

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines

Alaska's Early Learning Guidelines (ELGs) inform parents, caregivers, community members, and leaders about expectations for children's development and learning. They spell out what young children need to know, understand, and be able to do at the end of four stages of development, within five domain areas.

The four stages of development are:

- Birth to 18 Months
- 18 to 36 months
- 36 to 60 months
- 60 months to Kindergarten entry

The five domain areas are:

- *Physical Well-Being, Health, and Motor Development:* Physical health and ability to engage in daily activities
- *Social and Emotional Development:* Emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to their experiences in the home, school, and larger community
- *Approaches To Learning:* Disposition, rather than skill, for becoming involved in learning and acquiring knowledge
- *Cognition and General Knowledge:* Ability to understand and think about the physical and social world and development of specific cognitive functions
- *Communication, Language, and Literacy:* Understanding and use of language, emerging reading and writing skills, and ability to communicate effectively

The published Guidelines include specific strategies and sample activities to use to enhance children's development in each domain. They can be useful to early childhood programs, schools, communities, and state leadership as they address their early childhood education needs.

While the Guidelines are not an exhaustive guide to child development, a curriculum, or an assessment instrument, and should not be used as such, they are a framework that can be used to guide decision making around the development and use of early childhood education curricula and assessment as well as driving the professional development needs of the early childhood education workforce.

The Guidelines were developed using Washington State's Benchmarks as a basis. Washington's Benchmarks were adapted for use in Alaska through a collaborative process between the Departments of Education and Early Development and Health and Social Services with help from numerous representatives from the Alaska System for Early Education Development (SEED), the University of Alaska, school districts, tribal organizations, Head Start programs, preschools, child care, and parents.

Resource Paper on Early Learning