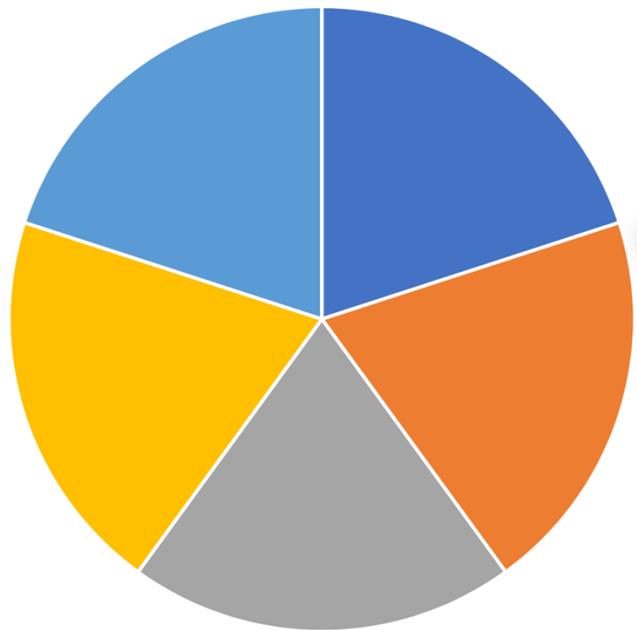


## Dimensions in Development

Early childhood is a crucial period for physical, cognitive and psychosocial development. It marks the acquisition of cognitive and language skills, the consolidation of attachment relationships and the development of a sense of self.

In the midst of the deep learning, educators connect phonemic awareness, mathematical concepts, language development, literacy development, science, art and music, Best practices in early childhood education make learning meaningful to the children who are the learners.



- Physical well-being and motor development
- Communication, language and literacy development
  - Social and emotional development
  - Cognition and general knowledge
  - Approaches toward learning

## Dimensions in Development Pre-K

### Physical Well-Being and Motor Development

#### Rationale

Research links child health to performance in school. Optimal motor development in children, from large motor movements that occur on the playground to small motor work required for holding a pencil or putting together puzzles.

#### *Physical Development*

- Growth
- Physical Fitness – stamina, energy, strength, flexibility
- Body Physiology – optimal functioning of the body

#### *Physical Abilities*

- Gross Motor Skills
  - walking, running, jumping, climbing, hopping, skipping, marching, galloping
  - coordinated movements in throwing, catching, kicking, bouncing balls, twirling
  - physical growth, strength, stamina and flexibility
- Fine Motor Skills
  - Strength, dexterity and control needed to use tools (scissors, paper punch, stapler, hammer)
  - cutting, fastening buttons
  - Hand-eye coordination in building with blocks, working with puzzles, reproducing shapes and patterns, stringing beads
  - Uses drawing, writing and art tools (pencils, markers, chalk, paint brushes, technology)
- Sensorimotor Skills – vision, hearing, touching, kinesthesia
- Oral Motor Skills – sucking, coordination of breathing, movements necessary to produce speech
- Motor planning and Spatial Awareness – learning about themselves, their bodies in relationship to people and objects around them

### Social and Emotional Development

#### Rationale

This dimension serves as the foundation for relationships that give meaning to school experience. It involves a sense of personal well-being that comes from stable interactions in children's early lives and interactions that enable children to participate in classroom activities that are positive for them, their classmates and teachers.

### ***Emotional Development***

- Self-Concept – consisting of traits, habits, abilities, motives, social roles, goals and values that define how we perceive ourselves:
  - Primary emotions – joy, fear, anger, grief
  - Sensory stimulated emotions – disgust, delight, horror
  - Self-awareness emotions – shame, pride, guilt, confidence
  - Takes healthy risks
  - Expresses needs and wants
- Includes the ability to comprehend the feeling of others
  - Empathy, understanding, acceptance
- Self-regulation – manages emotions effectively in relationships while playing and learning
- Developing self-confidence, autonomy and responsibility
- Beings to manage transitions with ease
- Development of executive functions, inhibitory control, working memory, flexibility

### ***Social Development***

- Ability to form and sustain social relationships with adults and friends is central to children's preparedness for school
- Begins to manage transitions with ease
- Social competencies with adults include
  - Ability to communicate with adults and seek help
  - Ability to understand and identify adult roles
- Social competencies with peers has two aspects
  - Social skills necessary to cooperate with peers
    - Understanding rights of others
    - Distinguishing between incidental and intentional actions
    - Treating others as one would like to be treated and attempts to resolve conflicts
    - Shows awareness, acceptance, understanding and appreciation for and empathy for the uniqueness of others
  - Ability to form and sustain reciprocal friendships
    - Listening to others' points of view
    - Willingness to solicit and act upon others' points of view
    - Providing help and support for friends

### **Approaches Toward Learning**

#### **Rationale**

This is the inclinations, dispositions or styles rather than skills that reflect the many ways that children become involved in learning and develop their inclinations to pursue it. Curiosity, creativity, independence, cooperativeness and persistence are some of the approaches that enhance early learning and development

### ***Predispositions***

- Gender – influences attitude toward subjects, about one’s abilities, how one approaches a task and attributions for success and failure
- Temperament – variations can influence the way children think, perceive, understand, judge and solve problems
- Cultural patterns and values – may affect children’s work styles, including their comfort working independently or socially

### ***Learning Styles***

- Openness to try and curiosity about new tasks and challenges – approaches learning with inquisitiveness or passivity
- Initiative, task persistence and attentiveness – enables children to develop and follow through on plans and tasks
- Reflection – includes the capacity to seek models, absorb information and work through alternate possibilities
- Imagination and Invention – associated with the ability to form images of what is not actually present and to extend conventional thinking
- Demonstrates reflective thinking
- Demonstrates a sense of humor

## **Communication, Language and Literacy Development**

### ***Rationale***

Language empowers children to participate in both the cognitive and affective components of the educational program. Experience with language, in both written and oral form, provides children with the tools to interact with others and to represent their thoughts, feelings and experiences. Communicating effectively with other children and adults and having emergent literacy experiences with diverse forms of language are fundamental elements of this dimension.

- Verbal Language
  - Listening and understanding
    - Responds to familiar voices
    - Demonstrates auditory discrimination
  - Speaking
    - Uses simple to increasingly longer and more complex requests/sentences

- Speaks clearly
- Social uses of language – Language is a tool to seek help, express needs, express emotions, get and give information, language as part of social convention and manners
- Vocabulary and meaning – meaningful words and sentences understood, explored, and used; relationship terms; complex sentences linking simple sentences in terms of sequence or causality
- Questioning
- Makes connections and associations
- Follows multi-step directions
- Creative use of language – rhyming sounds and words, storytelling, investigate, narrate, pretend, ideas, opinions, made up words
- Responds to a variety of sentence structure (i.e. questions, exclamations)
- Associates sounds with written letters and/or words
- ***Emerging Literacy***
  - Literature awareness – interest in various forms of literature; recalling familiar stories
  - Print awareness – aware of print; aware of connection between text and oral storytelling; assigning verbal labels to letters, and sounds to letter combinations; recognizing own name in writing, dictate stories
  - Recognizes signs and symbols in the environment
  - Alphabetic knowledge
    - Understands that letters connect to the sounds of language
    - Has a growing awareness that the world is filled with letters
    - Demonstrates the identification of letters in home language alphabet
    - Recognizes familiar words
  - Story sense – aware of story sequence; can retell stories
  - Can dictate stories
  - Writing process – produce ordered scribbling; using pictures, shapes and colors to illustrate their thoughts
  - Collects data and makes records

## Cognition and General Knowledge

### Rationale

A foundation for later learning is provided when children have opportunities to interact with individuals and materials and learn from their surroundings. Children's transitions to formal schooling are eased when children have been provided with a variety of play-oriented, exploratory activities. Cognition and general knowledge represent the accumulation and reorganization of experiences that result from participating in a rich learning setting with skilled educators. From these experiences, children construct knowledge of patterns and relations, cause and effect, and methods of solving problems in everyday life.

- ***Physical Knowledge***
  - knowledge of objects in external reality learned by observation and experience with objects  
(a red, heavy ball rolling downhill)
- ***Logic - Mathematical Knowledge***
  - Knowledge constructed within the mind of the individual that establishes similarities, differences, and associations between objects, events, or people  
(a red and blue bead may be different if the variable under consideration in the mind of the individual is color, or the same it is based on size)
  - Begins to associate number concepts, vocabulary, quantity and written numerals in meaningful ways
  - Demonstrates an understanding of quantity (more/less, equals)
  - Explores common tools for measurement
  - Displays an awareness of time concepts
- ***Social – Conventional Knowledge***
  - Knowledge that reflects agreed-upon convention of society that could not be reinvented by every generation of learners  
(the English language has 26 letters, including 5 vowels and 21 consonants)
- ***Cognitive Competencies that Young Children Develop Through Interaction with Different Types of Knowledge***
  - Representational thought – ability to think about things not present, using forms, color and spatial integration
  - Problem Solving – ability to experiment using different strategies; cause and effect; interpret and generalize, notice details
  - Comes to conclusion based on facts
  - Makes predictions from hypothesis
  - Mathematical knowledge – ability to put objects, events, actions into relationships; explore sequence; cardinality and ordinality, explore tools for measurement, displays an awareness of time concepts, patterns, compare/contrast, matches, sorts, classifies
  - Collects data and makes records
  - Social Knowledge – ability to be aware of self-family, community, physical environment and natural world
  - Imagination – ability to “formulate rich and varied mental images, see beyond the obvious or draw upon experience in inventive and effective ways.
  - Uses words and representations to describe ideas