



Child Development School Readiness Goals

Gulf Coast Community Services Association (GCCSA) Early Head Start/Head Start will promote school readiness by enhancing the social and cognitive development of children through the provision of educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to all enrolled children and families. Parents will be engaged in their children's learning and parents will be supported in making progress toward their educational, literacy and employment goals. Student's assessment data will be disaggregated and shared with the Policy Council and the Board of Directors in November, March and July. These goals were developed with input from staff, parents and community partners. The curriculum used in every classroom is aligned with both, the Texas Pre-K Guidelines and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Based on teacher's observations, ongoing student formal assessments on LAP-3, children will show individual growth in each of the following areas.

Physical Development and Health

Children will show gains of at least 15% on E-LAP/LAP-3 by the end of the year.

- The child will practice good habits of personal safety, personal health and hygiene and will be able to identify good habits of nutrition and exercise.*
- The child will coordinate a sequence of movements to perform tasks that require small-muscle strength and control.*

Social and Emotional Development

Children will show gains of at least 15% on E-LAP/LAP-3 by the end of the school year.

- The child demonstrates use of positive relationships as modeled by the teacher for his own pro-social behaviors.*
- The child regulates his own behavior with occasional reminders or assistance from the teacher.*
- The child demonstrates the ability to assume various roles and responsibilities as part of a classroom community and shows competence in initiating social interactions.*

Approaches to Learning

Children will show gains of at least 20% on E-LAP/LAP-3 by the end of the school year.

- The child will demonstrate an interest in varied topics and activities, desire to learn, creativeness, and independence in learning.*
- The child will begin and finish activities with persistence and attention.*

Language and Literacy

Children will show gains of at least 20% on E-LAP/LAP-3 by the end of the school year.

- The child investigates and demonstrates growing understanding of the sounds and intonation of the English language (ELL).*
- The child uses a wide variety of words to label and describe people, places, things, and actions.*
- The child is able to name at least 20 upper and at least 20 lower case letters and recognize at least 20 letter sounds.
- The child asks and answers appropriate questions about a book.

Cognitive and General Knowledge

Children will show gains of at least 20% on E-LAP/LAP-3 by the end of the school year.

- The child uses words to rote count from 1 to 30.*
- The child counts up to 10 items, and demonstrates that the last count indicates how many items were counted.*
- The child names and is able to create common shapes.
- The child identifies similarities and differences in characteristics of people and of families.
- The child organizes their life around events, time, and routines.
- The child demonstrates that all people need food, clothing, and shelter.

**Infant and Toddler specific goals*

Physical Development and Health

Children explore their physical space and understand how their bodies function in space through active movement experiences. Loco-motor skills are developed first, followed by stability (turning, twisting, balancing, dodging) and manipulative (throwing, catching, kicking, striking) motor skills. Gross motor development requires thought and deliberate movement. Four-year-old children develop greater control of gross-motor manipulative movements that involve giving force to objects and receiving force from objects. Pre-kindergarten children demonstrate an understanding of health and safety issues as it relates to their daily routines and activities. Children learn to make healthy choices in nutrition and understand the importance of well-being through exercise and rest.

Social and Emotional Development

Central to understanding emotional development is the idea of self-concept which is an increasing level of conscious awareness of one's feelings, thoughts, abilities, likes, and dislikes, as well as awareness of one's body in space. Preschool children's emerging ability to perceive these aspects of themselves at a conscious level distinguishes them from toddlers, who lack such awareness. Children begin to generate multiple answers to the question, "Who am I?" which is an essential aspect of becoming competent in related areas such as self control and social / friendship skills. Preschool children feel safer and function more successfully in the classroom when rules and routines are consistently followed. A well-organized classroom with well prepared activities helps children extend their attention span and build self-control and personal responsibility. As they encounter and overcome new and various social obstacles when playing with peers, guidance from teachers will enable them to learn acceptable and unacceptable ways of dealing with social and emotional stress and/or excitement.

Approaches to Learning

Prekindergarten children come from a variety of cultural and linguistic settings; therefore, their understanding of the world around them can be unique and very diverse. It is important to realize that children bring different background knowledge to the classroom, and this will undoubtedly influence their understanding of some concepts. Therefore, it is important to incorporate and honor the child's home, community, and diversity in their understanding and world view.

Language and Literacy

From birth, children begin learning by listening to the world around them. As their exposure increases, so does their understanding. Prekindergarten-age children are able to comprehend with increasing accuracy what they hear in conversation and in stories read aloud. Children demonstrate understanding through their questions, comments, and actions. According to state law, prekindergarten children who are English language learners can be in a classroom environment that is either English as a Second Language instruction or Bilingual. Children who are English language learners arrive at school with listening comprehension skills in their home language. These skills can be used to support the child's development in English. Children who are English language learners listen purposefully to both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking teachers and peers to gather information about both their home language and their new language (English). (LEER MAS, 2001) Prekindergarten children gain the ability to use language in a variety of settings and for a variety of reasons. They become increasingly able to describe wants and needs, carry on conversation with others, and share information with both peers and adults. Young children must learn to vocalize, pronounce, and discriminate among the sounds of the alphabet and words of language. Children's vocabulary acquisition is largely dependent upon interactions with adults. These may be occurring in one or more languages through talking about experiences, reading familiar stories, singing familiar songs, and playing word games. When introducing vocabulary to children who are English language learners, teachers should use a variety of approaches to teach important new words and use real-life objects or pictures when appropriate. To ensure that all children enter school ready to learn, early education efforts must encourage emergent literacy. When optimal conditions exist in a child's environment, literacy develops naturally. Prekindergarten children benefit from classroom activities and environments that create an association between reading and feelings of pleasure and enjoyment, as well as learning and skill development. Children who are English language learners benefit from repetitive exposure to pictures and other media pertinent or associated with the content of stories read aloud in English. Phonological awareness is an auditory skill that involves an understanding of the sounds of spoken words. It includes being able to recognize individual words in a spoken sentence, blending and dividing words into syllables, recognizing and producing rhyming words, identifying words that sound the same at the beginning, and for some children, blending words at the single-sound level.

Cognitive and General Knowledge

Prekindergarten children's mathematical understandings are built on informal knowledge about quantity that they develop even before any instruction. Young children know immediately if someone gets more cookies than they do. They like telling their age, such as by holding up four fingers to tell an adult how old they are. Prekindergarten-aged children show basic counting readiness and counting by using nonverbal and verbal means. They use informal and formal strategies to make a collection larger or smaller. This includes teacher showing (modeling) a mathematical behavior and asking the children to do the same. They can recognize, describe, and name attributes of shapes. They are also able to verbally describe or demonstrate attributes of persons or objects, such as length, area, capacity, or weight. They have the ability to sort and classify objects using one or more attributes. They begin to use attributes of objects to duplicate and create patterns. Prekindergarten children learn to explore properties of materials, positions, and motion of objects through investigations which allow them to notice the attributes of each of these. These explorations continue as children use attributes to classify and sort objects, make observations and predictions, problem-solve, compare, and question. Children learn about sources of energy by investigating and discussing light, heat, electricity and magnetism. They are naturally curious about the characteristics of organisms and they understand the differences in living and non-living things. They are enthusiastic learners about earth and space. They are intrigued by their local environment. Discovering their place in the world is exciting and fun for them. Prekindergarten children are aware of time and begin to organize their lives around it. Children learn to depend on events and routines that occur in a regular and predictable order. They begin to understand past events and how these events relate to present and future activities, demonstrating evidence of their growing understanding of time, change, and continuity. In prekindergarten, children learn about the world in their community. They explore the roles and relationships of consumers and producers, and become aware that people produce services as well as goods. Children learn that their community benefits from many different people working in many different ways. The child begins to understand important customs, symbols, and celebrations that represent American beliefs and principles and contribute to our national identity.