
For Children Birth to Age Three
Illinois Early Learning
Guidelines

Presented by------

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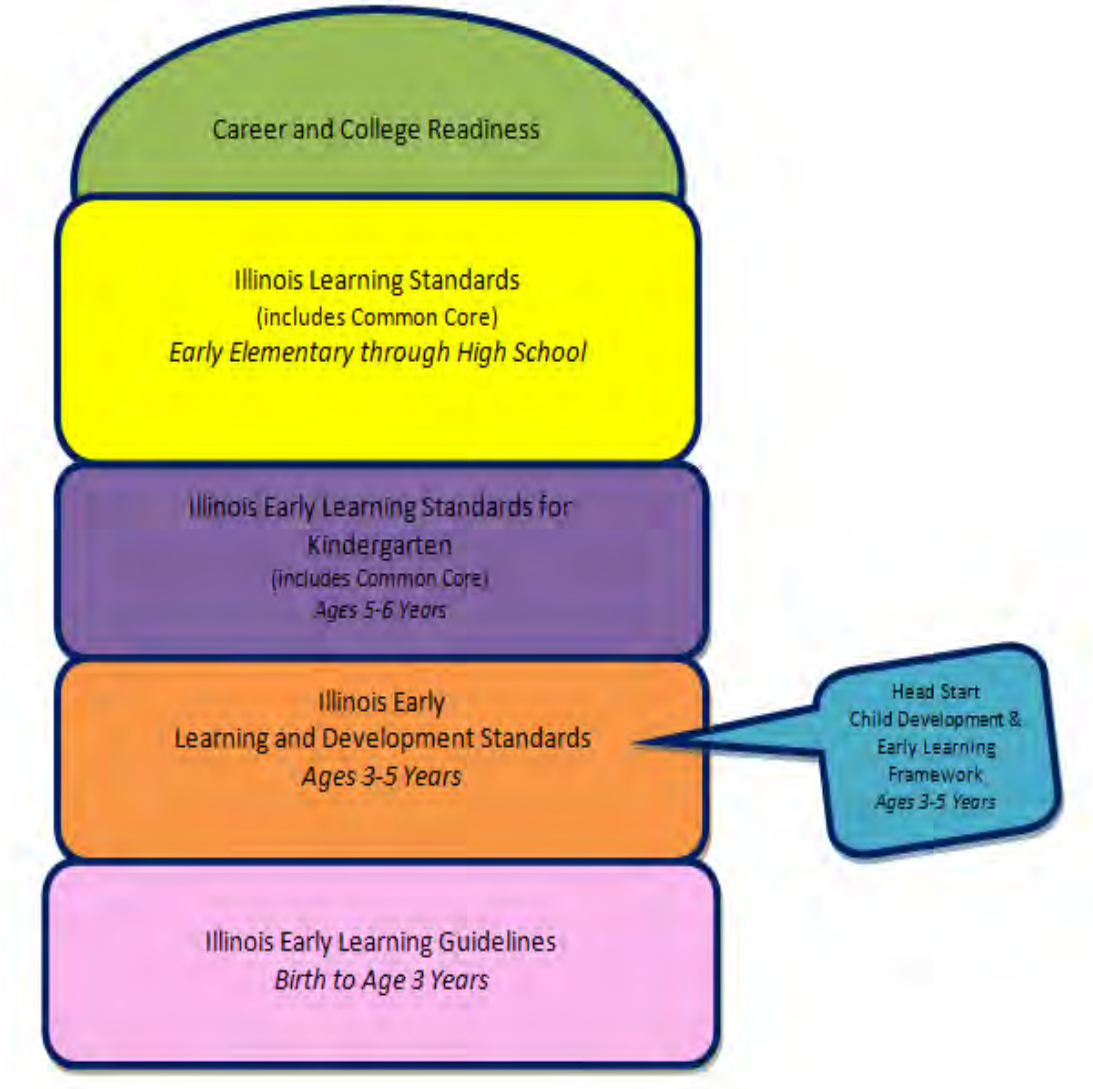
The Illinois Early Learning Guidelines -- a Foundation for Learning



The Illinois Early Learning Guidelines:

1. Create a foundational understanding for families, providers, and professionals in the field of what children from birth to age three are expected to know and do across multiple developmental domains.

2. Improve the quality of care and learning through more intentional and appropriate practices to support development from birth to age three.

3. Develop a more qualified workforce.

Purpose cont….

4. Enhance the current system of early childhood services by aligning birth-to-three developmental standards with existing standards and practices for older children and across system components.

5. Serve as a resource for those informing decision makers involved with developing and implementing policies for children from birth to age three.

The Guidelines are NOT a:

- Curriculum
- Program model
- Developmental screening tool
- Developmental assessment
- Professional development curriculum

A Brief History of the Guidelines

- Two years in development
- McCormick Foundation
  - Illinois Early Learning Council
  - IELG Workgroup and Writing Teams
  - Positive Parenting
  - Ounce
  - Stakeholders
  - State Agency Partners
    - DCFS
    - DHS
    - ISBE

Core Principles

- Early relationships are most important and central to young children's development.
- Development occurs across multiple and interdependent domains, in a simultaneous manner.
- Children develop and learn at their own unique pace and in the context of their family, culture and community.
- Play is the most meaningful way children learn and master new skills.

Who, Me? A Professional Brain Developer?

Brain development in the first three years of life is EXTRAORDINARY!!

All caregivers are tasked with developing and shaping the brain of society's youngest scientists. They are building the foundation for how children learn and interact with their world.

So, who are the professional brain developers? ANY person who is responsible for the care of children!

Overview of the Sections

- Introduction
- The Newborn Period
- Self Regulation: A Foundation of Development
- Domains of Development
  - Social and Emotional Development
  - Language Development, Communication, and Literacy
  - Physical and Motor Development
  - Cognitive Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Appendices

The Newborn Period

The Guidelines begin with a delightful section describing the Newborn Period. It is a developmental perspective on the first four months of an infant's life and the experiences that are unique to this time.

Self-Regulation: A Foundation of Development

This Section is the first of the six tabbed sections of the Guidelines. It focuses on children's development of self-regulation, which is essential for overall healthy development and learning.

Self-regulation refers to children's emerging ability to regulate or control their attention, thoughts, emotions and behaviors.

This sections includes sub-domain information on:

- Physiological Regulation
- Emotional Regulation
- Attention Regulation
- Behavior Regulation

Developmental domain 1: Social & Emotional Development

Healthy social emotional development in young children depends on positive and nurturing relationships with the important adults in their lives.

This section includes sub-domain information on:

- Attachment Relationships
- Emotional Expressions
- Relationships with Adults
- Self-Concept
- Relationship with Peers
- Empathy

Developmental domain 2: Physical Development & Health

Physical development is supported by the remarkable brain growth that children undergo in the first three years. Children will grow more during this time than at any other point in their lives.

This section includes sub-domain information on:

- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor
- Perceptual
- Self-Care

Developmental domain 3: Language Development, communication, & Literacy

Learning language and communication is a universal experience for children across cultures. Children spend the first year of life building the foundation for language, as they absorb what they see and hear through interactions with their caregivers and their environment.

This section includes sub-domain information on:

- Social Communication
- Receptive Communication
- Expressive Communication
- Early Literacy

Developmental domain 4: Cognitive Development

Cognitive development in young children refers to their process of learning and the development of intelligence and other mental capabilities, such as memory, reasoning, problem solving, and thinking.

This section includes sub-domain information on:

- Concept Development
- Memory
- Spatial Relationships
- Symbolic Thought
- Creative Expression
- Logic & Reasoning
- Quantity & Numbers
- Science Concepts & Exploration
- Safety & Well-Being

Approaches to Learning

Children are born ready to learn, and the first three years are the time when children develop the habits in how they approach and explore their world. Depending upon the quality of their early experiences, children either form healthy or unhealthy attitudes toward learning.

This section includes sub-domain information on:

- Curiosity & Initiative
- Problem Solving
- Confidence & Risk-Taking
- Persistence, Effort, & Attentiveness
- Creativity, Inventiveness, & Imagination

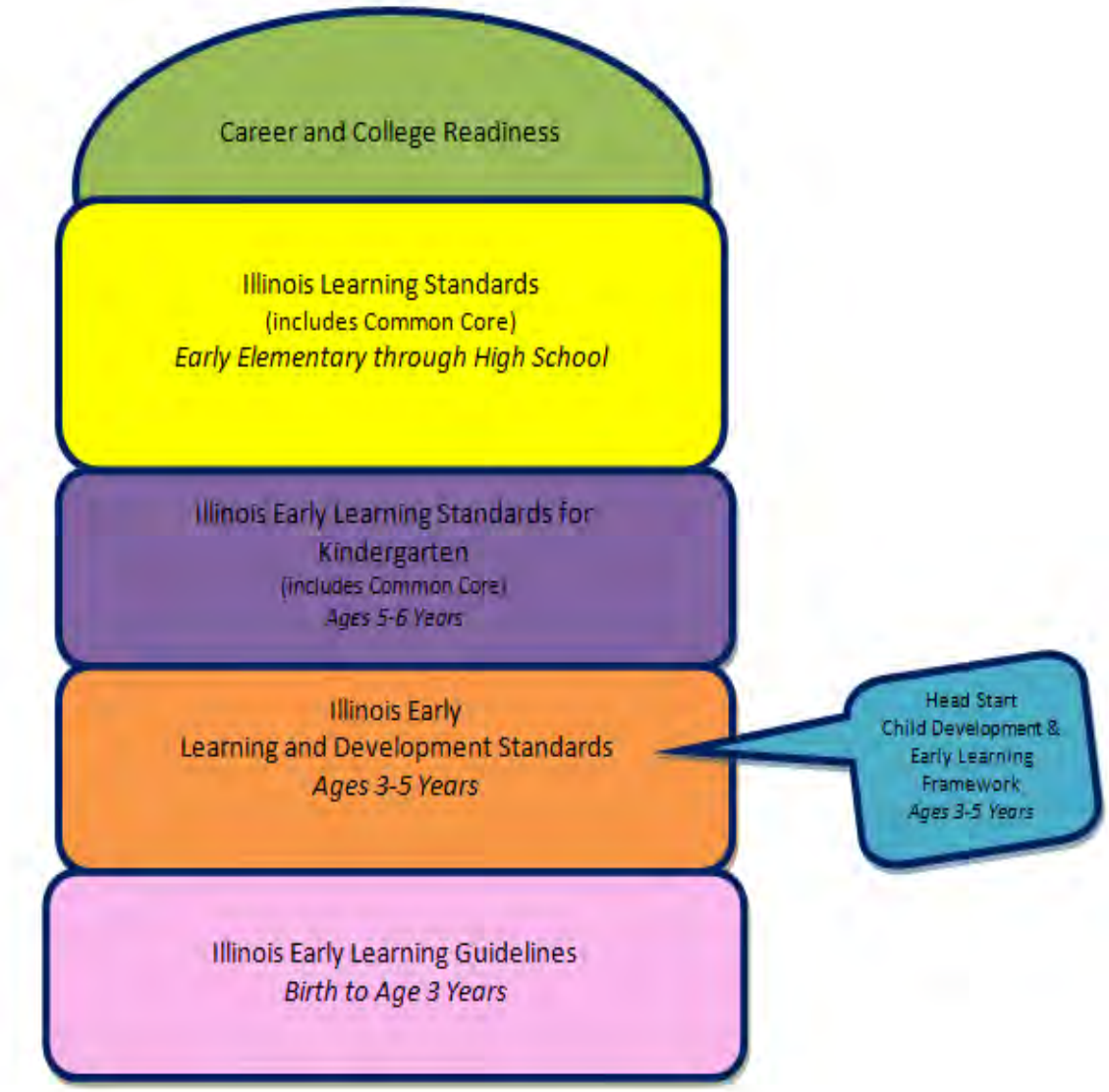
Appendices

- Horizontal Alignment
- Vertical Alignment
- Glossary
- Endnotes and Resources

Alignment


Program Standards and Guidelines
Curriculum Framework
Illinois Early Learning Guidelines
Child & Family Outcome Assessment Systems
Professional Development
Professional Development
Professional Development

Vertical Alignment



Using the Guidelines

- Let's look more closely at the Guidelines. Each of the 4 domains plus the sections on self-regulation and approaches to learning are divided into
  - sub-domains,
  - standards,
  - age descriptors,
  - indicators for children, &
  - strategies for interaction.

Physical Development & Health

Physical development is supported by the remarkable brain growth that children undergo in the first three years. Children will grow more during this time than at any other point in their lives. They often triple their birth weight by one year of age, and will have quadrupled it by age two.[51] The size of their brain grows to about 80 percent of adult size by three years of age.[52] One of the most important milestones children reach in their first year is learning about and experiencing gravity.[53] They learn to control their movements and use their bodies in different ways. Movement, physical actions, and use of their senses are the primary ways that children explore their surroundings during these first three years. Therefore, children need to feel safe and nurtured. This is achieved through loving and attentive relationships. These positive relationships encourage healthy development, build confidence in children to try new skills, and provide them with a sense of security.

Physical development includes mastering movement, balance, and fine-motor skills. Children are born with an intense need to explore and learn about their world. The ability to move expands their ability to explore, discover, and problem-solve. Part of physical development also includes the development of perceptual abilities, which consists of taking in sensory experiences through hearing, seeing, smelling, and touching, and responding to these experiences.[54] One example of this process is how children take in sensory information and respond with movement and actions. For example, an 11-month-old claps his hands after hearing music, or a 24-month-old uses his hands and fingers to squeeze clay in order to change its shape. Children's perceptual development is important because it helps them learn and

Fine Motor

Fine motor refers to the movement and coordination of small muscles, such as those in the hands, wrists, fingers, toes, and feet.[55] Young children begin to develop their fine motor skills during the first year.

They bring their fingers and toes to their mouths, grasp objects, and, eventually, learn to twist and turn objects. Around 10 to 12 months of age, children transition from using a raking motion with their fingers to using their thumb and forefinger grasp when picking up small objects. Their hand-eye coordination improves and children start to manipulate small objects, exploring all the ways objects can be combined or changed.[56]

Children's everyday activities help support the development of their fine motor skills. These skills include feeding, reading books, and playing with a variety of different objects. With improving skills, children change the way they explore their surroundings. They begin to push a toy car, instead of just holding and moving it around their hands. They may also pick up objects and place them inside containers. They begin to stack blocks, instead of just knocking them down. Children are not only improving their fine motor skills, but are also improving their physical coordination. They begin to turn pages of a book and scribble. Close to 36 months of age, children may be able to hold a writing utensil in writing position, and can screw and unscrew objects, such as lids.[57]

Standard: Children demonstrate the ability to coordinate their small muscles in order to move and control objects.

Discover how Fine Motor is related to:

self-regulation

Physiological Regulation, p. 13
Attention Regulation, p. 21

domain 1: Social & Emotional

Self-Concept, p. 43

domain 3: Language

Expressive Communication, p. 83

domain 4: Cognitive

Spatial Relationships, p. 101

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Small muscles refer to the muscles found in the hands, fingers, feet, and toes. The coordination of these small muscles is known as fine motor development.

During this age period:	Birth to 9 months: Children begin to reach for, grasp, and move objects.	7 months to 18 months: Children begin to gain control of their small muscles and purposefully manipulate objects.
	Indicators for children include:	**Indicators for children include:**
	• Opens hands when in a relaxed state • Reaches for objects • Grasps, holds, and shakes objects • Transfers an object from one hand to the other • Uses raking motion with hands to bring objects closer, e.g., uses all fingers to bring small objects closer to body • Holds a small object in each hand; bangs them together	• Picks up objects • Uses pincer grasp, e.g., picks up a Cheerio with thumb and forefinger • Begins to use simple baby signs (if exposed to baby sign language), e.g., moves hands toward each other to signal more • Uses hands in a purposeful manner, e.g., turns the pages of a board book, drops objects into a bucket • Coordinates increasingly complex hand movements to manipulate objects, e.g., crumples paper, connects and disconnects toy links, flips light switch on and off • Participates in finger plays, e.g., moves hands to imitate caregiver's hands when singing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"
	Strategies for interaction:	**Strategies for interaction:**
	• Strategically place objects around the child where he or she will have to reach for them • Provide opportunities for the child to grasp toys and other small objects • Model different ways of how to use objects, e.g., bang two objects together, shake a sensory ball, stack blocks	• Provide art materials, e.g., crayons and paper, for the child to scribble on • Allow the child to explore books on his or her own • Provide the child with finger foods they can grasp and bring to mouth, e.g., dry cereal • Encourage the child to participate in finger plays, e.g., "Itsy, Bitsy Spider" • Provide different materials for child to explore, e.g., books and toys with different textures, cloth toys, water play

Standard: Children demonstrate the ability to coordinate their small muscles in order to move and control objects.

16 months to 24 months: Children begin to coordinate their movements when using their small muscles and begin to manipulate various types of objects.	21 months to 36 months: Children effectively coordinate their small muscles to manipulate a wide array of objects, toys, and materials in different ways.	During this age period:
Indicators for children include:	**Indicators for children include:**	
• Attempts to fold various types of materials, e.g., paper, baby blanket • Uses baby sign to communicate various concepts, e.g., "all done," "more," "water" • Uses simple tools, e.g., scooper to scoop sand or water, crayon for scribbling • Begins to imitate lines and circles when drawing • Controls placement of objects in a more effective manner, e.g., stacks blocks in a more orderly fashion	• Begins to use more complicated hand movements, e.g., uses eating utensils independently, stacks blocks • Attempts to help with dressing self, e.g., snaps buttons, pulls zipper, puts socks and shoes on • Scribbles with intent and begins to draw circles and lines on own • Uses hand-eye coordination in a more controlled manner, e.g., completes puzzles, strings beads together	
Strategies for interaction:	**Strategies for interaction:**	
• Provide the child opportunities to scribble with crayons, or use chalk on sidewalk • Encourage the child to experiment with tearing paper, popping bubbles (bubble wrap), and completing puzzles • Use sensory experiences for children to engage in, e.g., water table with objects to pour, move, and squeeze water; play dough	• Model how to use writing and feeding utensils through everyday activities • Provide experiences and objects that promote fine motor development, e.g., stringing manipulatives, play dough, using plastic tweezers to pick up objects, and peg boards • Allow the child to help in dressing him- or herself; be patient and provide guidance as needed to limit frustration • Introduce more complex puzzles for the child to attempt, e.g., puzzles with more pieces	

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During this age period:	Birth to 9 months: Children begin to reach for, grasp, and move objects.	7 months to 18 months: Children begin to gain control of their small muscles and purposefully manipulate objects.
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	• Opens hands when in a relaxed state • Reaches for objects • Grasps, holds, and shakes objects • Transfers an object from one hand to the other • Uses raking motion with hands to bring objects closer, e.g., uses all fingers to bring small objects closer to body • Holds a small object in each hand; bangs them together	• Picks up objects • Uses pincer grasp, e.g., picks up a Cheerio with thumb and forefinger • Begins to use simple baby signs (if exposed to baby sign language), e.g., moves hands toward each other to signal more • Uses hands in a purposeful manner, e.g., turns the pages of a board book, drops objects into a bucket • Coordinates increasingly complex hand movements to manipulate objects, e.g., crumples paper, connects and disconnects toy links, flips light switch on and off • Participates in finger plays, e.g., moves hands to imitate caregiver's hands when singing "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star"
	Strategies for interaction:	**Strategies for interaction:**
	• Strategically place objects around the child where he or she will have to reach for them • Provide opportunities for the child to grasp toys and other small objects • Model different ways of how to use objects, e.g., bang two objects together, shake a sensory ball, stack blocks	• Provide art materials, e.g., crayons and paper, for the child to scribble on • Allow the child to explore books on his or her own • Provide the child with finger foods they can grasp and bring to mouth, e.g., dry cereal • Encourage the child to participate in finger plays, e.g., "Itsy, Bitsy Spider" • Provide different materials for child to explore, e.g., books and toys with different textures, cloth toys, water play

Standard: Children demonstrate the ability to coordinate their small muscles in order to move and control objects.

During this age period:	16 months to 24 months: Children begin to coordinate their movements when using their small muscles and begin to manipulate various types of objects.	21 months to 36 months: Children effectively coordinate their small muscles to manipulate a wide array of objects, toys, and materials in different ways.
	Indicators for children include:	**Indicators for children include:**
	• Attempts to fold various types of materials, e.g., paper, baby blanket • Uses baby sign to communicate various concepts, e.g., "all done," "more," "water" • Uses simple tools, e.g., scooper to scoop sand or water, crayon for scribbling • Begins to imitate lines and circles when drawing • Controls placement of objects in a more effective manner, e.g., stacks blocks in a more orderly fashion	• Begins to use more complicated hand movements, e.g., uses eating utensils independently, stacks blocks • Attempts to help with dressing self, e.g., snaps buttons, pulls zipper, puts socks and shoes on • Scribbles with intent and begins to draw circles and lines on own • Uses hand-eye coordination in a more controlled manner, e.g., completes puzzles, strings beads together
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Overlapping Age Ranges

- Birth to 9 months
- 7 to 18 months
- 16 to 24 months
- 21-36 months

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During this age period:

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Birth to 9 months: Children begin to reach for, grasp, and move objects.

Indicators for children include:

- Opens hands when in a relaxed state
- Reaches for objects
- Grasps, holds, and shakes objects
- Transfers an object from one hand to the other
- Uses raking motion with hands to bring objects closer, e.g., uses all fingers to bring small objects closer to body
- Holds a small object in each hand; bangs them together

Strategies for interaction:

- Strategically place objects around the child where he or she will have to reach for them
- Provide opportunities for the child to grasp toys and other small objects
- Model different ways of how to use objects, e.g., bang two objects together, shake a sensory ball, stack blocks

7 months to 18 months: Children begin to gain control of their small muscles and purposefully manipulate objects.

Indicators for children include:

- Picks up objects
- Uses pincer grasp, e.g., picks up a Cheerio with thumb and forefinger
- Begins to use simple baby signs (if exposed to baby sign language), e.g., moves hands toward each other to signal more
- Uses hands in a purposeful manner, e.g., turns the pages of a board book, drops objects into a bucket
- Coordinates increasingly complex hand movements to manipulate objects, e.g., crumples paper, connects and disconnects toy links, flips light switch on and off
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Strategies for interaction:

- Provide art materials, e.g., crayons and paper, for the child to scribble on
- Allow the child to explore books on his or her own
- Provide the child with finger foods they can grasp and bring to mouth, e.g., dry cereal
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During this age period:

16 months to 24 months: Children begin to coordinate their movements when using their small muscles and begin to manipulate various types of objects.

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- Attempts to fold various types of materials, e.g., paper, baby blanket
- Uses baby sign to communicate various concepts, e.g., "all done," "more," "water"
- Uses simple tools, e.g., scooper to scoop sand or water, crayon for scribbling
- Begins to imitate lines and circles when drawing
- Controls placement of objects in a more effective manner, e.g., stacks blocks in a more orderly fashion

Strategies for interaction:

- Provide the child opportunities to scribble with crayons, or use chalk on sidewalk
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- Use sensory experiences for children to engage in, e.g., water table with objects to pour, move, and squeeze water; play dough

21 months to 36 months: Children effectively coordinate their small muscles to manipulate a wide array of objects, toys, and materials in different ways.

Indicators for children include:

- Begins to use more complicated hand movements, e.g., uses eating utensils independently, stacks blocks
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- Scribbles with intent and begins to draw circles and lines on own
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Strategies for interaction:

- Model how to use writing and feeding utensils through everyday activities
- Provide experiences and objects that promote fine motor development, e.g., stringing manipulatives, play dough, using plastic tweezers to pick up objects, and peg boards
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Indicators for children include:

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- Begins to use simple baby signs (if exposed to baby sign language), e.g., moves hands toward each other to signal more
- Uses hands in a purposeful manner, e.g., turns the pages of a board book, drops objects into a bucket
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This story also relates to:

self-regulation

Physiological Regulation, p. 13

domain 2: Physical

Fine Motor, p. 61
Perceptual, p. 65

domain 4: Cognitive

Spatial Relationships, p. 101

Real World Story

Jacob is 18 months old and was born with Agenesis of the Corpus Callosum (ACC). ACC refers to the absence of the corpus callosum, the band that connects the two sides of the brain. Because of this impairment, the right and left sides of Jacob's brain do not communicate properly. Jacob has vision impairment, low muscle tone, and poor motor coordination. He is enrolled in Early Intervention, and a physical therapist, speech pathologist, child-development specialist, and occupational therapist all work with him in developing his skills. Jacob recently met his goal of crawling. While crawling is often accomplished by age seven to 10 months, Jacob is developing this skill later than what is typical because of his disability. For the next six months, Jacob's physical therapist will work with him on reaching the following milestones: climbing, taking steps with a walker, and standing unassisted for three seconds. A major goal for Jacob is to take two to three steps unassisted by age two.

Jacob's disability has also impacted his fine motor development. Currently, skills he is working on include feeding himself finger foods and stacking one block on top of another. He is also focusing on engaging with different types of sensory materials such as play dough, water, and sand. These activities help with his **sensory input** and help him build tolerance for different types of textures. Again, these are all developmental skills that are often mastered and experienced earlier, but Jacob is developing at his own unique pace.

THIS EXAMPLE HIGHLIGHTS how a disability can impact all areas of development and how it changes the developmental trajectory for children. Jacob may not ever be able to do all the things that typically developing children can, but he is nevertheless working to reach his milestones at his own pace and in his own way. Jacob may not walk unassisted for years, but he is achieving milestones that will support him to eventually reach that skill when he is ready.

Since Jacob has global delays, he is receiving therapy for all areas of development. This approach is important because all areas of development impact each other. Early intervention in the first three years is so important for children with developmental delays; it is a critical period for learning and can provide children and families with a much-needed support system.

Evolving Hand Movements

In the first year of life, children work on holding objects in a controlled manner. In the first two months of age, children's hand movements are reflexive. At three months of age, these reflexes begin to fade as children bat at objects and soon will be able to pick up large objects. Between four and eight months, children are perfecting their grasp. They are able to intentionally pick up objects and bring them to their mouths in order to explore. Children start to manipulate objects while holding them in one hand. Around nine months of age children start to pick up small objects with their thumb and forefinger. This movement is known as the pincer grasp. As they perfect this skill, they will soon be able to pick up very small objects. The pincer grasp is important for self-feeding and also is the precursor skill to holding feeding and writing utensils.

Real World Story

Michelle is a home visitor who sees Eric, a 26-month-old, and his family on a weekly basis. Michelle has been visiting the family for over a month and is still building a relationship with Eric's mother, Diana. During her home visits, Michelle provides parent education along with developmentally appropriate activities for Eric. For this particular visit, Michelle has brought pretend play objects for Eric and Diana to engage with. There are play silverware, plates, vegetables, and cups. Michelle sits on the floor, and Diana does the same. Eric begins to rummage around in Michelle's bag, and begins to take out all of the kitchen toys. Michelle picks up a play plate and spoon and pretends to eat. She says, "This is so yummy!" She then attempts to hand Eric the plate and spoon. Eric grabs them and then hands them over to Diana. He gestures to his mouth and then sits in front of her. Diana then begins to pretend feed him. Eric opens his mouth and says, "Mmmm." Michelle observes, and then says, "Eric, can you try by yourself?" Eric shakes his head and gestures toward his mother to feed him again. Diana follows his lead and again pretends to feed him food off the play plate. Diana looks at Michelle and says, "I like to feed him his food, and he prefers it that way. He does not know how to really use a spoon." Michelle nods and says, "I understand." Eric takes this opportunity to disengage with his mother and begins to rummage in Michelle's bag once again.

THIS EXAMPLE HIGHLIGHTS how culture and experiences play important roles in development. Eric has his own expectations for how he eats based on the routine he has established with his mother. Eric is still fed by his mother, and he makes that obvious during his interaction with the play meal. Even after Michelle encourages him to try on his own, Eric still gestures toward his mother to continue the interaction. Michelle is sensitive to what she is observing and simply nods to Diana's explanation. Michelle demonstrates respect toward Diana and Eric's routine as she does not ask why, nor does she push Eric to try on his own. While some children at this age may attempt to use a spoon to feed themselves, Michelle is aware that this self-help skill is not a particular goal for this family at the moment.

This story also relates to:

self-regulation

Physiological Regulation, p. 13
Attention Regulation, p. 21

domain 1: Social & Emotional

Relationship with Adults, p. 39

domain 4: Cognitive

Memory, p. 97
Symbolic Thought, p. 105

Keep In Mind

Child development does not occur in isolation; children reach their developmental milestones within their social and cultural contexts. However, while "how the child develops" may look different, "what the child develops" can be observed in a more universal fashion. Below are some indicators that may warrant a discussion with the child's healthcare provider for closer examination.

- ☐ Does not roll over by six months
- ☐ Does not walk by 18 months
- ☐ Appears to have low muscle tone (loose, floppy muscles)
- ☐ Does not pick up small objects using thumb and finger/fingers by 12 months

Putting it all into Practice

- These Guidelines are a resource to refer to when you want to know about how children develop from birth to three. Only by knowing about how children develop, can you develop relationships that help individual children feel safe and secure and support their learning as well as their sense of competence and confidence as learners.

Olivia's Story

Picture Olivia (6 months) lying on the floor on her blanket. Rolling over on her tummy, she spots a big bright red plastic ring nearby on the floor. She reaches for it, kicking her legs and stretching her arm out. Almost…and then she gets it. She pulls the ring toward her, babbling the whole time. She rolls onto her back, looks at the ring, smiles broadly and brings it to her mouth.

Individualizing

- Observe
- Listen
- Reflect
- Plan
- Carry Out
- Observe
- Reflect again
- Modify
- Carry Out your modified plan
- Continue to OBSERVE, REFLECT, PLAN, CARRY OUT, and MODIFY

Here's a good question to ask yourself as you decide what learning opportunities to offer to individual children:

What about this child makes me select this activity?

CAUTION: If you don't have an answer, it could be a sign you are not individualizing or personalizing learning opportunities for individual children.

Bridging into the Next Level of Learning

Vertical Alignment
The Illinois Early Learning Guidelines: The Foundation for Later Learning

Set of Standards	Includes:	
Illinois Learning Standards including Common Core *(Early Elementary through High School)*	Fine Arts Foreign Language Language Arts (Common Core) Mathematics (Common Core)	Physical Development & Health Science Social Science Social Emotional Learning
Illinois Early Learning Standards for Kindergarten including Common Core *(Ages 5 to 6)*	Fine Arts Foreign Language Language Arts (Common Core) Mathematics (Common Core)	Physical Development & Health Science Social Science Social/Emotional Development
Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards *(Age 3-5)* • **Head Start** (ages 3-5): The Head Start regulations require that Head Start agencies establish school readiness goals that align with the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework, and the State's early learning standards, plus the requirements and expectations of the local schools. http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/sr/approach/pdf/OHSApproach-to-School-Readiness_Early-Learning-Framework.pdf	Language Arts Mathematics Science Social Studies Social/Emotional Development	Physical Development & Health The Arts English Learner Home Language Development
Illinois Early Learning Guidelines for Children Birth to Age 3 *(Birth to Age 3)*	Approaches to Learning Cognitive Development Language Development, Communication, & Literacy	Physical Development & Health Self-Regulation Social & Emotional Development

Questions or Comments?? Email

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http://www.isbe.net/earlychi/pdf/el-guidelines-0-3.pdf