

## INTRODUCTION

Each child has unique characteristics embedded in the context of family, culture, and community. *Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines* acknowledge and embrace the diversity and variation that exists among young children. Diversity includes socioeconomic, cultural, racial, linguistic, ethnic, gender, abilities, family composition, and regional variations.

The *Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines* are not grounded in any single theoretical perspective or in any single cultural context. They are based on research from various theoretical perspectives, and are specifically intended to acknowledge and accommodate cultural differences. The *eGuidelines* include goals for young children's development that reflect the perspectives, values, and recommended practices of a diverse range of people, institutions, and communities throughout Idaho.

The *eGuidelines* emphasize that young children's learning is individual, interconnected, and multi-dimensional. Young children develop at individual rates physically, socially, emotionally, linguistically, and cognitively. All dimensions of development are critical to healthy development.

Parents are part of a child's cultural fabric. Effective teachers are familiar with the different cultures of the children they serve, especially those cultures that differ from their own. Recognizing that development and learning are influenced by social and cultural contexts sensitizes teachers to acknowledge how their own cultural experience shapes their perspective. Early childhood teachers can understand the influence of sociocultural contexts on learning, recognize children's developing competence, and accept a variety of ways for children to express their developmental achievements.

Children are capable of learning to function in more than one cultural context simultaneously. The goal is that all children learn to function well in the society as a whole and move comfortably among groups of people who come from both similar and dissimilar backgrounds.

The *eGuidelines* are specifically intended to accommodate, support, and build upon individual family characteristics and cultural heritage. Efforts were made to acknowledge the learning needs of children with developmental delays and disabilities, and children who have a home language other than English.

Embracing the right of every child to learn, grow, and play with children their own age in community settings, these *eGuidelines* endorse natural and least restrictive environments for all young children. The definition of "children with special needs" includes those who are medically fragile, delayed in one or more developmental domains, have a known medical condition that may lead to a delay, and/or a disability. Concerns about a child's development may warrant a screening by a

***CULTURE is defined as the customary beliefs and patterns of and for behavior, both explicit and implicit, which are passed on to future generations by the society they live in and/or by a social, religious, or ethnic group within it. Because culture is often discussed in the context of diversity or multiculturalism, people fail to recognize the powerful role that culture plays in influencing the development of all children.***

***Parents, Child Care Givers, and Early Childhood Educators all have important uses for Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines.***

physician or early childhood educator. If the screening shows concern, refer the child for a developmental evaluation/assessment.

## SCOPE

Families, early childhood education and programs, the community, and policy makers share responsibility for all children's development. The *Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines* underscore shared responsibility and shared accountability for development in terms of both learning opportunities and outcomes for children.

The *eGuidelines* are arranged by "domains" that organize the broad sweep of child development theory, research, and practice. The five developmental and learning domains include:

Domain 1: Approaches to Learning and Cognitive Development\*

Domain 2: Physical Well-Being, Health, and Motor Development

Domain 3: Social and Emotional Development

Domain 4: General Knowledge

Domain 5: Communication, Language, and Literacy.

\*Domain 1 addresses aspects of development that permeate all domains. All five domains are interdependent.

## PURPOSE AND USE

This foundational document is designed as a resource to support the growth and development of young children from birth through third grade. The information in the document applies regardless of the setting: children's own homes, others' homes, child care programs, early intervention programs, Head Start programs; or in private, faith-based, or public schools.

Some people will work from the resource document itself, while others will use collateral products to inform their specific inquiry and interest. The *Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines* are intended to:

- **Inform** and **Guide** adult practices in working with young children.
- **Describe** typical milestones about the child's development process.
- **Develop** a common, research-based guide that describes the development of young children from birth to five.
- **Provide** social and emotional developmental characteristics and approaches to learning materials that supplement Idaho Content Standards for children K-3.
- **Integrate** early learning guidelines as a component to the larger system of services including quality initiatives, professional development, personnel preparation; and curriculum for higher education, professional development, vocational education, and pre-service training.
- **Empower** Idaho's families to enrich childhood.
- **Help** adults understand, nurture, support, and teach young children during the critical years of birth to five.

Within each domain, the *Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines* present a set of goals, developmental growth, and child indicators that reflect how young children develop at different stages in their lives.

***Idaho's Early Learning eGuidelines are grouped by Domains that are divided by ages, and then described by Goals, Developmental Growth, Child Indicators, and Caregiver Strategies.***

Age divisions are intended only as a means by which to capture the discussion about development, and are not intended to be absolute. The overlap in ages, as indicated in the table below, is a deliberate acknowledgement of variations in child development.

Domains	Ages					
1. Approaches to Learning	0-8 Months	6-18 Months	16-38 Months	36-60 Months	60 Months through Kindergarten	First, Second, and Third Grade
2. Physical Well-Being, Health, and Motor Development	0-8 Months	6-18 Months	16-38 Months	36-60 Months	60 Months through Kindergarten	K-12 Standards Apply
3. Social and Emotional Development	0-8 Months	6-18 Months	16-38 Months	36-60 Months	60 Months through Kindergarten	First, Second, and Third Grade
4. General Knowledge	0-8 Months	6-18 Months	16-38 Months	36-60 Months	60 Months through Kindergarten	K-12 Standards Apply
5. Communication, Language, and Literacy	0-8 Months	6-18 Months	16-38 Months	36-60 Months	60 Months through Kindergarten	K-12 Standards Apply

The *Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines* provide links to educational standards for children in Idaho's Head Start, kindergarten, and elementary school programs. Two domains: Approaches to Learning and Cognitive Development, and Social and Emotional Development carry through first, second, and third grades.

The *Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines* include an update and revision of existing standards (*The Idaho Early Learning Standards: Resource Guide (2004)*) and align with Head Start Standards and K-12 Standards.

## ORGANIZATION

Each domain is categorized by age ranges. Each domain may be further divided by sub-domain. For each domain or sub-domain, the *Idaho Early Learning eGuidelines* provide the following:

- **Goal statement,**
- **Age Range,**
- **Developmental Growth,**
- **Child Indicators** that describe what parents and others might observe about the child's development respective to that task, and
- **Caregiver Strategies** to stimulate development related to that goal.

DOMAIN 1: APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT			
SUB-DOMAIN: LEARNING APPROACHES			
CURIOSITY, MOTIVATION, EXPLORATION, AND EXPERIMENTATION			
GOAL 1: CHILDREN SHOW CURIOSITY AND INTEREST IN LEARNING AND EXPERIMENTING.			
Age Range	Developmental Growth	Child Indicators	Caregiver Strategies
Birth through 8 Months	Seeks, initiates, and responds to interactions with people and objects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reacts to new voices or sounds by turning in the direction of sound, becoming more quiet or active, or changing facial expressions.</li> <li>▪ Looks and follows slow moving objects.</li> <li>▪ Shows interest in people by kicking legs, smiling, reaching, and looking at the person.</li> <li>▪ Shows interest in patterns and shapes.</li> <li>▪ Responds to familiar things or sounds.</li> <li>▪ Gazes toward and or reaches for toys that are visible but out of reach.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hold the baby facing you to encourage exploration of the human face, emotions, communication, and interactions.</li> <li>▪ Create a safe, secure, and attractive environment for children to explore toys, books, and people.</li> <li>▪ Use both facial expressions and words to initiate play with the child during the course of everyday routines (diaper changing, bathing).</li> <li>▪ Observe child to understand unique temperament, learning styles, and ways of showing curiosity.</li> <li>▪ Introduce child to new people, places, objects, and experiences.</li> <li>▪ Offer a variety of positions from which a child can explore (e.g. tummy, back, sitting upright, propped on side, or laying on the floor, sitting on a lap, or sitting in a baby chair).</li> <li>▪ In group child care settings with multiple staff, establish a primary caregiver to create a trusting relationship from which the child can explore.</li> <li>▪ Provide child with toys and materials with bold designs and contrasting colors.</li> <li>▪ Show child mobiles with complex patterns.</li> <li>▪ Encourage child to track movement of slow moving toy.</li> <li>▪ Offer toys and activities where the child gets a definite, focused response to interactions.</li> </ul>