



## What you will learn about Developmentally Appropriate Practice

*QRIS Indicators for Step 3 Child Growth, Development, and Learning: ERS Assessment meets minimum overall and interaction scores. (Developmentally Appropriate Practice is the hallmark of high quality child care settings.)*

*Program formally documents each child's progress. Step 3, Steps to Quality; Child Growth, Development, and Learning Standard.*

***ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE MEANS THAT ADULTS MEET CHILDREN WHERE THEY ARE; AND ADULTS SUPPORT EACH CHILD IN ATTAINING CHALLENGING AND ACHIEVABLE GOALS.***

Individualize experiences, activities, interactions, and instructions to meet the needs of each child. (ELG Essential Practice, Cultural Context)

### What does this look like in practice?

- Observe child to understand unique temperament, learning styles, and ways of showing curiosity.
- In group child care settings, establish a primary caregiver to create a trusting relationship from which the child can explore.
- Interact with child by asking simple questions and responding to his/her questions.
- Offer a variety of materials and activities that match each child's exploration style.
- Play question-and-answer games that inspire child's curiosity.
- Offer a variety of resources for gathering information to build on child's interests.

***ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: THERE ARE FIVE GUIDELINES WHICH ENCOMPASS DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE. EACH GUIDELINE IS ONE COMPONENT OF ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE WITH SEPARATE QUALITY INDICATORS.***

1. **Community of Learners**
2. **Teaching**
3. **Curriculum**
4. **Assessment**
5. **Families**

**Create a Caring Community of Learners-** Provide continued acknowledgements in ways that reflect children's cultural beliefs and traditions so that all children feel valued. Support a sense of competence. (ELG, Essential Practices, Cultural Context)

*What does this look like in practice?*

- Observe child to learn which activities increase or sustain their interest.
- Talk to, smile at, cuddle with; and allow infant time to respond to you.
- Provide words to the infant's expression of emotion (hungry, peaceful, happy, sad, sleepy).
- Create a safe, secure, and attractive environment for children to explore toys, books, and caregiver.
- Listen with interest to what child says and elaborate and expand on their thoughts or ideas.
- Model, explain, and provide opportunities for child to interact appropriately and be respectful of adults.
- Provide supported opportunities for babies and children to play and interact with each other.
- Talk about babies' expression of emotion (hungry, sad, sleepy) while providing care.
- Verbally acknowledge a baby/child's feeling so that peers are aware of other's feelings.
- Help children communicate with others when negotiating toys, space, and feelings by providing words and explanations and expressing empathy for both children.
- Facilitate play and communication among children of different ability levels, and linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- Post pictures of babies and children with their families in the child care program/classroom. Talk about the people in the pictures.
- Conduct group activities on a regular basis with singing and movement games.
- Promote a sense of community by having children participate in clean up, classroom duties, and meal preparation (as appropriate for their age).

**Teaching to Enhance Development and Learning-** Children are active learners who learn through play. Play is fundamental to a child's learning. Children learn through play, shared knowledge, curiosity, and sense of wonder are foundations for children's learning. (ELG, Guiding Principles)

*What does this look like in practice?*

- Providers use a wide range of teaching/learning strategies.

- Acknowledge children's efforts and accomplishments by giving descriptive positive attention. ("You wrote your name on your paper." Or responding to babbling with eye contact and a verbal response.)
- Talk with child about what has been seen, heard, or done.
- Encourage children's persistence and effort through comments and nonverbal actions. ("You worked really hard to untangle that!") Avoid empty praise such as "Good job!"
- Give specific feedback rather than general feedback such as "I wonder what would happen if you used a fork instead of a spoon for your noodles."
- Model for children by displaying a skill or desired behavior such as whispering when you'd like them to lower their voices or sitting down at a center to work on a project.
- Demonstrate by showing the correct way to perform a task which must be done in a certain way such as washing hands, blowing bubbles, or using a hammer.
- Create or add challenge by generating a problem or add difficulty to a task or step so that it is a bit beyond what the child has already mastered.
- Try child's suggested interventions when problems are encountered; talk with them about what worked and what did not.
- Provide information by giving children facts and labeling items. ("Birds make nests to live in." or "This is a cup.")
- Describe and name what child is looking at ("That's a big boat!" "There is a horse.")
- Give directions with specific instructions for children's action or behavior "Let's put all of the colored blocks on this shelf".
- Help child stay on task, break activity into manageable pieces, give visual and spoken cues, and help them return to tasks.

**Planning Appropriate Curriculum-** Learning is most meaningful when it is integrated across all areas of development. Children construct knowledge and integrate new ideas and concepts into their existing understanding. Their achievements in language and learning are influenced by the social and emotional aspects of their development. Communication influences mathematical and scientific understanding. There are no clear lines between the domains of development or areas of learning. (ELG, Guiding Principles)

#### *What does this look like in practice?*

- Engage children in activities that show "more." Eating, dressing, and singing or play times are good times to talk about concepts of more.
- Use number games and vocabulary with child, using numerical terms (e.g. two eyes, one nose, two hands, one belly button).
- Sing songs that introduce numbers and encourage the child to sing some of the song (e.g. 3 little ducks, 3 little monkeys).

- Provide opportunities for child to fill and dump containers with objects.
- Provide opportunities to sort common objects and offer commentary as the child sorts (e.g. sorting laundry: "You put all of the socks in this basket. I'll fold the shirts.").
- Provide small table blocks and unit blocks for child to play, build, and explore.
- Comment on sorting and matching during clean-up (e.g. "Do you want to put the big ones on the shelf, or the little ones?").
- Pose math questions relevant to daily life (e.g. "How many days until your birthday? How many days until the field trip?").
- Describe patterns and sequences during routines such as diaper changing and feeding.
- Provide visual patterns, variations in light, variation in music, and a variety of tactile materials both indoors and outside in the child's environment.
- Sing songs, use finger-plays, and read books with repeatable action patterns, familiar objects, colors, and shapes; noting similarities and differences.
- Provide opportunities for child to create art projects that use shapes (e.g. "You can draw a house by putting a triangle on top of a square." "Look at the door. What shape is it? You can draw a door in that shape.").
- Challenge child to repeat patterns made by clapping, stomping, or with rhythm instruments.
- Play simple games that include a physical response to words such as peek-a-boo, pat-a-cake, and so big.
- Use puppets and other props that support call and response scenarios.
- Play treasure hunt, where you put objects somewhere close by, give the child a direction to find the object, then cue them until they find the object.
- Pretend talking on phone with the child.
- Play dancing games where instructions include such directions as stop and start again, step softly, dance like an elephant, or march in place.
- Play games with child that require listening and understanding ("Going on a Bear Hunt," "Red Light/Green Light, Red stand up, green stand up, yellow and blue sit down").

**Assessing Children's Development and Learning-** Children have unique characteristics that influence learning. The rate of development and learning varies for individuals and is not the same for every child of the same age. Learning may be uneven or occur in spurts. An individual's learning is impacted by genetics, culture, environment and experiences, interests, motivation, and approaches to learning. (ELG, Guiding Principle)

Individualize experiences, activities, interactions, and instructions to meet the needs of each child. (ELG Essential Practices, Cultural Context)

*What does this look like in practice?*

- Teachers use reflection from observation to make changes to the environment, schedule, methods, etc. as necessary to improve effectiveness for the group and for individual children.
- Teachers connect curriculum topics to children's interests, what children can do, and what children know and to cultural and social contexts of the children's lives.

**Developing reciprocal relationships with families-** Build strong relationships with and among families, teachers, caregivers, and community programs. (ELG, Essential Practices, Family Support)

*What does this look like in practice?*

- Show respect for child and everyone in his/her environment.
- Recognize child's emotions during separation and reunion times with parents and caregivers. These may range from sadness, to anger, to fear.
- Choose your words of comfort and the strategies you use to match the child's emotions.

***ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: A VARIETY OF CONTEXTS FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ARE SUPPORTED IN A DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE CHILD CARE SETTING.***

Provide a range of experiences to all children even though their responses may differ and some children may need adaptations. (ELG, Essential Practices)

**What does this look like in practice?**

*Infants and Toddlers are engaged through small groups, environments for play, and daily routines.*

- Respond and play with child during the course of everyday routines and free time.
- Provide space and times where child can play or work at tasks without interruptions.
- Provide consistent, but flexible daily care routine.
- Provide opportunities and supervision for child to observe play groups (younger babies).
- Conduct group activities on a regular basis with singing and movement games (older infants and toddlers).
- Provide opportunities for brief social games and group activities ("Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes") (toddlers).

*Preschool and Kindergarteners are engaged through large groups, small groups, play and engagement in learning centers, and daily routines.*

- Engage child in dramatic play that promotes group work and an understanding of social rules.
- Engage children in group discussions and decision-making, and encourage them to contribute their ideas and listen to others.
- Encourage participation in group games, allowing children to make up or modify rules.
- Assist child who needs extra help in sustaining group participation, by suggesting tasks for that child within the group.
- Provide opportunities to engage group activities (science and cooking projects).
- Make materials accessible for self-sufficiency, free choice, and self-expression.
- Provide a variety of stimulating, open-ended materials reflecting child's expressed interests, and self-directed time to use them.
- Provide schedules and routines.