LANGUAGE AND CULTURE MATTER:

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

INFANT/TODDLER & PRESCHOOL SUB-DOMAINS

- Emotional & Behavioral Self-Regulation
- Cognitive Self-Regulation (Executive Functioning)
- Initiative and Curiosity
- Creativity

HOW DO TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SKILLS, VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LIFEWAYS ALIGN WITH STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS?

Children actively and confidently engage in play as a means of exploration and learning.

Children approach tasks, activities, and problems with creativity, imagination and/or willingness to try new experiences or activities.

Children exhibit curiosity, interest, and willingness in learning new things and having new experiences.

Children sustain interactions by cooperating, helping, and suggesting new ideas for play.

Children demonstrate persistence.

—Examples from New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core

WHY IT MATTERS

"Creative movement…is one of the best ways for children to learn the social skills needed for working together" In Gilbert 2002 (quoted in Dow 2010)

"Children whose parents and teachers gave them high ratings on approaches to learning [self-control, attentiveness, task persistence, eagerness to learn, flexibility, organization, concentration] in kindergarten exhibited faster rates of growth in reading and math from kindergarten to fifth grade, compared with children with lower ratings" In Li-Grining et al. 2010 (quoted in Chien, Harbin, Goldhagen, Lippman, & Walker 2012)

My father went on talking to me in a low voice. This is how our people always talk to their children, so low and quiet, the child thinks he is dreaming. But he never forgets.

—Maria Chona, Tohono O'odham

For a description of the skills, behaviors and knowledge that Early Head Start and Head Start programs must foster in all children, please visit the *Interactive Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five. A guide to what children should know and do in five central developmental domains*.

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE MATTER:

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

INFANT/TODDLER & PRESCHOOL SUB-DOMAINS

- Relationships with Adults
- Relationships with Other Children
- Emotional Functioning
- Sense of Identity and Belonging

> Tell me and I'll forget. Show me, and I may not remember. Involve me, and I'll understand.
>
> — Author Unknown

WHY IT MATTERS

A secure attachment relationship between infants and their child care providers can complement the relationship between parents and young children and facilitate early learning and social development" In Howes 1999 (quoted in Schumacher & Hoffman 2008)

". . . children's self-regulation behaviors in the early years [are] more predictive of school achievement in reading and math than IQ scores" In Bodrova & Leong 2008 and Blair 2002 (quoted in NY State Board of Regents)

HOW DO TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SKILLS, VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LIFEWAYS ALIGN WITH STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS?

- Show self-confidence as they develop abilities and potential.
- Demonstrate persistence with challenging activities, showing a can-do attitude.
- Demonstrate increasing self-direction and independence, especially with related to self- help skills and separating from primary caregivers.
- Demonstrate increasing competence in regulating, recognizing, and expressing emotions verbally and nonverbally.
- Enjoy playing alone or near other children.
- Develop skills for coping with adversity and change.
- Express and manage anger appropriately.
- Develop an awareness of personal uniqueness, regarding themselves as having certain abilities, characteristics, preferences, and cultural identities.
- Use pretend play to express thought and feelings.

—Examples from Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers and Strategies for Guiding Their Success

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE MATTER:

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION

INFANT/TODDLER SUB-DOMAINS

- Attending and Understanding
- Communicating and Speaking
- Vocabulary
- Emergent Literacy

PRESCHOOL SUB-DOMAINS

- Attending and Understanding
- Communicating and Speaking
- Vocabulary
- Phonological Awareness
- Print and Alphabet Knowledge
- Comprehension and Text Structure
- Writing

WHY LITERACY MATTERS

"Children who are read to more frequently and from an earlier age tend to have a greater interest in literacy, exhibit superior literacy skills during the preschool and school years, choose reading more frequently, initiate reading sessions on their own, and show greater engagement during reading sessions" In California Department of Education 2008

"Phonological awareness is one of the most powerful predictors of later success in reading" In Tomlinson & Hyson 2009

"Engaging children in early writing also helps them learn about print and the letters and words they eventually will read and spell" In Burns, Griffin, & Snow (quoted in Tomlinson & Hyson 2009)

As young children get more involved with written text by being read to, examining books, and observing others write, they begin to experiment with writing" In California Department of Education 2008

WHY LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION MATTER

"The first five years of life, and especially the years between one and four, are prime time for language learning. The brain is growing and developing rapidly, forming new connections as it learns. These connections, in turn, enable rapid information processing and new learning" In Shore 1997 (quoted in Bardige 2005)

"Preschool children's language achievements provide unique and complementary contributions to higher-level language achievements, including reading comprehension, decontextualized language abilities, and metalinguistic awareness" In Chaney & Burk 1998 (quoted in Justice Mashburn, Pence, & Wiggins 2008)

"…the amount of verbal interactions between teachers and students largely accounted for the effects of broad indicators of child-care quality on language development" In Vasilyeva & Waterfall 2011

It takes three generations to lose the language. But by focusing on children, you can get it back in one generation.

—Michael Skenadore, Director, Menominee Nation Early Childhood Head Start/Early Head Start, Wisconsin

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE MATTER:

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION (CONT.)

HOW DO TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SKILLS, VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LIFEWAYS ALIGN WITH STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS? (LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION)

Children understand increasingly complex sentences, including past, present, and future tenses.

Children understand and use a growing vocabulary. Attend to language for longer periods of time, such as when books are read, people are telling stories, and during conversations.

Children understand that people communicate in many ways, including through gestures, sign language, facial expressions, and augmentative communication devices.

Children consistently respond to requests for information or action (e.g., respond to questions and follow one and two step directions).

Children comprehend and use language for multiple social and cognitive purposes (e.g., understand and talk about feelings, ideas, information, and beliefs).

Children develop familiarity with sounds in words (e.g., listening to, identifying, recognizing, and discriminating).

— Examples from Early Learning Standards for North Carolina Preschoolers and Strategies for Guiding Their Success

HOW DO TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SKILLS, VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LIFEWAYS ALIGN WITH STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS? (LITERACY)

Children begin to recognize print conventions and understand that print carries meaning.

Children develop age-appropriate phonological awareness.

Children begin to recognize the letters of the alphabet.

Children demonstrate understanding of age-appropriate text read aloud.

Children demonstrate motivation for literacy activities.

Children demonstrate emergent writing skills.

—Examples from California Preschool Learning Foundations

The language is your world view. The way you see the world (when speaking in my native language) . . . is so different from thinking in English. Every single sound of the language has a meaning to it, and unless you can understand those meanings, it is really hard to put that world view together.

—Jonathan Ross, Alaska Native Heritage Center

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE MATTER:

COGNITION

INFANT/TODDLER SUB-DOMAINS

- Exploration and Discovery
- Memory
- Reasoning and Problem-Solving
- Emergent Mathematical thinking
- Imitation and Symbolic Representation and Play

PRESCHOOL SUB-DOMAINS

MATHEMATICS DEVELOPMENT

- Counting and Cardinality
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Measurement
- Geometry and Spatial Sense

SCIENTIFIC REASONING

- Scientific Inquiry
- Reasoning and Problem-Solving

Survival of our nations depended on our children's activities, skills, knowledge and acts of bravery.

—David Wilkins, Lumbee

WHY IT MATTERS

"By engaging in the investigation of topics rooted in their own culture, children tend to become fully engaged in the process and remember and use these thinking strategies (asking questions, considering cause-and-effect relationships, predicting, investigating, recording, and discussing) when inquiring about other everyday topics" In Dubosarsky et al. 2011

"Critical thinking requires children to carefully and rigorously reflect on their past experiences and to sue their memory to note relationships and make comparisons based on a set of criteria" In Zachopoulou & Makri 2005 (quoted in Marigliano & Russo 2011)

"Like the other essential skills, the skill of critical thinking follows a developmental path throughout childhood and into adulthood, but its use must also be promoted" In Galinksy 2010

"Thinking about patterns is another important precursor for learning mathematics in general and for learning algebra in particular" In California Department of Education 2008

"Developing preschoolers' spatial sense through block play helps build the foundation for later math success in the primary years and beyond" In Hanline, Milton, & Phelps 2010 (quoted in Tyminski & Linder 2012)

"Engaging in scientific investigation supports children's language, mathematics, and science reasoning skills. It provides rich opportunities for teachers to observe and document children's thinking in action" In Brenneman 2009

There is a profound similarity between the research methods used by scientists and the exploration of young children as a result of their natural curiosity" In Dewey 1916 (quoted in Shaffer, Hall, & Lynch 2009)

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE MATTER:

COGNITION (CONT.)

HOW DO TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SKILLS, VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LIFEWAYS ALIGN WITH STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS?

Child actively engages in problem solving.

Child communicates more than one solution to a problem.

Child identifies additional materials to complete a task.

Child chooses materials/props and uses novel ways to represent ideas, characters, and objects.

Child experiments and seeks additional clarity to further his/her knowledge.

—Examples from New York State Prekindergarten Foundations for the Common Core

Child seeks out connections, relations, and assistance from peers and adults to complete a task.

The child understands numbers, ways of representing numbers and relationships between quantities and numerals.

The child anticipates, remembers, and describes sequence of events with increasing accuracy.

The child demonstrates emerging knowledge of measurement.

The child uses numbers and counting as a means for solving problems and determining quantity.

The child demonstrates the ability to investigate, organize, and create representations.

The child demonstrates understanding of geometrical and spatial concepts.

The child demonstrates an understanding of non-standard units to measure and make comparisons.

—Examples from New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines: Birth Through Kindergarten

The child uses the scientific method to investigate the physical and natural worlds and to hypothesize and make predictions.

The child explores, observes, describes, and participates in a variety of activities related to preserving the environment.

The child uses various tools to gather information (i.e., thermometers, magnifiers, rulers, and/or balances).

The child acquires scientific knowledge related to earth science.

The child investigates, compares, and contrasts seasonal and weather changes in the immediate environment.

The child acquires scientific knowledge related to life sciences.

The child explores, observes, and describes a variety of living things and distinguishes from non-living things.

—Examples from New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines: Birth through Kindergarten

> A word has power in and of itself. It comes from nothing into sound and meaning; it gives origin to all things.
>
> —N. Scott Momaday, Kiowa

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LANGUAGE AND CULTURE MATTER:

PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

INFANT/TODDLER AND PRESCHOOL SUB-DOMAINS

- Perception
- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition

HOW DO TRADITIONAL CULTURAL SKILLS, VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LIFEWAYS ALIGN WITH STATE AND LOCAL SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS?

- Children use their senses to assist and guide learning.
- Children use sensory information to plan and carry out movements.
- Children engage in a variety of physical fitness activities.
- Children demonstrate personal are and hygiene skills.

—Examples from New York State Prekindergarten Foundation for the Common Core

WHY IT MATTERS

"Crawling also reinforces babies' ability to cross their body's midline, which helps them develop directionality, an important skill for writing left to right" In Shamberg 2009 (quoted in New York State Board of Regents 2011)

"…children who don't eat breakfast have trouble concentrating at school, becoming restless by late morning as glucose levels, the brains' basic fuel, drop" In New Your State Board of Regents 2011

"Teachers must encourage motor development with developmentally appropriate tasks that are achievable at any age or with any skill set" In Bruni 2006 (quoted in Huffman & Fortenberry 2011)

I have walked in a mountain meadow bright with Indian paint-brush, lupine, and wild buckwheat, and I have seen . . . the male pine grosbeak . . . its dark striped wings nearly invisible in the soft, mottled light.

—N. Scott Momaday, Kiowa

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