

Health and Physical Development

- Fine (Small) Motor Skills
- Gross (Large) Motor Skills
- Health Status and Practices
- Nutrition



Physical development and health and safety activities should be integrated into all areas of learning. Activities should be structured to encourage preschool children to explore their world, promote coordination and strength, enhance thinking skills, and develop an “I can do it” attitude. Adults should ensure that children’s health, safety and nutrition needs are met, and that activities contribute to the overall health and well-being of children.

Young children need indoor and outdoor space and facilities that allow them to experience a variety of developmentally appropriate physical activities.

The development of fine (small) motor and gross (large) motor skills, as well as self-help skills, is a critical part of the development of the preschool child. These skills serve as the foundation for the development of future academic skills such as writing and reading.

Strategies to support inclusive learning environments:

- ❖ Assure that materials in indoor and outdoor environments are easily accessible (height, size, location)
- ❖ Use verbal, visual, and physical cues to help children know what to do
- ❖ Assign a capable buddy to model the actions and help with materials and equipment
- ❖ Provide physical guidance/support for children having difficulty with motor tasks

Some general accommodations to support children with special learning or developmental needs can be found on page 9 and in Rule 51.

Fine (Small) Motor Skills

Widely Held Expectations

- Child uses finger and hand control to operate and use small objects to demonstrate fine (small) motor coordination
 - Uses eye-hand coordination to perform a variety of tasks
 - Develops fine (small) motor skills through participation in activities
 - Uses strength and control to perform simple tasks
- Child explores drawing and painting materials

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Participates in activities which require the use of small muscles (buttoning, squeezing, etc.)
- Handles small objects with growing skill (stringing small beads, fitting small objects into holes, etc.)
- Pulls caps off markers and puts them back on firmly, easily uses scissors, brushes, pencils, etc.
- Puts small building blocks together and pulls them apart with relative ease
- Opens/closes jars or lids on containers

The Adult

- Provides adequate time and materials for fine (small) motor skills (drawing, handwriting development, use of computer keyboard/mouse, musical instruments, etc.)
- Plans for scheduled and spontaneous activities that support the development of fine (small) motor skills
- Provides relevant and challenging activities to help children build more advanced fine (small) motor skills

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Opportunities to use materials (art materials, tools, workbench, clay, toys, puzzles, blocks, beads, etc.)
- A variety of materials for writing and drawing

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Science
1.1.4
1.2.1
1.6.1
1.6.2

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations
004.05A7
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start Outcomes Framework

8.1.1
8.1.2
8.1.3

Gross (Large) Motor Skills

Widely Held Expectations

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Science
1.1.1
1.1.4
1.2.1

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A7
004.05A8
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
8.2.1
8.2.2

- Child develops coordination, balance, spatial awareness and strength through gross (large) motor activities
- Child develops gross (large) motor skills
 - Coordinates both hands to manipulate large objects
 - Continues to develop body flexibility and coordination
 - Uses indoor and outdoor gross (large) motor equipment safely and appropriately

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Engages in gross (large) motor activities (marching, hopping, running, dancing, pulling wagons, pushing boxes, rolling, etc.)
- Engages in complex movements (climbing, going up and down steps, riding a tricycle, skipping, throwing, catching, bouncing a ball, etc.)
- Begins to identify body parts and words used in movement (eyes, arms, head, knees, etc.)

The Adult

- Acknowledges and supports children's natural tendencies to move and be active throughout the day
- Provides adequate time for children to practice, explore, and expand their motor skills and interests
- Supports variations in gross (large) motor development
- Plans for outdoor activities on a daily basis

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Equipment and materials to encourage hopping, running, jumping, dancing, climbing and other gross (large) motor skills
- A variety of outdoor equipment (climbing apparatus, swings, tunnels, slides, tricycles, wagons, etc.)

Health Status and Practices

Widely Held Expectations

- Child develops an awareness of health, nutrition and safety
 - Shows growing independence in hygiene, nutrition, and personal care when eating, dressing, washing hands, brushing teeth, and toileting
 - Develops knowledge and skills about what to do in case of fire, storm, injury or other emergencies
 - Identifies potentially harmful objects, substances or behaviors, knows to leave them alone and tell an adult
- Child develops an understanding of the need for regular physical exercise and activity

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Participates actively in games, outdoor play, and other forms of exercise that enhance physical wellness
- Follows program safety rules
- Recognizes common signs of danger/warning
- Uses good hand washing skills (after toileting, eating, wiping nose, handling animals, etc.)

The Adult

- Provides health education for children and families
- Provides time for exercise and physical activity
- Provides instruction for basic health and safety rules
- Models health and safety practices during regular activities including meals and snacks
- Provides opportunities to practice necessary emergency drills (fire, tornado, emergency, etc.)

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Procedures and signs for emergency evacuation (fire, tornado, etc.)
- Written health and safety policies
- Child size sinks, soap that is readily available, hand washing signs, footstools if needed, paper towels, etc.

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12
State Standards
Reading/Writing
1.1.4
1.2.1
1.3.1
Science
1.5.3
1.7.1
Social Studies/
History
1.3
1.4

Nebraska Rule 11
Regulations
004.05A7
004.05A8
004.06C
004.06D
004.06E

Head Start
Outcomes
Framework
8.3.1
8.3.2
8.3.3
8.3.4
8.3.5

Nutrition

Widely Held Expectations

- Child shows knowledge of healthy eating and lifestyle habits
 - Demonstrates knowledge that some foods are healthier than others
 - Uses manners during meals/snacks, including asking for second helpings
- Child begins to develop interest in foods and eating styles of other cultures
- Child understands that healthy foods help them to grow and give them energy to play and think

Learning in Action: Examples

The Child

- Passes food and takes child-sized portions
- Chooses to try new foods and eat a variety of foods
- Uses dramatic play materials to show awareness of different kinds of food, cooking utensils, etc.

The Adult

- Encourages children to serve and feed themselves and assist with cleanup
- Provides opportunities for children to prepare healthy snacks
- Recognizes that families have different food preferences and eating habits
- Stays current with an individual child's food allergies and provides substitute foods as needed
- Provides dramatic play props, pictures, stories and books to represent many cultures

THE ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES

- Books, tapes, visual media and pictures, about familiar foods and nutrition habits from around the world
- Dramatic play center props (foods, dishes, utensils, pots, pans, cookbooks, etc.)

Related Standards

Nebraska K-12 State Standards

Science

1.1.1

1.1.4

1.4.1

1.4.2

1.7.1

Mathematics

1.5.1

1.5.2

1.5.3

1.6.2

Nebraska Rule 11

Regulations

004.05A7

004.05A8

004.06C

04.06D

004.06E

Head Start

Outcomes

Framework

8.4.1

8.4.2

8.4.3

8.4.4

8.4.5

8.4.6

Resources

Active for Life: Developmentally Appropriate Movement Programs for Young Children--Stephen W. Sanders

Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years--National Association for Sports and Physical Education

Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children and Adolescents--American Academy of Pediatrics

Developmental Physical Education for All Children--David L. Gallahue and Frances Cleland Donnelly

More Than Mud Pies: A Nutrition Curriculum Guide for Preschool Children--National Food Service Management Institute

Movement Activities for Early Childhood--Carol Totsky Hammett

Parachute Games--Todd Strong and Dale Lefevre

Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health--U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

These books and many other resources may be borrowed by Nebraska residents from the Early Childhood Training Center. A web-based search of these media materials is offered at www.esu3.org/ectc or telephone contact may be made by calling 1-402-597-4826 or 1-800-89CHILD.

Books for Children

Bee Safe (Bee Attitudes)--Charles Reasoner

Children's Health Books Set--Judith Ann Rice

- *Those Icky Sticky Smelly Cavity Causing But... Invisible Germs*
- *Itsy-Bitsy Teeny-Tiny Not-So-Nice Head Lice*
- *Those Mean Nasty Dirty Downright Disgusting But...Invisible Germs*

Dr. De Soto--William Stieg

Officer Buckle and Gloria--Peggy Rathmann

My World--Margaret Wise Brown

The Safety Book for Active Kids: Teaching Your Child How to Avoid Everyday Dangers--Linda Schwartz and Beverly Armstrong

Wash Your Hands!--Tony Ross

What Happens to a Hamburger?--Paul Showers