUNICATION

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS BY:

- 1a. Understanding, responding to, and learning from conversations with others.
- 1b. Responding appropriately to simple statements, directions, questions, and stories.
- 1c. Comprehending increasingly complex and varied vocabulary.

STANDARD 2

CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS BY:

- 2a. Using increasingly complex and varied vocalizations and vocabulary to express ideas and needs.
- 2b. Communicating in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
- 2c. Understanding, following, and using appropriate social and conversational rules.
- 2d. Persisting with conversations through multiple exchanges.
- 2e. Varying the amount of information provided to meet the demands of the situation.
- 2f. Expressing themselves in increasingly long, detailed, and sophisticated ways.

ASKING FOR MORE

Anna is an Early Childhood Special Educator who works with young children ages birth to three-years-old who are receiving early intervention services as part of an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Anna links her work to standards as she supports children and families in their homes. She uses benchmarks to guide possible next steps in children's development. On a recent home visit, Anna explored puzzles with two-year-old Kairi and her father, Benito. Anna and Kairi's parents have been working on a goal to help Kairi communicate more using signs and sounds. Kairi's family taught Anna a special sign they use for "want" and Anna shared the sign for "more." They encourage both signs as they played together with Kairi. During a home visit Anna, Benito, and Kairi explored a puzzle together. Kairi began by completing the puzzle on her own. Then Anna helped Benito join in the play, encouraging him to remove puzzle pieces and put them back in alongside Kairi. After several times completing the puzzle, Anna and Benito encouraged Kairi to request a puzzle piece using one of her familiar signs. Anna removed all of the pieces and guided Benito to give Kairi a piece one at a time when she signed "more" or "want." She celebrated with Benito as Kairi communicated her requests and completed the puzzle. Anna was thrilled to learn from Benito that Kairi is imitating words more frequently, and her family has noticed that her frustration has decreased. Anna used her observation of Kairi and Benito's play and her conversation with Benito to plan her visit the following week.



EQUITY CONNECTION: TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

As Anna supported Benito in his interaction with Kairi and the puzzle, she was helping them both build a responsive relationship, the most important trauma sensitive strategy. As Benito responded to Kairi's requests for additional puzzle pieces, he was mirroring the behaviors he wanted to encourage in his child. Kairi and her father were both able to practice self regulation and communication skills in a safe environment with the support of another caring and responsive adult, Anna. Anna used these Trauma Responsive Strategies to facilitate a successful play experience for Benito and Kairi that built upon their strengths and encouraged growth for them both.



A FASCINATING TRIP TO THE PARK

Sarah uses standards to help support her three-year-old daughter Piper’s development. Recently, while at the park, Piper was climbing on a spider web climber. She imagined she was on a rocket ship and told her mom all about it.

“My rocket ship is fash-ee-ating,”

she said. Then she paused and re-stated, “I mean my rocket ship is fascinating because it can fly upside down!” Remembering the standards for communication, Sarah saw the moment as a learning opportunity, not just a cute story to tell the family. As they moved to other games at the park, Sarah used the word fascinating again and again and shared other synonyms for the word. She noticed that Piper said and used the word correctly throughout the day and for the next couple of days. She continued to support Piper’s

new learning by pointing out the word in books they read together at home. “Fascinating” is now a regular word in Piper’s vocabulary.



EQUITY CONNECTION: UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Sarah followed her daughter’s lead as she tried out using a new word. She then found many different opportunities to help Piper hear the word used correctly during activities she chose at the park. She also found examples of the word in books they read together. Each of these many ways of engaging Piper are an example of Universal Design for Learning (*UDL Principle 2 - Provide multiple means of representation*).



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: RECIPROCAL RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS

“Reciprocal relationships are two-way. Each person is equally respected and valued. The relationship is balanced so that both people feel seen and heard” (*Wyoming’s Coherent Path to Quality, p. 12*).

How are Anna, Benito, and Kiari’s, or Sarah and Piper’s interactions reciprocal?

In what ways are you hearing family voices?

EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 1C	Comprehending increasingly complex and varied vocabulary.
Emergence	Looks at an object when an adult names it or asks about it (i.e., “Where is the ball?”).
Acquisition	Responds to questions and conversations about a variety of objects or people.
Generalization	Continually adds new vocabulary words in conversations.
Fluency	Reads, talks about, or writes new vocabulary words found in books or stories.



TEACHER TIP: SUPPORTING DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS

When supporting dual language learners, keep these practices in mind (Educational Development Center—*Promising Practices*). First, encourage children to use their home language in the classroom. Obtain bilingual books, label classroom items in the home language, and invite family members or community members who speak the language into the classroom. Second, support children’s home culture. Celebrate the unique cultures of the children in your class, and include them as you plan for learning. Third, use teaching strategies that promote language development. Make connections between stories and activities and children’s own experiences; ask open-ended questions; use new words multiple times in meaningful ways; provide visual images, gestures and movements to communicate; include authentic props and real items for children to explore; and embrace hands-on and play-based learning. Be willing to adjust your teaching to help dual language learners succeed.



TRY IT!

Strategies to support dual language learners are good for all young children. Select one of the suggestions above and try it out in the classroom—even if you aren’t currently teaching a dual language learner. Note how this strategy supports children’s language development. Select another strategy and add it to your repertoire. You can increase your confidence supporting language development one simple strategy at a time.

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN GAIN EARLY READING SKILLS AND AN APPRECIATION FOR BOOKS BY:

- 1a. Showing interest in shared reading experiences and engaging with books independently.
- 1b. Comprehending meaning from pictures and stories.
- 1c. Demonstrating an understanding of narrative structure through storytelling/retelling.
- 1d. Engaging with or asking and answering questions about a book that is read aloud.
- 1e. Recognizing how books are read (front to back and one page at a time) and recognizing basic features of books such as title, author, and illustrator.
- 1f. Making connections between stories and real-life experiences.

STANDARD 2

CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS BY:

- 2a. Attending to, repeating, and using rhythms, rhymes, phrases, or refrains from stories or songs.
- 2b. Demonstrating awareness that spoken language is composed of smaller segments (e.g., words, syllables, and sounds).

STANDARD 3

CHILDREN DEVELOP WRITING SKILLS BY:

- 3a. Recognizing that writing is a way of communicating for a variety of purposes.
- 3b. Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to tell a story.

- 3c. Communicating through written representations, symbols, and letters using increasingly sophisticated marks.

STANDARD 4

CHILDREN GAIN KNOWLEDGE OF PRINT CONCEPTS AND THE ALPHABET BY:

- 4a. Identifying letters of the alphabet and producing correct sounds associated with letters.
- 4b. Developing an understanding that print carries a message through symbols and word.

DAILY JOURNALS

Preschool teacher Lynelle uses daily journals to support her children’s emerging writing skills. Daily journals are available for children to access any time during their preschool day. Lynelle also plans more intentional opportunities for the children to write in their journals by providing prompts and a specific journal writing time at least twice a week. Children can choose to share their work with the rest of the class each day by sitting in the “Author’s Chair” during meeting time. At the beginning of the year, children most often draw pictures, with adults writing words. As the year progresses, children begin writing their own letters and word approximations, often accompanied by adult writing. Children decide if they want adult assistance with writing in their journal or not. By the end of the year, many children are independently writing letters and words to describe their drawings. Journals go home when they are full, which for some happens several times a year. Lynelle uses the daily journal as an artifact to document and assess children’s learning and skills, and to share their progress with families. On this day, Dylan was drawing a pumpkin he saw as he was trick-or-treating.



PLAYFUL READING

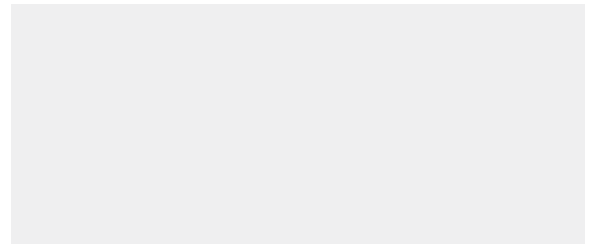
During preschool choice time, four-year-old Bobby asked Kara, a classroom guest, to read him a story. Before she could reply, four-year-old Olivia said, "I will read it to you!" Together the children sat down and read a classroom favorite, "Not A Box." Olivia was able to "read" the book based on her ability to look at the pictures and retell the familiar story. When Olivia forgot the words or struggled on a page, Bobby would recall that part of the story. They read the story together three times. Olivia read first, then Bobby said, "I want to read it to you," taking a turn. Then both children read the book to Kara. After the story, Kara said, "It's really fun to play with boxes." As she pointed out two boxes in dramatic play she said, "Maybe we could play 'Not a Box.'" Bobby and Olivia began playing with the boxes recalling parts of the story such as, "It's not a box—it's a horse buggy" and "It's not a box—it's a refrigerator."



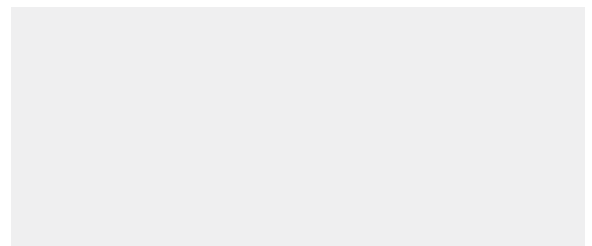
EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: ACCESSIBLE EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

"Accessible environments foster confidence and independence and invite exploration. [They] are designed with the learner in mind" (*Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality*, p. 33) and convey the message this space is for you—you can be successful here.

In this example how was the environment both emotionally and physically accessible?



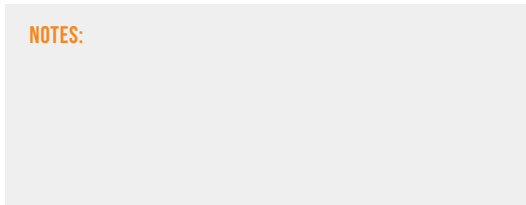
How is your environment accessible for children's independent learning?



EQUITY CONNECTION: TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

Bobby and Olivia were provided a comfortable and relaxed classroom environment where they had time to engage in a self-directed activity. They experienced an emotional connection as they supported each other while reading the book. Adults also offered additional opportunities to make meaning of the book as they engaged in open-ended play with the boxes in dramatic play. This promoted feelings of self-mastery and helped them process their learning together. Children who have experienced trauma, and all children, benefit from the opportunity to direct their learning and experience feelings of self-mastery and confidence that come from making meaning of their experiences through play.

NOTES:



EQUITY CONNECTION: UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Journal writing in Lynelle's classroom is intentionally designed to support children with different experiences, cultures, abilities, and languages. Children choose how to use their journal and decide if they want an adult to help with writing words or not. They choose what they will draw or write, and they determine if they want to share their journal entry with the class. They are given multiple ways to engage and express their ideas (*UDL Principle 1 - Provide multiple means of engagement, Principle 3 - Provide multiple means of action and expression*).

READING AT THE PARK

Krystal is a Family Support Provider (FSP) for an Early Head Start Program. She provides home visits to families, and plans activities using a standard-based evaluation tool, which the program developed. Krystal's primary role is to support families as they teach their children at home. During visits, families share activities they would like to do with their children. Krystal then aligns the activity with a developmental goal and plans the location and needed supplies. Recently, Krystal scheduled a visit with Anita and her son Caleb at the park. They brought along a favorite book to read together. Krystal was excited to see what would happen as Anita and Caleb engaged in an activity that they enjoy at home in a new location. As Anita and Caleb read the book together, Anita asked questions about what they saw on the pages, and Krystal sat close by offering suggestions when needed. Afterward, as Caleb played on the equipment, Krystal and Anita discussed the experience, planned for the next visit, and celebrated Caleb's recent accomplishments.

NOTES:



EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 1D	Engaging with or asking and answering questions about a book that is read aloud.
Emergence	Finds a favorite picture or page in a book or responds to an adult question with eye contact.
Acquisition	Responds to a question about a book by pointing to an object, making a noise (i.e., mooing like a cow or saying cow) or performing an action (i.e., jumping when the book says "jump").
Generalization	Makes connections between different books or stories, or connects to the child's experiences outside of school (i.e., when reading a book about the zoo, states "We went to the zoo!").
Fluency	Selects a favorite book, acts out, retells, or writes about a story.

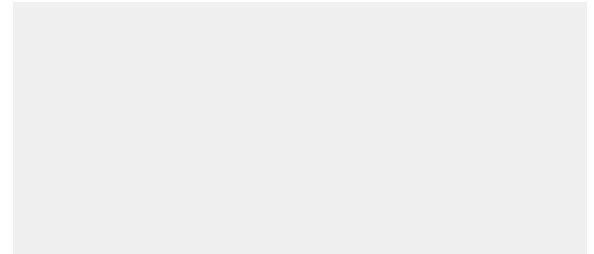
NOTES:



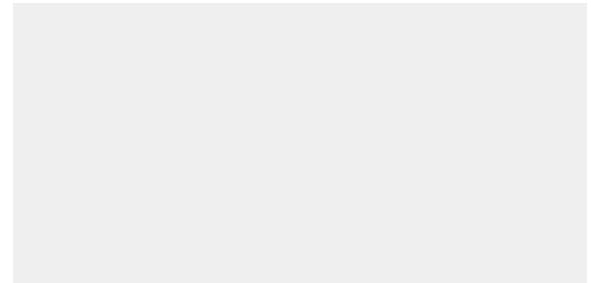
EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: MEANINGFUL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

"Meaningful learning experiences invite the learner to connect something new to the familiar"
(Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality, p. 39).

What do these stories demonstrate about how we learn what is important to children?



How do you know that something is meaningful to a child?



EQUITY CONNECTION: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

Krystal used her knowledge of Caleb and his experiences at home to help plan a new opportunity for Caleb and his mother to do something they enjoy in a different setting (*DAP Core Consideration 2 - Individuality*). Krystal collaboratively partnered with Anita to plan her visit and encouraged them to explore a new community resource (the park) together (*DAP Guideline 2 - Engaging in Reciprocal Partnerships with Families and Fostering Community Connections*).



TEACHER TIP: SHARING STANDARDS WITH FAMILIES

Standards are a great resource for families, as well as early childhood educators. There are many different ways to share standards with families. You can start by explaining that early childhood standards are a tool to help understand children's development, guide your observations, and plan for their learning. They are not a way to measure readiness for kindergarten or to disqualify children from opportunities. As partners, families and educators can use standards to identify children's strengths, discuss learning goals, and plan to support next steps in development. You can help families identify and leverage their own strengths as the child's first and most important teacher as you share standards with them.



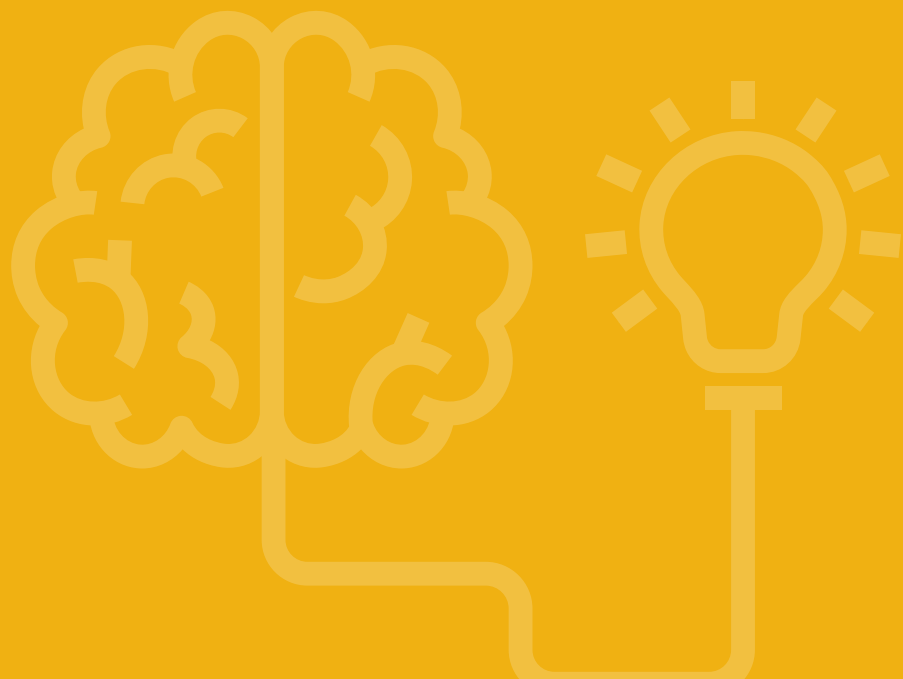
TRY IT!

Using the standards, identify something to celebrate for each child in your care. Take a photo or save an artifact that demonstrates the child's success, link it to a standard, and include your reflection to tell the whole story. Share this accomplishment with families in a text, email, or in a printed document. Notice how they respond as you celebrate their child together!



COGNITION

Supporting children’s cognition—how they think and what they know—is vital to the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. When children approach learning with curiosity, initiative, imagination, and flexibility they become lifelong learners. Mathematics and scientific reasoning skills help children connect ideas, develop logical and abstract thinking, question, and analyze to understand and organize the world around them.





APPROACHES TO LEARNING

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN FOSTER INITIATIVE AND CURIOSITY BY:

- 1a. Demonstrating eagerness to explore, learn about, and discuss a range of topics, ideas, and tasks.
- 1b. Demonstrating flexibility, imagination, and inventiveness in approaching tasks and activities.
- 1c. Planning, initiating, and completing learning activities with peers.

STANDARD 2

CHILDREN PRACTICE COGNITIVE SELF-REGULATION AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS BY:

- 2a. Demonstrating an increasing ability to control impulses.
- 2b. Maintaining focus, sustaining attention, and persisting in tasks with age-appropriate support.
- 2c. Using memories as a foundation for more complex actions and thoughts.
- 2d. Demonstrating flexibility in thinking and behavior.
- 2e. Shifting attention between tasks and moving through transitions with minimal direction.

STANDARD 3

CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION BY:

- 3a. Using imagination in play and interactions with themselves, materials, and others.
- 3b. Recognizing the difference between pretend or fantasy situations and reality.
- 3c. Representing people, places, things, and processes, through drawings, movement, writing, and three-dimensional objects.
- 3d. Exploring and representing their ideas through creative arts.

MAKING A TRAIN

Kim, an assistant teacher in a Head Start classroom, noticed two children playing in the block area. Four-year-old Grace was placing large blocks in a line on the floor, making a train. Three-year-old Addi became interested and wanted to join the play. Grace and Addi had a disagreement, and Kim stepped in to offer help. They decided to make a bigger train that could hold two passengers so both girls could fit inside. Soon two other children joined in, and the group expanded the train to make a spot for each child who wanted to play. During the experience, Kim used prompting questions that had been placed around the classroom to encourage the children to explain their thinking. As they began working together, she asked, “How can she help?” and “What can she do?” As the play progressed, she continued to ask questions and give prompts: “Tell me more about that!”, “Where are you going?”, “How long will it take to get there?” Kim provided assistance when the children needed it, and she continued to ask prompting questions as the play progressed.



EQUITY CONNECTION: TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

Kim was nearby and available to Grace and Addi during their play. She provided support and offered possible solutions when she noticed they were struggling. Rather than addressing “misbehaviors,” Kim understood what needs the girls were expressing through their actions. She thoughtfully used questions to help them practice self-regulation and allow others to enter their play. Kim helped the girls create a safe space within the play as they designed a bigger train that could fit more people. These Trauma Informed Practices provided the foundation for a joyful interaction that modeled inclusion for all of the children involved.

NOTES:





TEACHER TIP: ASKING GREAT QUESTIONS

As adults engage in meaningful conversations with children, they strengthen relationships, support language development, and deepen children’s understanding. Thoughtful questions are an excellent tool that teachers can use to create great conversations. Try using questions that require more than just remembering or identifying objects (i.e., “What shape is this?”). Instead, ask questions that encourage children to discuss, explain, compare, contrast, hypothesize, and evaluate. Open-ended questions work best. Some examples include: “How did you make this?”, “What did you notice about...?”, “What do you think will happen if...?”, “How does this work?”, “What can we try next?”, or “What did you like best about...?”. [Click to learn more about asking great questions.](#)



TRY IT!

Make a list of questions that invite deeper thinking that you can place strategically in your classroom. Try to include different types of questions that help children remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. You may want to make several lists with questions tailored to a specific area (i.e., questions for the block area, dramatic play, or mealtimes). Try using the questions with children and share what you are learning.

VOLCANO EXPERIMENT

Calvin, Lydia, and Sadie, ages four, three, and two, attend Janae’s family home childcare program. Calvin had been asking to make a volcano for several days. Janae, responding to his interest, originally planned to make a large playdough volcano for the children to observe, using baking soda and vinegar. As she reflected on what she knew about Lydia and Sadie, Janae decided to rethink her plan so the younger children could participate more actively. Instead of starting with a large volcano, she designed a homemade science station with cardboard, test tubes, and pipettes, which would allow all three children to explore together. Each child had their own test tube and access to baking soda and vinegar. As they explored, two-year-old Sadie enjoyed scooping and pouring the baking soda on her own, causing a big bubbling-over reaction when vinegar was added. She also loved smelling and looking closely at the bubbles. Lydia was quieter and more focused as she observed the effect of the vinegar on the baking soda. Calvin quickly suggested adding color and Lydia was thrilled with his idea. The two older children talked about the results of the color mixing while Sadie continued to be most interested in what was happening in her own test tube. Using the standards to reflect afterward, Janae noticed that while the experiment addressed scientific reasoning skills, the children demonstrated strengths in many other subdomains, including Communication, Fine Motor Skills, and Approaches to Learning.



EQUITY CONNECTION: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

Janae intentionally designed an open-ended volcano activity that successfully involved children at multiple levels of development (*DAP Principle 4 - Consider individual differences, Principle 5 - Children are active learners, Principle 6 - Foster a sense of belonging, purpose, and agency*). During their exploration, she provided responsive individual support based upon her observations of each child (*DAP Core Consideration 2 - Individuality, Guideline 3 - Observing, Documenting, and Assessing Children’s Development and Learning*).

NOTES:



PLANNING WITH CHILDREN

In Lori's classroom of four- and five-year-olds, the children help plan materials for the dramatic play area. Recently, after noticing children were not using the dramatic play space as frequently, Lori asked the class what new ideas they had for the area. In response to one child's experience on a recent family trip, the group became very excited about creating a hotel. Lori guided their thinking as they identified different roles people have in hotels, including working at the front desk, cleaning, and cooking, as well as the people who sleep there. The group then listed the tools needed for each job, the clothing worn, and the tasks each person performs. They posted photos of each job, and before entering dramatic play, children signed up for a specific role using a sticky note. The children helped each other remember their roles and responsibilities at the hotel. They named the hotel the Mother Mary Hotel. Because the children created the hotel, they were very invested in the play and in the roles and responsibilities for each job. As the children worked at the hotel, they practiced many skills and demonstrated proficiency in Approaches to Learning, Mathematics, Communication, Literacy, Social Development, Emotional Development, and Gross and Fine Motor Skills.



NOTES:



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: ACTIONABLE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

“We learn by doing, and strengthen learning by doing” (*Wyoming’s Coherent Path to Quality*, p. 46). Actionable experiences deepen learning and give children the opportunity to see that what they are learning is purposeful.

How is this learning opportunity connected to the needs, interests, questions, or curiosities of these children?

What are you noticing about the current needs and interests of the children you care for?

EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 3D	Exploring and representing their ideas through creative arts.
Emergence	Moves body in response to music or sound.
Acquisition	Draws or builds something and tells an adult what it is.
Generalization	Uses multiple materials and different media to express ideas.
Fluency	Designs or performs increasingly complex representations using music, movement, or visual media.



EQUITY CONNECTION: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

Lori used the children’s interests to plan a meaningful play experience that supported their acquisition of knowledge and skills across multiple content areas (*DAP Guideline 5 - Planning and Implementing an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals*). She encouraged their agency and ownership in the classroom by guiding them as they chose materials for dramatic play (*DAP Principle 3 - Play promotes joyful learning, Principle 6 - Connecting experiences in school to home and community, Guideline 1 - Creating a Caring, Equitable Community of Learners*).



MATHEMATICS

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN BUILD AN UNDERSTANDING OF NUMBER SENSE AND OPERATIONS BY:

- 1a. Developing a sense of quantity and number.
- 1b. Knowing number names and counting sequences.
- 1c. Recognizing the number of objects in a set.
- 1d. Comparing numbers and quantities.
- 1e. Understanding the relationship between numbers and quantities.
- 1f. Associating a quantity with written numerals and writing numbers.
- 1g. Understanding addition as adding-to and understanding subtraction as taking-away-from.

STANDARD 2

CHILDREN PRACTICE MEASUREMENT AND COMPARISON BY:

- 2a. Measuring objects by their various attributes using standard and non-standard measurement.
- 2b. Using differences in attributes to make comparisons.
- 2c. Identifying currency and recognizing that it holds value.

STANDARD 3

CHILDREN DEVELOP SPATIAL SENSE AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF GEOMETRY BY:

- 3a. Exploring the positions of objects and their movement in space.
- 3b. Identifying, describing, comparing, and composing 2D and 3D shapes.

STANDARD 4

CHILDREN PRACTICE SEQUENCING AND PATTERNS BY:

- 4a. Matching, sorting, classifying, and ordering objects.
- 4b. Recognizing, duplicating, and extending simple patterns.

CALENDAR COUNTDOWN



The three- to five-year-olds in Nicole's preschool classroom began talking about upcoming events they were looking forward to during the month of October. Nicole noticed that they spent time every day discussing upcoming birthdays, "stay-at-home" days, show and tell days, and even a class member's family trip to watch an NFL football game. Often during morning meeting, children would ask how many days it was until one of these special occasions occurred. Nicole decided to introduce a calendar to help the children track how long they had to wait until their anticipated event.

She invited any children that were interested to join her in making a calendar. The children worked together to count out and draw the numbers on the calendar, and Nicole helped them identify and mark the dates that were significant to them. Every morning, the children now cross off the day and count how many days they have left until the events they are looking forward to. The calendar is on the wall where the morning meeting happens and has become part of the daily classroom routine. New events are recorded and tracked as the calendar continues monthly.

EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 2C	Identifying currency and recognizing that it holds value.
Emergence	Identifies a favorite toy or object and recognizes favorites of peers.
Acquisition	Determines an item or toy's value by offering it in exchange for something else, or pretends to pay for items in play.
Generalization	Identifies different types of currency (i.e., coins, bills, or credit cards) as a tool to acquire desired objects or to access activities.
Fluency	Uses currency correctly during play, or to purchase actual items.

NOTES:



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: PREDICTABLE EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

“A predictable environment eliminates the stress of the unknown and promotes independence and decision making” (*Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality*, p. 30).

In what ways did Nicole address children’s concerns and support them in creating an environment that is predictable?

How have you introduced predictability so that children are less anxious?



EQUITY CONNECTION: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

Nicole’s introduction of a calendar was based upon her observations of children’s interactions and was meaningful and connected to their interests and experiences (*DAP Principle 5 - Children are active learners creating meaning from their experiences, Guideline 3 - Observing, Documenting and Assessing Children’s Development and Learning, Guideline 5 - Planning and Implementing an Engaging Curriculum to Achieve Meaningful Goals*). The calendar was not only a way to support children’s curriculum goals, but also a way to strengthen their relationships and feelings of belonging in the classroom (*DAP Principle 5 - Children create meaning through their relationships, Principle 7 - Children learn in an integrated fashion, Guideline 1 - Creating A Caring, Equitable Community of Learners*).



TEACHER TIP: REPRESENTING CHILDREN’S THINKING

Children show us what they are thinking in many different ways. Reggio Emilia founder Loris Malaguzzi described this as the Hundred Languages of Children (2012). They show us as they play, draw, build, dance, and tell stories. We strengthen neural connections and help children think more deeply when we offer them multiple opportunities to represent their thinking. Encourage children to retell and then act out a favorite story, rather than just reading it. Help children look carefully at their artwork and try to make it again, including additional details. Take photos of children while they play, share it with the group, and have them describe what they were doing. Invite children to paint a picture of a recent field trip, and then tell a friend what they remember. Encourage children to make up a song about your clean up routine. Help children design and build a replica of their house or school. As you plan, provide more than just one way for children to show you what they know.



TRY IT!

Think about the tools children use in your classroom to represent their thinking. What do you rely upon most? Which tools do you offer to the children less often? Brainstorm ways to encourage children to represent their thinking through music, drama, and art. Think of something new you would like to offer, try it, and document how the children respond.



SCIENTIFIC REASONING

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN ENGAGE IN SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY BY:

- 1a. Exploring, observing, and describing objects, materials, organisms, and events.
- 1b. Comparing and categorizing observable phenomena.
- 1c. Using understanding of causal relationships to act on social and physical environments.
- 1d. Engaging in scientific talk.
- 1e. Developing an understanding of the processes that assist people in designing and building.

STANDARD 2

CHILDREN PRACTICE SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING SKILLS BY:

- 2a. Using a variety of strategies to solve problems.
- 2b. Asking a question, gathering information, and making predictions.
- 2c. Planning and conducting investigations and experiments.
- 2d. Analyzing results, drawing conclusions, and communicating results.

PLANT EXPLORATION

Jaden is a 17-year-old high school student who works after school as an assistant in a preschool classroom. Jaden loves plants and wanted to share his passion for them with the preschool children. With support from his program director, Jaden prepared a learning activity about plants for the children. He began by setting out a sensory tub with potting soil, scoops, and cups for the children to explore. Jaden asked the children to use their senses and describe the potting soil. When they noticed it was very dry and dusty, he offered them a spray bottle to water it down. He allowed the children to play for as long as their attention held, and when he noticed that they were ready for a new challenge he introduced empty pots and a plant. He asked the children, "I wonder if we could fill this pot with dirt for this plant?" The children guessed how many scoops were needed to fill the pot and then worked together to scoop the soil. Next, Jaden introduced a plant that was in need of repotting, talking to the children about the plant being "root bound" and in need of a new home. Together they untangled the roots and placed the plant into a new pot. The four children involved in the activity engaged with the soil and plant differently. Marvin was focused on the plant and its roots and listened carefully to the scientific terms Jaden used to describe it, while Ariel and Lucy enjoyed the sensory experience of the soil. Paxton chose to not touch the soil, but closely watched Jaden and his peers at work.

NOTES:



EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 2D	Analyzing results, drawing conclusions, and communicating results.
Emergence	Explores objects using cause and effect.
Acquisition	Notices the result of an action and intentionally seeks to recreate it, or draws attention to a result with words or actions.
Generalization	Describes the results of an action and plans what to do next in response.
Fluency	Documents the results of an action or experience and uses conclusions to intentionally design next steps.

NOTES:



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: RESPONSIVE RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS

“Responsive means you notice and connect with actions and words that fit the person and the situation” (*Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality*, p. 9).

What can we learn from Jaden's responses to the children in this experience?

How do you respond to children's individual interests and needs?



EQUITY CONNECTION: UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Jaden used sensory materials that the children could engage with in different ways to recruit and maintain their interest in potting a plant (*UDL Principle 1 - Provide multiple means of engagement*). He also presented ideas about plants using words and a variety of hands-on materials (*UDL Principle 2 - Provide multiple means of representation*). Jaden allowed children to use the materials in different ways based upon their interest, experiences, and development (*UDL Principle 3 - Provide multiple means of action and expression*).



TEACHER TIP: DOCUMENTING CHILDREN'S LEARNING

When we take the time to document the things we observe, it provides a powerful tool for reflection and planning. It also allows us to share with children and others our excitement about their learning. As you document, record what you see children doing, what you hear them saying, and the questions and ideas they are exploring. Save the work they create and take photos, many of them! Make time to document important milestones and significant events for individual children and the whole group. Be sure to include your reflections on the children's learning. Display your documentation for others to see. Documentation provides a window into your classroom and children's learning. The more you document, the more you can share!



TRY IT!

Take a photo of children at work in your classroom. Make some time to look at the photo and reflect. What do you remember about the event? What were individual children doing? What was the group doing? Were you involved? If so, what role did you play? What went well during the experience? What challenges did the children face? Write down your thoughts. Share the photo and your reflections with children or families, and see how they respond.



PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Promoting children's physical health and development enables them to explore and function in their environment and supports development in all other domains. Early health habits lay the foundation for lifelong healthy living.





PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN DEVELOP GROSS MOTOR SKILLS BY:

- 1a. Demonstrating control, strength, and coordination of large muscles.
- 1b. Using perceptual information to guide movement and interactions with objects and other people.

STANDARD 2

CHILDREN DEVELOP FINE MOTOR SKILLS BY:

- 2a. Demonstrating increasing control, strength, and coordination of small muscles.
- 2b. Exhibiting complex fine motor coordination when using tools to complete tasks.

STRAWS AND CONTAINERS

Delaney teaches in an Early Head Start center-based classroom with a mixed-age group of infants and toddlers. To meet the learning needs of all of the children, Delaney frequently offers open-ended materials for their play. Observing the children's interest in containers, Delaney provided a variety of straws and containers with different-size openings to encourage exploration. 27-month-old Jason was very interested in the straws and containers. As he explored, Delaney described what she saw him doing. "You opened the lid of the container. You dropped one straw in. Are you going to choose another straw in. Are you going to choose another straw the same color?"

NOTES:



EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 2B	Exhibiting complex fine motor coordination when using tools to complete tasks.
Emergence	Uses hands to explore objects and negotiate the environment, or explores tools.
Acquisition	Uses hands with coordination to explore objects, use tools, and participate in routines.
Generalization	Uses fine motor coordination with a wide variety of tools and to complete increasingly complex tasks.
Fluency	Uses fine motor coordination to complete academic tasks, or uses fine motor coordination to meet daily needs independently.

NOTES:



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: SAFE EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

“Safe environments are a pivotal part of learning; conveying the message it is safe for your brain to investigate and explore” (*Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality* p. 22).

How did Delaney’s facilitation of learning and choice of materials in this story communicate safety for Jason to explore?

Why do you think it is important to create an emotionally and physically safe environment?



EQUITY CONNECTION: TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

Delaney’s use of open-ended materials allowed the children to make a connection between their knowledge and skills and the task they were presented with. This built the children’s confidence and supported their meaning-making. As Delaney remained available to Jason and described what she saw him doing, he experienced feelings of pride and self-mastery and was encouraged to take on new challenges. These Trauma Informed Practices not only supported Jason’s growing understanding of himself, they deepened his experience in play.



TEACHER TIP: STRENGTH-BASED ASSESSMENT

As you use standards to report on children’s learning and development, your task is to identify what children CAN do. Include clear factual statements and avoid judgment. Reporting that a child is not demonstrating a skill often tells you and others very little. You learn much more about children by identifying the things you have seen them do, including things they may not yet do consistently or independently. Teachers will, of course, recognize that there are skills they have yet to see children demonstrate. Rather than focusing on reporting this to families, teachers can use this observation to plan learning opportunities that address the gaps.



TRY IT!

Think of a child who has just begun to demonstrate a new skill. How have they shown you this skill is emerging? Have you seen it once or twice, but not yet consistently? Are they able to do this with the help of peers or adults? Make a plan to help them continue to acquire or begin to generalize this new skill. How does looking for emerging skills change your perspective about children and standards?



DAILY LIVING SKILLS

STANDARD 1

CHILDREN DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF HEALTH, NUTRITION, AND SAFETY PRACTICES BY:

- 1a. Demonstrating healthy behaviors that contribute to lifelong well-being through physical activity.
- 1b. Demonstrating personal health and hygiene skills and practicing self-care routines.
- 1c. Exploring and enjoying a variety of nutritional foods and developing healthy eating practices.
- 1d. Developing knowledge and skills that help promote nutritious food choices and eating habits.
- 1e. Developing an awareness and understanding of safety rules and routines while learning to make safe and appropriate choices.
- 1f. Assessing situations and taking appropriate risks.

PUPPET HELPERS

In Jessie’s kindergarten classroom, she uses puppets named Fred and Alice to help the children work through some of the stresses of kindergarten. These include planning for upcoming events, resolving conflicts, and taking care of their belongings. Fred and Alice recently demonstrated how to prepare to go outside during cold Wyoming winters. During meeting time, Fred and Alice discussed proper clothing for cold weather and demonstrated how to put on gloves, hats, coats, snow pants, and snow boots. They walked the class through when, how, and whom to ask for help as they get ready to go outside. After the puppet demonstration, the children had the opportunity to practice putting on each item and asking for help when they needed it. The kindergartners love learning from Fred and Alice and greatly benefit from an intentional opportunity to plan and practice daily living skills in a less stressful and rushed environment.



EQUITY CONNECTION: TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE

Jessie uses puppets to help reduce children’s anxiety about new experiences at school. Fred and Alice also demonstrate executive function skills such as self-regulation and inhibitory control as they act out different scenarios, and encourage children to be less reactive and more intentional in their responses to daily challenges. Jessie also provides opportunities for children to practice new skills before they are asked to perform them independently or within a specific time frame. She helps children identify individuals who can assist them and ways to ask for help, both of which are key tools to decrease their stress response. This provides a safe learning space for children to gain new skills.

EXAMPLES OF PROFICIENCY STANDARD 1D	Developing knowledge and skills that help promote nutritious food choices and eating habits.
Emergence	Tolerates or explores nutritious foods when offered.
Acquisition	Understands and follows healthy mealtime routines with adult guidance.
Generalization	Shares knowledge about nutritious foods and eating habits with others.
Fluency	Independently makes healthy food choices and follows healthy eating habits.



SELF-CARE WITH MOM

Aella’s mom, Adina, tries to involve her 16-month-old in all of her daily routines. She asks herself before the start of a routine, "How can Aella be part of this routine, and help or have some say in what happens?" Adina often offers Aella choices during routines. For example, when leaving the house she asks: "Do you want to wear the blue or green shirt?", or, "Do you want to wear your boots or tennis shoes?". She also allows Aella to help during self-care routines. After brushing her teeth, she gives her the toothbrush so she can try it too. When combing her hair, Adina gives Aella the comb so she can use it as well. She assists Aella in helping take off her pajamas in the morning and encourages her to help get herself dressed. Aella helps put clothes in the dryer and takes them out, placing them in her laundry basket for folding. Aella helps pick up toys when she is done playing. Adina references the standards frequently so she can look forward to next steps in Aella’s development.



EQUITY CONNECTION: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

Adina is using her understanding of common developmental expectations for a 16-month-old (*DAP Core Consideration 1 - Commonality*), as well as what she knows about her daughter as a unique individual (*DAP Core Consideration 2 - Individuality*) to plan opportunities for her to respond to her environment and daily routines at home (*DAP Core Consideration 3 - Context*).



EVIDENCE OF QUALITY: CONSISTENT RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS

“Consistent means steady and unchanging in your behavior with others” (*Wyoming’s Coherent Path to Quality, p. 16*). Relationships are strengthened and children feel a sense of trust when there are consistent positive interactions.

What do you notice about how Adina provides consistency for Aella in her daily routines?

What simple ways can you build relationships that are steady and dependable?



TEACHER TIP: REVISIT EXPERIENCES TO DEEPEN LEARNING

Adults sometimes assume that young children need new or flashy activities to captivate their attention and motivate them to learn. This often leads to feelings of pressure and online searches for the perfect idea that children have never done before. However, activities that are not connected to children’s previous experiences present a challenge for young minds. Children learn best when they are given time to explore deeply and revisit experiences over time. This builds upon their existing knowledge and helps them make important neural connections. When you plan for children’s learning, balance novelty with the familiar. Keep the same materials available and add a new invitation for their use. Return to the things and places children love and ask questions to deepen the experience. Offer a successful activity again and describe what you see children doing. Help children see the connections they are making as you revisit experiences together.



TRY IT!

Think of a learning moment you recently shared with a child or a group of children. What made this moment special? How can you revisit the experience and add a new twist? What can you do to help children see the connections they are making? Make a plan to revisit the experience and document what you observe.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of your role, program type, or the age of the children you care for, you have an impact on young children. Empowered by Wyoming's Early Learning Standards, you can own that impact. There is not one perfect way to implement these standards. They were designed to be adapted to each unique setting in which children are cared for and educated. Because this tool was created by educators, for educators, it is focused on simplifying and streamlining the complex task of caring for and teaching Wyoming's youngest children.

Standards are an important tool to help professionalize our field. They provide early childhood educators the language we need to help others understand how important our work with children is. They can lead to conversations with families, colleagues, and community members about what children are learning, and our essential role in supporting them. Standards require us to think deeply about teaching and learning, and hold us accountable to support children's growth and

development. Standards provide a way to celebrate the good things we are already doing with children.

During the creation of this tool, team members reflected on the way the process and the resulting document made them feel. Words used included "excited," "hopeful," "heard," and "empowered". We hope that as you use the Wyoming Early Learning Standards in your practice you feel the same way.

“ **I think this new tool will help elevate early childhood education across our state; it provides educators, caretakers, and parents with the language to see that the things we do in everyday life can be profound learning opportunities for young children.**

- Kara Cossel, Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative, Sheridan



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thanks to Shelby Jelly, Janae Asay, Britnee Geringer, Anna Sibbett, Kara Cossel, Krystal McClain, Kathy Nelson, Kim Thompson, Lori Clark, Shelby Miskimins, Delaney Robbins, Adina Bitner, Jessie Willoughby, Lisa Garner, Nicole Philbin, and Addison Rolf for sharing the Wyoming stories and photos that fill the pages of this document.

Updating the Wyoming Standards involved a significant commitment from many Wyoming early childhood educators and leaders over the course of eight months. These busy professionals were asked to embrace a new way of working together that required flexibility, courage, and a great deal of trust in each other and in the process. These inspiring educators never wavered from our mission and held fast to our vision of a new kind of standards tool for Wyoming.

EVALUATION TEAM

The Evaluation Team was the glue that held the standards update together. They spent countless hours driving Wyoming roads, sitting in Zoom meetings, and dreaming of something different for our state. They spent long days and late nights carefully crafting the language for this document. Their work was truly a collaborative writing experience that required patience, humor, and a great deal of chocolate. They also provided leadership and facilitation for the Development Team. The Evaluation Team met on short notice, whenever needed, all while managing full-time work and family commitments. Their brilliant minds and dedication to excellence kept the work moving forward when things seemed impossible. Special thanks to Evaluation Team members:

Nikki Baldwin	Director, University of Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network
Lauren Carlisle	Communications and Outreach Coordinator, University of Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network
Nicole Philbin	Director, Children's Learning Center
Tyler Gonzalez	Professional Learning Facilitator, Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative
Jaclyn Klinginsmith	Program Director, Wyoming Kids First
Char Norris	Professional Learning Facilitator, Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative

“It was an honor to be a part of the standards development from the beginning of the process to the very end. I believe the path is being paved for early childhood education to gain the respect and recognition it deserves, and that these standards are one piece to elevating the profession.”

- Jaclyn Klinginsmith, Wyoming Kids First, Laramie

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The Development Team was full of passionate and thoughtful early childhood professionals from across Wyoming who spent months engaged in a different type of creative process. They committed to the essential and time-consuming task of relationship and knowledge building first. This provided a strong foundation that guided the rest of their work together. They accessed their networks of early childhood educators in the state to get feedback, ideas, and the stories and photos that fill this document. They were asked to engage in rigorous critique as they reviewed each element in the tool. They fearlessly challenged each other and the ideas represented here. They gave up evenings for months to meet together, often not knowing what the result would be. Their trust in the process and commitment to our mission was truly inspiring. Thank you Development Team members:

Addison Rolf	Curriculum Coordinator, The Neighborhood School, Cheyenne
Adina Bitner	Parent and Early Childhood Educator, Laramie
Britnee Geringer	Lead Teacher, Holy Name Catholic Preschool, Sheridan
Courtney Hill	Title 1 Specialist, Aspen Early Learning Center, Early Childhood Liaison, Fremont County School District #25, Riverton
Janae Asay	Home-Based Owner and Director, Forward Footsteps Childcare, Green River
Jessie Willoughby	Kindergarten Teacher, Kemmerer Elementary School, Kemmerer
Julie Eastes	Early Childhood Consultant and Literacy Specialist, Casper

Kara Cossel	Professional Learning Facilitator, Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative, Sheridan
Kathy Nelson	Education Coordinator, Wyoming Child and Family Development, Wheatland
Kelce Eckhardt	Professional Learning Facilitator, Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative, Lander
Lisa Garner	Kindergarten Teacher, Afton Elementary School, Afton
Melissa Litke	Assistant Director, Casper College Early Childhood Learning Center, Casper
Penny Hotovec	Childcare Technical Assistance Coach, Wyoming Department of Family Services, Powell
Savannah Conrad	Early Childhood Special Educator, Child Development Center, Casper
Stephanie Rino	Associate Director, Wyoming Kids First, Casper
Tamara Currah	Early Childhood Liaison, Sublette County School District #1, Pinedale
Tanya Wall	Director of Human Resources, Carbon County School District #1, Rawlins
Tricia Giovacco Johnson	Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education, University of Wyoming, Laramie

REVIEW TEAM

The Review Team included key stakeholders and statewide leaders in early childhood. Their task was to evaluate the completed standards document to ensure alignment with the Statewide Strategic Plan and other Federal Preschool Development Grant Activities, including Wyoming's Coherent Path to Quality. They also created a plan for dissemination and a roadmap for the development of additional resources for educators and families. Thanks to Review Team members:

Amy Reyes	Early Learning Specialist, Wyoming Department of Education
Becca Steinhoff	Executive Director, Wyoming Kids First
Betsy Carlin	Early Childhood Consultant
Deana Smith	Part B 619 Coordinator and Early Intervention Coordinator, Wyoming Department of Education

Denise Steele	WY Quality Counts Program Manager, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services
Helena Wagner	Director, Head Start State Collaboration Office
Lachelle Brant	Senior Policy Advisor for Education, Office of Governor Mark Gordon
Nicky Anderson	Support Services Section Program Manager, Wyoming Department of Family Services
Sheila Ricley	Program Manager, Wyoming Pre-school Development Grant, The Align Team

WYOMING PARTNERS



The Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network (WYECON) is an initiative of the University of Wyoming College of Education Trustee's Education Initiative. Its mission is to share research-based best practices with the early childhood community and provide a pathway to higher education for early childhood professionals in Wyoming.



The Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative (WYECPLC) is a partnership between state agencies, non-profit organizations, and the University of Wyoming to provide professional development opportunities for early childhood educators and elevate the quality of early childhood programs in Wyoming.



Align is a non-profit organization that aims to create strong communities by partnering with others for more impactful, successful organizations and programs. Their work with and for Wyoming's youngest children, families, early childhood educators, and others is carried out through facilitation of the Preschool Development grant, the STARS program, and more.



Wyoming Kids First is an initiative of the John P. Ellbogen Foundation. It provides leadership, advocacy, and resources for practices and policies that advance outcomes across the early childhood system now and for the future. Wyoming Kids First has provided important leadership in all aspect of the Federal Preschool Development Grant.

REFERENCES

Advancing equity in early childhood education position statement. NAEYC. (2019).

Retrieved January 4, 2022, from <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/equity>

Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. (2017, December 4). Retrieved January 4, 2022, from <http://www.developingchild.harvard.edu>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, January 22). *CDC's Developmental Milestones.*

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved January 5, 2022, from <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>

Developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) position statement. NAEYC. (2020). Retrieved January 4, 2022, from <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/dap/contents>

Edwards, C. P., Gandini, L., & Forman, G. E. (2012). No way the hundred is there.

In *The hundred languages of children the Reggio emilia experience in transformation.* essay, Praeger.

Free resources. WY Quality Counts. (2021, October 18). Retrieved January 5, 2022,

from <https://wyqualitycounts.org/explorers-club/free-resources>

Green, J. (n.d.). Observation: The key to understanding your child. NAEYC. Retrieved January 5, 2022,

from <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/observation-key-to-understanding-your-child>

Jablon, J. R., Dombro, A. L., & Dichtemiller, M. L. (2002). *The power of Observation. Teaching Strategies.*

National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. (2004).

Young children develop in an environment of relationships. Working Paper No. 1. Retrieved from <http://www.developingchild.net>

Strasser, J., & Bresson, L. M. (2017). *Big questions for young minds: Extending children's thinking.* National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Strasser, J. (2018). Conversations with Children! Questions that Spark Conversations and Deepen Understanding. *Teaching Young Children.* Vol 11. No 4.

Supporting emergent bilingual children in early learning. Educational Development Center. (n.d.). Retrieved January 5, 2022, from https://main.edc.org/sites/default/files/uploads/Supporting-Emergent-Bilingual-Children-Checklist_English.pdf

University of Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network. (2021, August 1). *Standards update 2021.* Retrieved January 5, 2022, from <https://sites.google.com/view/standards-update-2021/>

Wyoming's coherent path to quality. (2021). Retrieved January 4, 2022, from <http://wyecplc.org/index.php/professional-learning-library/wyomings-coherent-path-quality>



WYOMING'S EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

BIRTH THROUGH KINDERGARTEN

RELATIONSHIPS AND INTERACTIONS

Strong positive relationships and interactions provide a critical foundation for lifelong development and learning. These relationships help children develop a sense of identity and belonging, manage their emotions, recognize and appreciate diversity, and build skills for interacting effectively with others.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1 CHILDREN DEVELOP A SENSE OF IDENTITY AND BELONGING BY:

- 1a. Developing an awareness and appreciation of self as a unique, competent, and capable individual.
- 1b. Feeling a sense of pride and belonging to family, community, and other groups.
- 1c. Expressing confidence in a range of abilities and in the capacity to accomplish tasks and take on new challenges.

2 CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE HEALTHY EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION AND FUNCTIONING BY:

- 2a. Expressing, recognizing, and labeling their body's sensations and emotions.
- 2b. Adapting to diverse situations and new environments with appropriate emotions and behaviors.
- 2c. Managing their internal state and emotions with increasing independence.
- 2d. Handling impulses and behavior with support from adults.

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

1 CHILDREN BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS BY:

- 1a. Showing trust, developing emotional bonds, and interacting comfortably with adults.
- 1b. Communicating with familiar adults and accepting or requesting guidance.

2 CHILDREN BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEERS BY:

- 2a. Engaging in and maintaining positive interactions and relationships with other children.
- 2b. Engaging in age-appropriate social play (e.g., parallel, associative, cooperative).

- 2c. Using problem-solving skills to resolve conflicts with other children.

3 CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR BY:

- 3a. Recognizing and labeling others' emotions.
- 3b. Expressing care and concern toward others.
- 3c. Recognizing how actions affect others.
- 3d. Asserting themselves and communicating preferences in age-appropriate ways.
- 3e. Participating collaboratively with a group.

CULTURE, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY

1 CHILDREN DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF CULTURE, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY BY:

- 1a. Demonstrating self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.
- 1b. Expressing comfort and joy with human diversity, using accurate language for human differences, and forming deep, caring connections across all dimensions of human diversity.
- 1c. Developing an awareness of the functions, contributions, and diverse characteristics of their own family and others.
- 1d. Recognizing and describing physical features of the classroom, home, and community.
- 1e. Developing an understanding of the basic principles of how communities function.
- 1f. Recognizing unfairness (injustice), using language to describe unfairness, and understanding that unfairness hurts.
- 1g. Demonstrating a sense of empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions.

COMMUNICATION

Communication is fundamental to the human experience. Language and literacy development is essential for children's learning across all domains. Dual language learners and those who use alternative forms of communication develop their language in the same way as all children. The emerging ability of children to communicate successfully with others in multiple ways allows them to build relationships, share meaning, express needs, and convey ideas.

COMMUNICATION

1 CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE RECEPTIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS BY:

- 1a. Understanding, responding to, and learning from conversations with others.
- 1b. Responding appropriately to simple statements, directions, questions, and stories.
- 1c. Comprehending increasingly complex and varied vocabulary.

2 CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE EXPRESSIVE LANGUAGE SKILLS BY:

- 2a. Using increasingly complex and varied vocalizations and vocabulary to express ideas and needs.
- 2b. Communicating in order to seek help, get information, or clarify something that is not understood.
- 2c. Understanding, following, and using appropriate social and conversational rules.
- 2d. Persisting with conversations through multiple exchanges.
- 2e. Varying the amount of information provided to meet the demands of the situation.
- 2f. Expressing themselves in increasingly long, detailed, and sophisticated ways.

LITERACY

1 CHILDREN GAIN EARLY READING SKILLS AND AN APPRECIATION FOR BOOKS BY:

- 1a. Showing interest in shared reading experiences and engaging with books independently.
- 1b. Comprehending meaning from pictures and stories.
- 1c. Demonstrating an understanding of narrative structure through storytelling/retelling.

- 1d. Engaging with or asking and answering questions about a book that is read aloud.

- 1e. Recognizing how books are read (front to back and one page at a time) and recognizing basic features of books such as title, author, and illustrator.

- 1f. Making connections between stories and real-life experiences.

2 CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS BY:

- 2a. Attending to, repeating, and using rhythms, rhymes, phrases, or refrains from stories or songs.
- 2b. Demonstrating awareness that spoken language is composed of smaller segments (e.g., words, syllables, and sounds).

3 CHILDREN DEVELOP WRITING SKILLS BY:

- 3a. Recognizing that writing is a way of communicating for a variety of purposes.
- 3b. Using a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to tell a story.
- 3c. Communicating through written representations, symbols, and letters using increasingly sophisticated marks.

4 CHILDREN GAIN KNOWLEDGE OF PRINT CONCEPTS AND THE ALPHABET BY:

- 4a. Identifying letters of the alphabet and producing correct sounds associated with letters.
- 4b. Developing an understanding that print carries a message through symbols and word.

COGNITION

Supporting children's cognition—how they think and what they know—is vital to the acquisition of new knowledge and skills. When children approach learning with curiosity, initiative, imagination, and flexibility they become lifelong learners. Mathematics and scientific reasoning skills help children connect ideas, develop logical and abstract thinking, question, and analyze to understand and organize the world around them.

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

1 CHILDREN FOSTER INITIATIVE AND CURIOSITY BY:

- 1a. Demonstrating eagerness to explore, learn about, and discuss a range of topics, ideas, and tasks.
- 1b. Demonstrating flexibility, imagination, and inventiveness in approaching tasks and activities.
- 1c. Planning, initiating, and completing learning activities with peers.

2 CHILDREN PRACTICE COGNITIVE SELF-REGULATION AND EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS BY:

- 2a. Demonstrating an increasing ability to control impulses.
- 2b. Maintaining focus, sustaining attention, and persisting in tasks with age-appropriate support.
- 2c. Using memories as a foundation for more complex actions and thoughts.
- 2d. Demonstrating flexibility in thinking and behavior.
- 2e. Shifting attention between tasks and moving through transitions with minimal direction.

3 CHILDREN DEMONSTRATE SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION BY:

- 3a. Using imagination in play and interactions with themselves, materials, and others.
- 3b. Recognizing the difference between pretend or fantasy situations and reality.
- 3c. Representing people, places, things, and processes through drawings, movement, writing, and three-dimensional objects.
- 3d. Exploring and representing their ideas through creative arts.

MATHEMATICS

1 CHILDREN BUILD AN UNDERSTANDING OF NUMBER SENSE AND OPERATIONS BY:

- 1a. Developing a sense of quantity and number.
- 1b. Knowing number names and counting sequences.
- 1c. Recognizing the number of objects in a set.
- 1d. Comparing numbers and quantities.
- 1e. Understanding the relationship between numbers and quantities.
- 1f. Associating a quantity with written numerals and writing numbers.
- 1g. Understanding addition as adding-to and understanding subtraction as taking-away-from.

2 CHILDREN PRACTICE MEASUREMENT AND COMPARISON BY:

- 2a. Measuring objects by their various attributes using standard and non-standard measurement.
- 2b. Using differences in attributes to make comparisons.
- 2c. Identifying currency and recognizing that it holds value.

3 CHILDREN DEVELOP SPATIAL SENSE AND AN UNDERSTANDING OF GEOMETRY BY:

- 3a. Exploring the positions of objects and their movement in space.
- 3b. Identifying, describing, comparing, and composing 2D and 3D shapes.

4 CHILDREN PRACTICE SEQUENCING AND PATTERNS BY:

- 4a. Matching, sorting, classifying, and ordering objects.
- 4b. Recognizing, duplicating, and extending simple patterns.

SCIENTIFIC REASONING

1 CHILDREN ENGAGE IN SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY BY:

- 1a. Exploring, observing, and describing objects, materials, organisms, and events.
- 1b. Comparing and categorizing observable phenomena.
- 1c. Using understanding of causal relationships to act on social and physical environments.
- 1d. Engaging in scientific talk.
- 1e. Developing an understanding of the processes that assist people in designing and building.

2 CHILDREN PRACTICE SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING SKILLS BY:

- 2a. Using a variety of strategies to solve problems.
- 2b. Asking a question, gathering information, and making predictions.
- 2c. Planning and conducting investigations and experiments.
- 2d. Analyzing results, drawing conclusions, and communicating results.

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Promoting children's physical health and development enables them to explore and function in their environment and supports development in all other domains. Early health habits lay the foundation for lifelong healthy living.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

1 CHILDREN DEVELOP GROSS MOTOR SKILLS BY:

- 1a. Demonstrating control, strength, and coordination of large muscles.
- 1b. Using perceptual information to guide movement and interactions with objects and other people.

2 CHILDREN DEVELOP FINE MOTOR SKILLS BY:

- 2a. Demonstrating increasing control, strength, and coordination of small muscles.
- 2b. Exhibiting complex fine motor coordination when using tools to complete tasks.

DAILY LIVING SKILLS

1 CHILDREN DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF HEALTH, NUTRITION, AND SAFETY PRACTICES BY:

- 1a. Demonstrating healthy behaviors that contribute to lifelong well-being through physical activity.
- 1b. Demonstrating personal health and hygiene skills and practicing self-care routines.
- 1c. Exploring and enjoying a variety of nutritional foods and developing healthy eating practices.
- 1d. Developing knowledge and skills that help promote nutritious food choices and eating habits.
- 1e. Developing an awareness and understanding of safety rules and routines while learning to make safe and appropriate choices.
- 1f. Assessing situations and taking appropriate risks.

NOTES:

