

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

What Children Should Learn or be able to do by First Grade:

- Five domains of development ---equally important
- Uses the process of screening, observation, and assessment to identify the current developmental level of individual child
- Uses the teaching cycle to intentionally plan to plan for developmental needs of each child and the group.
- Understand the importance of using WMELS as framework to decision making in choosing curriculum.



Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Guiding Principals

The WMELS were developed based upon the following principles or beliefs:

1. All children are capable and competent;
2. Early relationships matter;
3. A child's early learning and development is multi-dimensional;
4. Expectations for children must be guided by knowledge of child growth and development;
5. Children are individuals who develop at various rates;
6. Children are members of cultural groups that share developmental patterns;
7. Children exhibit a range of skills and competencies within any domain of development;
8. Children learn through play and the active exploration of their environment;
9. Parents are children's primary and most important caregivers and educators.

For a downloadable copy of 4th Edition WMELS and more information, visit: Collaboratingpartners.com

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Using the WMELS Family Tip Sheets

Remember – Your Child Learns and Grows Across all Five Domains!

Each tip sheet includes information about how your child develops across the domains.



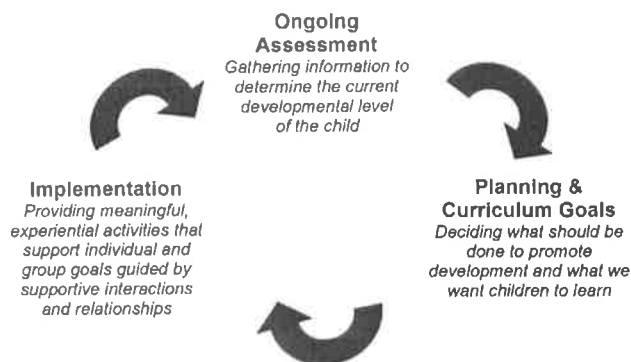
Focus on the Whole Child

The WMELS focuses on the development of the whole child. This means that we think about the child within the context of the world in which he or she lives.

Thinking about the whole child involves taking into consideration how a child's development is influenced by aspects of his or her physical and social environment:

- Relationships with family and other significant people;
- The child's biology or development (temperament, learning style, interests, etc.);
- The environment in which the child and family live;
- The child or family's life experiences, history, biology;
- The child's and family's culture.

The Teaching Cycle



The Teaching Cycle

The parts of the Teaching Cycle include:

- **Ongoing Assessment** – What does your child know, what can your child do;
- **Planning and Curriculum Goals** – Setting goals for your child and planning activities and materials to support learning around those goals;
- **Implementation** – Teaching through play and interactions with materials and people.

The Teaching Cycle is used by teachers in your child's early childhood program every day. Parents can use the Teaching Cycle when:

- **You wait** – Give your child time to play with materials and people;
- **You watch** – Watch what your child is doing;
- **You wonder** – Wonder what does this mean? What does my child know? What can my child do? How can I support my child's learning?

Sources: Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, Third Edition, Developmental Continuum, February 2011
Center for Disease Control and Prevention Developmental Milestones <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>



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Family Tip Sheets Health and Physical Development (Birth to First Grade)

Definition

Health includes knowledge and practices related to physical well-being:

- Health
- Safety
- Nutrition

Physical development includes:

- Large motor development (walking, kicking a ball);
- Small motor control (picking up a piece of cereal, cutting with scissors);
- Sensory (touch, sight, balance, coordination).

Rationale

- Good physical health and motor development allows children to fully participate in learning activities;
- Active movement and exploration of the environment supports brain development;
- Physical activity and good nutrition sets the foundation for healthy growth in all other areas of development.

What should I do if I have a concern about my child's development?

- Talk to your early learning program provider;
- Talk to your doctor. If you and your doctor are still concerned;
- Call Wisconsin First Step 1-800-642-7837 (24 hour service, a parent specialist is available M-F, between 8AM and 4PM);
- If you think your child is a child with a disability, call your County Birth to 3 Services or your Local School District 3 through 5 Services.

How Can I Help My Child Learn at Home and in the Community!

Infant

- Watch your baby to see how he lets you know when he is hungry. Follow your babies own schedule, feed him when he is hungry and let him sleep when he is tired;
- Change your baby's diaper every few hours to prevent diaper rash.

Toddler

- Follow a regular nap and bedtime schedule;
- Provide healthy food choices for your child and let her choose what foods she wants to eat and how much.

Preschooler

- Teach your child how to zip up his coat, fasten small buttons and snaps;
- It is normal for children to have toileting accidents through the age of six or seven;
- Help your child recognize when she needs to go to the bathroom by regularly asking.

Remember – Your Child Learns and Grows Across all Five Domains!

When you talk and listen to your child during routines, you are teaching your child language (listening and understanding) and letting her know that she is important to you (self concept). Talking to her about routines teaches her how to be independent (self help skills).



Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Health and Physical Development

What Does My Child Know? What Can My Child Do?

The Milestone Moments published by the Center for Disease Control provides detailed information of what to expect at each milestone in your child's development. The information below includes a sampling of the skills included in the Milestone Moments.

Infant

- Can hold head up and begins to push up when lying on tummy;
- Makes smoother movements with arms and legs;
- May be able to roll over from tummy to back;
- Can hold a toy and shake it and swing at dangling toys;
- Rolls over in both directions (front to back, back to front);
- Begins to sit without support;
- Stands, holding on;
- Crawls;
- Pulls up to stand, walks holding on to furniture ("cruising");
- May take a few steps without holding on.

Toddler

- Walks alone;
- Can help undress herself;
- Kicks a ball;
- Begins to run;
- Walks up and down stairs holding on;
- Climbs onto and down from furniture without help.

Preschooler

- Climbs well;
- Runs easily;
- Pedals a tricycle (3-wheel bike);
- Walks up and down stairs, one foot on each step;
- Catches a bounced ball most of the time;
- Pours, cuts with supervision, and mashes own food;
- Hops, may be able to skip;
- Can do a somersault;
- Uses a fork and spoon and sometimes a table knife;
- Can use the toilet on her own;
- Swings and climbs.

Additional Resource

Active Early/Healthy Bites

Wisconsin children's future health and well-being are directly related to the development and strengthening of their large and small muscles, involvement in sensory experiences, and practicing of healthy behavior. This site contains information and tools to support childcare, preschool, Head Start, early childhood special education and four and five year old kindergarten programs to provide developmentally appropriate, increasingly complex and diverse opportunities for children to understand and care for their physical well-being.

http://fns.dpi.wi.gov/fns_cacfpwellnessaehb#main-content

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Social-Emotional Development (Birth to First Grade)

Definition

Social Emotional Development includes:

- Children's feelings about themselves and others;
- Children's ability to form relationships and maintain positive relationships with adults and children;
- Children's ability to understand the perspective and feelings of others;
- The skills needed to succeed in a group setting;
- Social and emotional competence development from infancy through adulthood;
- Children's early relationships are the foundation for social and emotional competence and affect all other developmental domains.

Rationale

- Social and emotional development is an ongoing process of skills acquisition and mastery, involving emotions, perception, cognition and language;
- Social emotional skills are connected to school success;
- Social emotional development occurs within the context of relationships and through interactions with adults and peers.

What should I do if I have a concern about my child's development?

- Talk to your early learning program provider;
- Talk to your doctor. If you and your doctor are still concerned;
- Call Wisconsin First Step 1-800-642-7837 (24 hour service, a parent specialist is available M-F, between 8AM and 4PM);
- If you think your child is a child with a disability, call your County Birth to 3 Services or your Local School District 3 through 5 Services.

How Can I Help My Child Learn at Home and in the Community!

Infant

- Hold your baby so that she can see your face;
- Respond quickly when your baby cries, learn to read his cues;
- Hold or place your baby where she can see other children playing.

Toddler

- Talk to your child about how she is feeling, give words to her feelings;
- Model kindness and respect, as your child learns from watching you;
- Use simple one-to-two step directions to help your child learn appropriate behavior.

Preschooler

- Give your child specific complements, let him know what you like about a picture he painted;
- Develop regular routines so that your child knows what to expect;
- Role play positive ways to solve problems.

Remember – Your Child Learns and Grows Across all Five Domains!

When you talk to your child you are letting her know that she is important to you (self concept) and teaching your child language (listening and understanding).



Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Social-Emotional Development

What Does My Child Know? What Can My Child Do?

The Milestone Moments published by the Center for Disease Control provides detailed information of what to expect at each milestone in your child's development. The information below includes a sampling of the skills included in the Milestone Moments.

Infant

- Begins to smile at people;
- Can briefly calm himself (may bring hands to mouth and suck on hand);
- Smiles spontaneously, especially at people;
- Likes to play with people and might cry when playing stops;
- Knows familiar faces and begins to know if someone is a stranger;
- Likes to play with others, especially parents;
- May be afraid of strangers;
- May be clingy with familiar adults;
- Is shy or nervous with strangers;
- Has favorite things and people.

Toddler

- May have temper tantrums;
- Plays simple pretend, such as feeding a doll;
- Gets excited when with other children;
- Shows more and more independence;
- Shows defiant behavior (doing what he has been told not to);
- Plays mainly beside other children, but is beginning to include other children, such as in chase games.

Preschooler

- Copies adults and friends;
- Understands the idea of "mine" and "his" and "hers";
- Shows a wide range of emotions;
- May get upset with major changes in routine;
- Enjoys doing new things;
- Is more and more creative with make-believe play;
- Would rather play with other children than by himself;
- Often can't tell what's real and what's make-believe;
- Wants to be like friends;
- Shows concern and sympathy for others;
- Is aware of gender.

Additional Resource

[Pyramid Model for Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning \(SEFEL\)](#)

The Pyramid Model is an evidence-based tiered prevention and intervention framework to promote social and emotional well-being and prevent challenging behaviors. The vision for the initiative is that the State of Wisconsin will have comprehensive, cross disciplinary professional development to support professionals working to ensure the social and emotional well-being of infants, young children, and their families.

<http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/social-emotional-competence-sefel-pyramid.php>

Sources: Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, Third Edition, Developmental Continuum, February 2011
Center for Disease Control and Prevention Developmental Milestones <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>



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Family Tip Sheets Language Development and Communication (Birth to First Grade)

Definition

Language and Development is about children learning to understand and communicate through language:

- Listening
- Understanding
- Speaking and communicating
- Early literacy

Rationale

- Language development, including listening to others, has a great impact on brain development;
- Children learn language and communication skills by expressing their ideas and feelings, listening, and understanding others;
- In order to learn how to read and write, when children are in elementary school, they need to learn basic concepts about literacy, including purpose and form (grocery lists, letters, books).

How Can I Help My Child Learn at Home and in the Community?

Infant

- Talk and sing to your baby throughout the day;
- Play "turn-taking" games like peek-a-boo.

Toddler

- Make requests that are clear and specific ("Get your coat" rather than "Get it");
- Model appropriate interactions with family members, friends, and family pets;
- Use the names of the objects and people your toddler plays with.

Preschooler

- Children learn to ask questions by hearing others ask questions. Ask your child "what, where, when, and why" questions;
- Model good listening skills by always listening and being interested in the child's communication;
- Give your child opportunities to practice writing by letting him play with envelopes, scrap paper, and pencils.

Remember – Your Child Learns and Grows Across all Five Domains!

When you talk with your child, repeat what they say and add to it to make a full sentence (speaking and communicating). You are teaching your child listening skills (listening and understanding) and that your child is important to you (self concept).

What should I do if I have a concern about my child's development?

- Talk to your early learning program provider;
- Talk to your doctor. If you and your doctor are still concerned;
- Call Wisconsin First Step 1-800-642-7837 (24 hour service, a parent specialist is available M-F, between 8AM and 4PM);
- If you think your child is a child with a disability, call your County Birth to 3 Services or your Local School District 3 through 5 Services.



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Family Tip Sheets Language Development and Communication

What Does My Child Know? What Can My Child Do?

The Milestone Moments published by the Center for Disease Control provides detailed information of what to expect at each milestone in your child's development. The information below includes a sampling of the skills included in the Milestone Moments.

Infant

- Coos, makes gurgling sounds;
- Turns head toward sounds;
- Babbles with expression and copies sounds he hears;
- Cries in different ways to show hunger, pain, or being tired;
- Strings vowels together when babbling ("ah," "eh," "oh") and likes taking turns with parent while making sounds;
- Responds to own name;
- Understands "no";
- Uses fingers to point at things;
- Responds to simple spoken requests;
- Uses simple gestures, like shaking head "no" or waving "bye-bye".

Toddler

- Says several single words;
- Points to show someone what he wants;
- Knows names of familiar people and body parts;
- Says sentences with 2 to 4 words;
- Follows simple instructions;
- Points to things in a book.

Preschooler

- Follows instructions with two or three steps;
- Says first name, age, and sex;
- Talks well enough for strangers to understand most of the time;
- Carries on a conversation using two to three sentences;
- Sings a song or says a poem from memory such as the "Itsy Bitsy Spider" or the "Wheels on the Bus";
- Tells stories;
- Can say first and last name;
- Speaks very clearly;
- Tells a simple story using full sentences;
- Uses future tense; for example, "Grandma will be here";
- Says name and address.

Additional Resource

Get Ready to Read!

Get Ready to Read! is designed to support educators, parents, and young children in the development of early literacy skills in the years before kindergarten. Intended for use with all children, the resources and information provided on this site promote skill building, communication between adults and ways to address concerns.

<http://getreadytoread.org/>

Sources: Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, Third Edition, Developmental Continuum, February 2011
Center for Disease Control and Prevention Developmental Milestones <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>



Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Cognition and General Knowledge (Birth to First Grade)

Definition

Cognition and General Knowledge is about children learning to understand the world and focuses on intellectual development:

- Exploration, discovery and problem solving;
- Mathematical thinking;
- Scientific thinking.

Rationale

- Children learn new things by making connections between what they are learning and what they already know;
- Reasoning (cognition) is the process by which children make sense of the world through active exploration and learning;
- All learning occurs through play and hands on experiences.

How Can I Help My Child Learn at Home and in the Community?

Infant

- Play with your baby providing a variety of interesting objects and toys that make noise. You are your babies' favorite toy!
- Put your child on the floor with interesting toys to encourage him to explore.

Toddler

- Provide your toddler with water toys during bath time. Measuring cups and plastic cups support learning around size and quantity;
- When playing with your toddler, count people, blocks, animals and other toys.

Preschooler

- Ask your child to help come up with a solution to questions or problems, "It is raining and we cannot go outside, what should we do instead?"
- Talk to your child about animals that can be seen in the daytime and ones that move around at night.

Remember – Your Child Learns and Grows Across all Five Domains!

When you ask your child how and why questions, you are supporting critical thinking (problem solving) you are teaching your child to express himself (language and communication).

What should I do if I have a concern about my child's development?

- Talk to your early learning program provider;
- Talk to your doctor. If you and your doctor are still concerned;
- Call Wisconsin First Step 1-800-642-7837 (24 hour service, a parent specialist is available M-F, between 8AM and 4PM);
- If you think your child is a child with a disability, call your County Birth to 3 Services or your Local School District 3 through 5 Services.



Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Cognition and General Knowledge

What Does My Child Know? What Can My Child Do?

The Milestone Moments published by the Center for Disease Control provides detailed information of what to expect at each milestone in your child's development. The information below includes a sampling of the skills included in the Milestone Moments.

Infant

- Pays attention to faces;
- Begins to follow things with eyes and recognize people at a distance;
- Responds to affection;
- Uses hands and eyes together, such as seeing a toy and reaching for it;
- Brings things to mouth;
- Begins to pass things from one hand to the other;
- Plays peek-a-boo;
- Picks up things like cereal O's between thumb and index finger;
- Looks at the right picture or thing when it's named;
- Puts things in a container, takes things out of a container;

Toddler

- Knows what ordinary things are for; for example, telephone, brush, spoon;
- Can follow 1-step verbal commands without any gestures; for example, sits when you say "sit down";
- Begins to sort shapes and colors;
- Completes sentences and rhymes in familiar books;

- Plays simple make-believe games;
- Might use one hand more than the other.

Preschooler

- Can work toys with buttons, levers, and moving parts;
- Plays make-believe with dolls, animals, and people;
- Understands what "two" means;
- Copies a circle with pencil or crayon;
- Names some colors and some numbers;
- Understands the idea of counting;
- Starts to understand time;
- Remembers parts of a story;
- Can print some letters or numbers;
- Copies a triangle and other geometric shapes;
- Knows about things used every day, like money and food.

Additional Resource

[Brain Development – Zero to Three Baby Brain Map](#)

The Brain Map was adapted in 2006 by ZERO TO THREE. Visitors to the webpage are able to select an age range from the pull-down menu and click on it. Depending on the age range, different hotspots on the brain will appear. Clicking on a hotspot will reveal questions to find out how a baby's brain develops during this period of brain growth. Also learn how to enrich a very young child's development.

<http://www.zerotothree.org/baby-brain-map.html>

Sources: Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards, Third Edition, Developmental Continuum, February 2011
Center for Disease Control and Prevention Developmental Milestones <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/index.html>



Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Family Tip Sheets Approaches to Learning (Birth to First Grade)

Definition

Approaches to learning is about how children learn in different ways and focuses on the development of positive attitudes towards learning:

- Curiosity, engagement and persistence;
- Creativity and imagination;
- Diversity in learning.

Rationale

- Children's learning is connected to their feelings of success and willingness to keep trying when something is hard;
- How children learn is influenced by temperament and the child's personality and preferences;
- Children learn best through hands on experiences and nurturing interactions that promote the joy of learning.

How Can I Help My Child Learn at Home and in the Community?

Infant

- Take your baby on walks and let her sit on the grass. Notice what she is interested in;
- Put your child on the floor with interesting toys to encourage him to explore.

Toddler

- Although it takes more time, allow your toddler to "do it himself" before offering help;
- Give your toddler real and pretend toys that are part of everyday life such as pots and pans, spoons and bowls.

Preschooler

- Talk to your child about how we are all different. Read books about different cultures, places and homes;
- Share recipes for favorite foods and try different kinds of foods with your child.

Remember – Your Child Learns and Grows Across all Five Domains!

When you support your child in trying an activity that is hard, for example cutting with scissors (persistence) you are teaching your child to handle frustration (social competence) and promoting fine motor skills (motor development).

What should I do if I have a concern about my child's development?

- Talk to your early learning program provider;
- Talk to your doctor. If you and your doctor are still concerned;
- Call Wisconsin First Step 1-800-642-7837 (24 hour service, a parent specialist is available M-F, between 8AM and 4PM);
- If you think your child is a child with a disability, call your County Birth to 3 Services or your Local School District 3 through 5 Services.



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Family Tip Sheets Approaches to Learning

What Does My Child Know? What Can My Child Do?

The Milestone Moments published by the Center for Disease Control provides detailed information of what to expect at each milestone in your child's development. The information below includes a sampling of the skills included in the Milestone Moments.

Infant

- Pays attention to faces;
- Begins to act bored (cries, fussy) if activity doesn't change;
- Follows moving things with eyes from side to side;
- Watches faces closely;
- Looks around at things nearby;
- Shows curiosity about things and tries to get things that are out of reach;
- Watches the path of something as it falls;
- Looks for things he sees you hide;
- Explores things in different ways, like shaking, banging, throwing;
- Finds hidden things easily.

Toddler

- Points to get the attention of others;
- Shows interest in a doll or stuffed animal by pretending to feed;
- Finds things even when hidden under two or three covers;
- Builds towers of four or more blocks;
- Follows two-step instructions such as "Pick up your shoes and put them in the closet";
- Names items in a picture book such as a cat, bird, or dog.

Preschooler

- Does puzzles with three or four pieces;
- Turns book pages one at a time;
- Builds towers of more than six blocks;
- Screws and unscrews jar lids or turns door handle;
- Uses scissors;
- Starts to copy some capital letters;
- Plays board or card games;
- Tells you what he thinks is going to happen next in a book;
- Counts ten or more things;
- Can draw a person with at least six body parts.

Additional Resource

Temperament – Center for Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Temperament Tool

The Infant Toddler Temperament Tool includes a short online survey that allows parents and caregivers of infants and toddlers to recognize and explore their own temperament traits and those of a child for which they provide care. The IT³ generates results, which support parents and caregivers in understanding how adult and child similarities and differences in temperament traits may affect "goodness of fit." Along with these results, the IT³ generates simple best practice tips adults can use to foster the unique temperament of each child within their care.

<http://www.ecmhc.org/temperament/>

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