

New York State Early Learning Alignment

- ★ New York State Early Learning Guidelines
- ★ New York State Education Department Prekindergarten Learning Standards
- ★ Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework



This is an exciting time for early care and education in New York State! The Early Childhood Advisory Council, with a full complement of partners, is working on several initiatives to increase the quality of early learning programs in New York State. The purpose of aligning the state's developmental guidelines and standards is to help ensure that all children who attend any early care and education setting in the state will experience responsive and knowledgeable teachers in stimulating learning environments that support and build upon each child's development.

While these are three separate and unique documents, they are commonly linked and all are designed to foster high quality learning environments for children in New York State, regardless of what program the child

attends. All are research based and support developmentally appropriate practices.

This chart illustrates the similarities in domains for each of the three documents.

New York State Early Learning Guidelines (Birth to 5 Years)	New York State Education Department Prekindergarten Learning Standards (4 to 5 Years)	Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework (3 to 5 Years)
		
Approaches to Learning	Approaches to Learning	Approaches to Learning
Language, Communication & Literacy	Communication, Language, and Literacy	Language Development Literacy Knowledge & Skills
Social & Emotional Development	Social Emotional Development	Social & Emotional Development
Cognition & General Knowledge	Cognition and Knowledge of the World	Mathematics Knowledge & Skills Science Knowledge & Skills Creative Arts Expression Logic & Reasoning Social Studies Knowledge & Skills
Physical Wellbeing, Health & Motor Development	Physical Development and Health	Physical Development & Health
<i>English Language Learning embedded throughout all domains</i>		English Language Development

Our understanding of how young children learn has increased exponentially over the past decade. It is with this new knowledge that we update existing and develop new and innovative opportunities for the children of New York State to thrive and excel. We now know that a baby's environment, particularly their relationships and interactions with adults, shape the brain's architecture. Positive and nurturing early relationships strongly influence the development of a healthy well-functioning brain that guides children as learners. Establishing and supporting early care and education programs that are nurturing and stimulating enable children to become active learners and ultimately productive citizens.

Three sets of standards/ guidelines have been developed to assist early learning programs and families to support the development of children. They include:

Early Learning Guidelines — The new NYS Early Learning Guidelines have been developed to provide comprehensive information for parents, teachers, and others about how children grow and what adults can do to make the most of each child's intrinsic drive to learn. They are designed to support



educators and families alike in understanding the developmental progression children make from birth through 5 years. The Early Learning Guidelines illustrate each step along the developmental

The NYS Early Learning Guidelines depict a developmental progression of typical child development, they are not a set of standards. The Early Learning Guidelines outline how children typically develop through each domain from birth to 5 years, and help to inform an emergent curriculum and effective teaching.

The NYS Education Department Prekindergarten Learning Standards identify a set of skills for children to know and be able to do by the end of their preschool experience.

The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework provides a description of the building blocks for children ages 3 to 5 that Head Start researchers determined as most important for a child's school and long-term success.

continuum; this can help adults support children's play and interactions at each stage of development. The more adults know about what children are capable of achieving and how to encourage their development, the greater the likelihood each child will be empowered to grow and learn. Teachers will use the Early Learning Guidelines to help them understand where children are developmentally, and to plan meaningful activities while establishing trust and affirming the joy of learning.


New York State Education Department Prekindergarten Learning Standards — The NYS Education Department has released new standards (January 2011) for all Universal Prekindergarten classrooms. These standards establish expectations for instruction and will help to ensure consistency for children who attend prekindergarten in community based settings and school based prekindergarten classrooms. The Prekindergarten Learning Standards are designed to help ensure that children leave the

classroom prepared and well-equipped to take on the next stage of their learning. Because of the timing of the adoption of the New York State Education Common Core standards and the simultaneous release of the new Prekindergarten standards we currently have two sets of Prekindergarten standards. The Common Core standards (English Language Arts and Math) were developed on a national level. The state of New York adapted and adopted them as the Prekindergarten through grade 12 standards. The newly released Prekindergarten standards include all areas of child development and support a teacher's effort to provide a well-balanced developmentally appropriate prekindergarten experience.

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework — The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework has been updated (2010) and replaces the Head Start Outcomes Framework. Based on additional research and information in the Head Start Act, the new Framework addresses all domains of development and supports children's learning. Each Head Start program will align their curricula and child assessment tools to these expectations for all enrolled 3-5 year old children.

These three valuable resources have many common threads and together, they provide a wonderful outline for excellent early childhood practices. The

A Look at the Three Documents

	Total Number of Elements	Age Range	The Number of Children Impacted by the Standards/ Guidelines
Early Learning Guidelines	73	Birth to 5 years old	All children in New York State birth to 5 years old 1.25 million children
NYS Prekindergarten Standards	71	4 year olds	107,000 children
Head Start Framework	37	3 and 4 year olds	50,000 children



documents have been aligned to enable teachers and others (parents, teacher educators, etc.) to make sure that they are providing children with highly effective opportunities to learn and grow.

	Domain	Domain Element/ Benchmark	Example/ Indicator
Early Learning Guidelines	Physical Wellbeing, Health & Motor Development	Gross Motor Skills	Walks and runs and navigates obstacles and corners.
NYS Education Department Prekindergarten Learning Standards	Physical Development and Health	Gross Motor: Children demonstrate coordination and control of large muscles.	Child runs, jumps, walks in a straight line, and hops on one foot.
Head Start Framework	Physical Development & Health	Gross Motor Skills	Develops motor control and balance for a range of physical activities, such as walking, propelling a wheelchair or mobility device, skipping, running, climbing, and hopping.

Please note these documents are designed with the expectation that all children will make progress in all domains over time. Some children might need more individualized or intensive instruction in order to make progress. Early screening is imperative to ensure children’s needs are met as early as possible. Classroom teachers will work closely with special educators, health providers, family support professionals and parents to help ensure the child’s IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan) or IEP (Individualized Education Program) goals are clearly addressed in daily planning.

The NY State Early Childhood Advisory Council vision is as follows: All young children are healthy, learning, and thriving in families that are supported by a full complement of services and resources essential for successful development. Using the guidelines and standards families and professionals

working in the field of early childhood education can increase the effectiveness of their support of each child in achieving all developmental milestones and prepare them for lifelong learning.

Key initiatives currently underway to provide guidance, support, and technical assistance include:

- ✦ Implementing Early Learning Guidelines for children birth to five years of age.
- ✦ Supporting professional development opportunities in early care and education settings.
- ✦ Implementing QUALITYstarsNY (a quality rating and improvement system for early care and education programs).

Each of these efforts will continue to support and enhance the New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council’s position that all young children deserve high quality, developmentally appropriate learning environments, with well-trained and educated adults and that all children should enter kindergarten physically and emotionally healthy, ready and able to learn.

For more information please go to:

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework
http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/ecdh/eecd/Assessment/Child%20Outcomes/HS_Revised_Child_Outcomes_Framework.pdf

QUALITYstarsNY
<http://www.qualitystarsny.org>

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The New York State Early Childhood Advisory Council
<http://www.ccf.state.ny.us/Initiatives/ECACHome.htm>

New York State Education Department Prekindergarten Learning Standards
http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/pdfdocs/prekindergarten_learning_standards_jan_10_2011.pdf