

Developmental Domains

(Adapted from Developmentally Appropriate Practice
in Early Childhood Programs)

Physical/Motor

Gross Motor: is the movement of the body and limbs: walking, balance, running, climbing, lifting, etc. are examples of this. The development of these abilities reflects a combination of genetics and environmental factors, depends on maturation and experience, and can be enhanced when supported by adults.

Fine Motor: is the movement and manual dexterity of fingers and hands in conjunction with the eye (known as eye-hand coordination). Hand muscle coordination, for instance, can be developed through drawing, painting, working with play dough or Lego, cutting, beading etc.

Language/Communication

This domain reflects children's desire to be connected and to communicate. Language use develops with a child's neurological readiness. Adults who provide opportunities for children to talk, who carefully listen to children, encourage interactive play, sing songs, tell stories, and offer well-placed extensions to their sentences do much to assist and support children's language acquisition.

Cognitive/Intellectual

This domain involves children's thinking, memory and reasoning processes. As children grow and develop, their increasing cognitive capacity enables them to engage in more sophisticated reasoning, concepts and understandings, reflections and interactions. For more information read Piaget, Vygotsky and Gardner - all theorists who studied children development.

Social/Emotional

Children naturally wish to form meaningful relationships with each other and with adults. The role of the adult is to support the development of positive self-concepts and sensitivity towards others. All children at whatever age have the right to express themselves emotionally and have their concerns listened to. This manifests differently depending on age and maturation. When children are treated respectfully by adults, they are more likely to successfully develop respectful and meaningful relationships with others.

Creativity/Aesthetics

Aesthetics is an expression and appreciation of beauty and a shows in a feeling of wonder (for color, sensation, light, furnishings...) using all the senses. Children develop a sense of this over time. Creativity is integral to thinking and all the processes linked to thinking and learning. Creativity involves the imagination and thinking about a wide range of possibilities. It often involve adopting new or changing perspectives.