

**Delaware Opportunities, Inc.**  
**Head Start**  
**School Readiness and Family Engagement Policy**

In order for us to prepare the children in our program for school we need to have expectations and goals that gauge the children's progression and mastery across the five broad and interrelated domains. These domains encompass the following and the seven family outcomes.

The five School Readiness broad goals are:

- Communication, Language and Literacy – Children's understanding, creating, and communicating meaning.
- Cognition and Knowledge of the World – What children need to know and understand about their world and how they apply what they know.
- Approaches To Learning – How children become engaged in learning and acquire knowledge.
- Physical Development and Health – Children's physical health and ability to engage in daily activities.
- Social and Emotional Development – The emotional competence and ability to form positive relationships that give meaning to children's experiences in their home, school and community.

These Family Engagement outcomes are as follows:

- Family Well-being – Parents and families are safe, healthy and have increased financial security.
- Parent-Child Relationships – Beginning with parents and families developing warm relationships that nurture their child's learning and development.
- Families as Lifelong Educators – Parents and families observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at

home, school and in their communities.

- Families as Learners – Parents and families advance their own learning interests through education, training and/or other experiences that support their parenting, career and life goals.
- Family Engagement in Transitions – Parents and families support and advocate for their child’s learning and development as they transition to new learning environments, including HS to other early learning environments and HS to kindergarten through elementary school.
- Family Connection to Peers and Community – Parent and families form connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational and that enhances social well-being and community life.
- Families as Advocates and Leaders – Parent and families participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, and community and state organizing activities to improve children’s development and learning experiences.

By planning to integrate these domains/outcomes and planning for the children/families based on their individuality we will improve the children’s school readiness in compliance with New York State’s Early Learning Goals and Head Start Family Engagement Outcomes.

Delaware Opportunities, Inc. Head Start uses the High Scope Curriculum and the assessment tool is the COR Advantage (COR) which correlates with The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. The monitoring tool used by the Children’s Services Manager is the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) which covers the areas of Emotional Support, Classroom Organization and Instructional Support. The Children’s Services Manager calculates aggregate scores for three CORs that correlate with Family Reports for the Parent/Teacher Conferences and for each CLASS observation.

Delaware Opportunities, Inc. Head Start children will be school ready if they meet their Family Engagement outcomes through our Program environment, Family Partnerships, Teaching and Learning and Community Partners. As a Program our leadership, continuous improvement along with professional development enable this to happen.

The steps we take to accomplish school readiness goals are as follows:

Delaware Opportunities, Inc Head Start works together in a mutual, respectful and responsive to a family's language and culture, meaningful relationship building is ongoing and requires time and attention by partnering with families to share responsibility for the care and learning of children in working with parents to plan ways to support their children – a team approach that includes everyone in the home and in the Program. Delaware Opportunities, Inc. Head Start makes a point to check in, to revisit a plan and meet when new ideas are needed.

Engagement in the early years prepares families to be engaged throughout their child's school years. Most importantly, Family Engagement efforts support the parent-child relationships that are the key to a child's healthy development, school readiness and well-being now and in the future.

1. Adopt and align established Office of Head Start (OHS) preschool child goals from The Head Start Early Learning Framework, establishing clear school readiness goals across domains (listed above):

- We have contacted the Local Education Agencies (LEA) and compiled a Kindergarten Checklist that correlates with the skills that they would like to see the children enter school with. This check list correlates with The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, High Scope and COR Advantage as well as the CLASS monitoring system. Teaching staff are informed of the Kindergarten Skills, The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and any changes that are necessary in order to meet these requirements at meetings, trainings and communications with Children's Services Manager.
- We communicate with the LEA during our transition periods as follows:
  - There are activities to prepare the children in the classrooms, such as, role play in the dramatic play learning centers, books, songs, finger plays and field trips to acquaint the children that are transitioning from Head Start to school. Parents are invited to participate in all these activities.
  - The LEAs are invited to the classrooms to read to the children and/or observe so that they may appropriately place the children

when they register with the LEA.

- The LEAs are invited to Parent Group meetings to speak to parents about the expectations for both parents and children as they transition to kindergarten.
- During the children's enrollment in a Head Start classroom the CORs aggregate scores are calculated in order to assist the manager and staff in the status of the children's challenges, progress, and mastery of skills. These aggregate scores are used to show strengths, mastery and challenges in order to plan and
- provide staff development to increase/maintain readiness skills and goals for the children enrolled in our program. These scores are shared with the Board, Policy Council and staff.

2. Create and implement a plan of action for achieving the established readiness goals:

- Parents/Guardians are their child's first teacher. They know their child best. The research shows the more families are engaged in their children's education, the greater success, they will have. This reflects the importance for the connection between school and home.
- In order to improve the quality of teacher-child interactions the Children's Services Manager uses CLASS as a monitoring tool. When a center observation is taken the observations as well as the aggregate scores are shared with the teaching staff. The CLASS scores are used to show the education staff where their strengths and challenges are and recommendations are made as to the changes that need to be taken to improve the classroom environment.
- We use the High Scope Curriculum. This curriculum uses the COR Advantage to assess the children. Teaching staff take anecdotal observations and score the level of skill development. Assessments are provided three times a year and teaching staff meet with the parents to share the challenges, progression and strengths they have documented.

When staff and parents meet they will discuss and set goals for the children utilizing a team approach. The goals and readiness skills will be worked on at home as well as at school.

- After looking at the COR Summary that the teaching staff compile and send to the Children's Services Manager an aggregate report will be produced. This report will provide scores that will address the challenges and strengths as a program. Once these are evaluated the Children's Services Manager will provide individual or program-wide training to increase and/or support overall school readiness.
- Final Family Reports of children entering kindergarten are sent out to the LEAs in June and when staff returns in the fall they contact the parents to provide backpacks for the children as well as guidance and assistance to the parents. The parents are contacted later in the year as well to see how the children are doing and if there is anything more that we can do to assist them.

We also contact the LEAs twice to see how the children are doing in kindergarten and to provide insight and assistance on how the children performed while enrolled in Head Start.

3. Assess child progress on an ongoing basis and aggregate and analyze data at multiple times throughout the year:

- Aggregate data is collected three times in our program center year – October, January and March. After the second round of the COR Summary the aggregate scores are shared with the Board and Policy Council members to discuss the children's progress as well as the programs strengths and challenges. If there are challenges in any area the Children's Services Manager will provide information, trainings and materials in order to improve the areas that show challenges we face as a program.
- The aggregate data is used to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses across the domains. The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework which is aligned with the New York State Early Learning Goals and High Scope Curriculum/COR enables us to ensure that we are providing the school readiness goals in preparation for children transitioning from Head Start to school. The way this would be accomplished would be to look at the specific area that we show weakness on the aggregate report and bolster that area by providing staff development trainings and workshops and/or by enhancing the materials and activities presented in our classrooms.

- Aggregate reports are produced twice a year and it is shared with the Board and Policy Council members. Parents are informed of their child's progress three times a year. If the child will return to Head Start they will receive three Family Reports at the Parent/Teacher Conferences. If a child is transitioning into Kindergarten then the final Family Report will be in the form of a complete description of the child which encompasses all the skills that correlate with the Kindergarten Skills checklist. Staff will maintain anecdotal observations until April when the final Family Report for the Parent/Teacher Conferences will be provided to parents and with permission sent on to the school that the children will be attending.

4. Examine data for patterns of progress for groups of children in order to revise, or develop and implement plans for program improvement:

- In looking at the patterns of progress for the children in the program we consider the children's skill development level based on the observations made by the education staff in the classroom. We further take into consideration the children/family's culture and language and work with the family to ensure that we are meeting the children's educational needs.
- If a child is receiving services through CPSE we take into considerations the goals that are outlined in the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). In this way the education staff can assist the children in attaining those goals along with the therapists that work with the children.
- Patterns of progress are noted on the children's individual CORs which are kept in their individual files. When the COR scores are complete the COR Summary is turned into the Children's Services Manager and a report will be compiled that incorporates the total children enrolled in the Head Start Program.
- When COR data is compiled it shows the growth and progress and/or challenges on a graph. This data is shared with both the Board and Policy Council members as well as the education staff. If there is an area that poses challenges, the Children's Services Manager will communicate the challenges found to the education staff and provide individual staff development training, provide All-Staff training to improve the area that is posing the challenge in order to bolster and intensify the materials and activities that are being presented in the classrooms. These areas that may prove to be a challenge to the program are also monitored on classroom observations. The Children's Services Manager conducts observations on a four to six week period or where there is the most need and calculates the aggregate scores. These aggregate

scores are shared with the education staff and the observation is discussed in order to improve the areas that may pose the challenge for that classroom or teaching team.

### **Domains and Benchmarks**

The benchmarks in each domain are the indicators that are representative of the standards that New York State designate what prekindergarten children should know and are capable to do in order to be successful students. The indicators are observable, measurable and demonstrated through their play with materials and activities that are presented in an environment that is inviting and well designed for children's exploration and growth. These benchmarks are samples of observable behaviors that the children display while in the classroom.

Delaware Opportunities, Inc. Head Start has several curriculums that supports the parents and families in the challenges in the growth of development for the children.

Education staff, therapists, parents and guardians through observation can establish what children enjoy, learn, master and where their challenges lie. This is through observations while the children play, work and interact with their peers and other environments. When adults interact with the children through their play and conversations the information that is collected is valuable and ensures that planning is individual and education staff is working to facilitate meeting the benchmarks required to have a successful experience in learning and transitioning to kindergarten. The following goals are just a sample of what we will meet in each domain and domain element. The italicized goals are those that parents can do with their children at home. Parent – child relationships ensures parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child's learning and development.

#### **School Readiness Domain: Physical Development and Health**

##### **ELOF Domain: Perceptual, Motor and Physical Development**

In the area of gross motor:

- The children will demonstrate coordination of large muscles by running, hopping, skipping, jumping and climbing.
- The children will demonstrate progress in activities that promote balance and flexibility.
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In the area of gross motor:

- *The parents will support development of control in gross motor through play in catching and throwing balls, bouncing balls and pumping on swings.*
- *The parents will encourage children's development of large muscles through walking, climbing and running.*

In the area of fine motor:

- *The children will increase skills in fine motor by engaging in finger plays and use of materials such as pencils, crayons, markers, effective use of blunt scissors, paint brushes, eating utensils and tooth brushes.*
- *The children will show progress in the use of pincher grasp (use of pointer finger and thumb).*

In the area of fine motor:

- *The parents will encourage strengthening small motor muscles by cutting squeezing and use of markers, crayons and pencils.*
- *The parents will support skill development in hand-eye coordination in pouring skills and simple tasks as in spreading peanut butter, butter, cream cheese and/or jellies on toast.*

In the area of health knowledge and practice:

- *The children will increase skills in personal care, such as: independent use of toilet, tooth brushing, dressing and hand washing.*
- *The children will develop and understand the role of maintaining healthy habits by using tissues, washing hands, eating and drinking healthy foods.*

In the area of health knowledge and practice:

- *The parents will promote healthy habits by role modeling coughing in their elbows, proper hand washing and tooth brushing.*
- *The parents will encourage healthy and safe behaviors by using equipment to promote safety; such as, the use of bike helmets and seat belts.*



In the area of physical health status:

- The children will demonstrate an understanding of the importance of rest and exercise to stay healthy.
- The children will show progress understanding safe and healthy practices (for example: bus safety, pedestrian safety, fire safety, and bike safety).

In the area of physical health status:

- *The parents will encourage and support children in maintaining a healthy routine before bed and the importance of rest.*
- *The parents will encourage and promote safety by example in the areas of pedestrian and fire safety. This will also include stranger safety.*

#### **Try At Home Activities**

- Activities: 2, 10, 14, 15, 16, 32, 39, 40, 47, 49, 50 and 54.

### **School Readiness Domain: Social and Emotional Development**

#### **ELOF Domain: Social and Emotional Development**

In the area of social relations:

- The children will develop friendships with peers.
- The children will show growth in appropriate behaviors with peers and adults.

In the area of social relations:

- *The parents will encourage pro-social relationships with peers and familiar adults.*
- *The parents will promote sharing in a give and take manner.*

In the area of self-concept and self-efficacy:

- The children will gain self confidence by taking safe risks in attempting new tasks and participating in use of new materials and activities.
- The children will identify personal ideas, preferences by sharing thoughts and feelings.

In the area of self-concept and self-efficacy:

- *The parents will support children's efforts to take safe risks in trying new tasks with activities and materials.*
- *The parents will support their children in sharing feelings and offering the names for the emotions they are feeling.*

In the area of self-regulation:

- The children will show growth in identification of feelings and emotions through words or identification of pictures.
- The children will demonstrate expression of feelings and emotions that is appropriate.

In the area of self-regulation:

- *The parents will encourage children's expression of feelings and support them in appropriate expression.*
- *The parents will role model appropriate means to express feelings and emotions to allow children the opportunity to 'see' and 'learn' how to express.*

In the area of emotional and behavioral health:

- The children will show progress in expression of emotions in an acceptable manner.
- The children will demonstrate an understanding of the purpose of rules and follow the classroom routine.

In the area of emotional and behavioral health:

- *The parents will give children adequate time to express and show appropriate expressions of feelings.*
- *The parents will assist children in learning rules by discussion of appropriate behavior as in rules and following rules.*
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In the area of well-being:

- *This allows parents and families are safe, healthy and have increased financial security.*
- *Parents and families observe, guide, promote and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school and in their communities.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: All activities will support the Social and Emotional Development.

## **School Readiness Domain: Approaches to Learning**

### **ELOF Domain: Approaches to Learning**

#### **Creative Arts Expression**

In the area of music:

- The children will engage and create sounds with musical instruments.
- The children will gain confidence by engaging in singing songs, performing and/or acting out finger plays or songs.

In the area of music:

- *The parents will engage in singing songs with their children.*
- *The parents will talk about the sounds that they hear with their children and how sounds create music.*

In the area creative movement and dance:

- The children will develop skills in moving to music and dancing, expressing feelings, movement of animals and rhythm in music.
- The children will gain confidence in moving in spontaneous and imaginative ways to music, songs, rhythm and instruments.

In the area creative movement and dance:

- *The parents will encourage children's movement to sounds and music.*

- *The parents will support children's creative movements to the sounds they hear in whole body or part body movements.*

In the area of art:

- The children will demonstrate growth in the use of different materials to make creative art creations.
- The children will express their thoughts and feelings in regard to their individual artistic creations as well as the art of others and/or artistic pictures used in lessons.

In the area of art:

- *The parents will encourage children to create with materials that are provided.*
- *The parents will accept all of the children's creations regardless of the accidental and/or incidental nature of the creativity.*

In the area of drama:

- The children will demonstrate progress in the use of basic props, dress-up and act out a setting and/or character.
- The children will gain confidence in demonstrating actions and objects to tell a story or express thoughts and feelings through role play and/or dialogue.

In the area of drama:

- *The parents will accept and encourage the children's use of one item standing for another in play; such as, Legos standing and talking like people or the use of a block as a phone.*
- *The parents will encourage children's expression and imitation in play based on their 'real world' and knowledge base.*

In the area of families as learners:

- *Parents and families advance their own learning interests through education, training and other experiences that supports their parenting, career and life goals.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 14, 15, 16, 28 and 54.

## Approaches to Learning

In the area of initiative and curiosity:

- The children will gain confidence in asking questions and the exploration of how things work.
- The children will demonstrate curiosity in exploring new experiences, materials and activities.

In the area of initiative and curiosity:

- *The parents will support children's curiosity by answering the questions they ask.*
- *The parents will encourage the exploration of how things work.*

In the area of persistence and attentiveness:

- The children will show progress in planning and setting goals until their plans are complete.
- The children will show growth in maintaining focus and attention on the task and will continue to work through distractions, periods of frustration and challenges they face.

In the area of persistence and attentiveness:

- *The parents will support children's plans, progress in carrying the plans out to completion.*
- *The parents will encourage and support children to complete tasks when they may be challenged, have distractions or become frustrated.*

In the area of cooperation:

- The children will demonstrate skills in modeling and/or participating in teaching peers.
- The children will show progress in working cooperatively with peers through sharing and/or cooperation in a group setting.

In the area of cooperation:

- *The parents will encourage children to role model for peers or siblings.*
- *The parents will support flexibility when working problems out with materials or others, asking how they think they may (the children) resolve issues.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: All activities will support Approaches to Learning.

## **School Readiness Domain: Language and Literacy**

### **ELOF Domain: Language and Literacy**

#### **Language Development**

In the area of receptive language:

- The children will demonstrate they understand and can follow spoken directions.
- The children will show growth in listening actively (ex: to share information, following directions, performing tasks and listening for purposes of enjoyment).

In the area of receptive language:

- *The parents will support the children by offering praise for following spoken directions they are given.*
- *The parents will encourage the children to share ideas with them by asking open ended questions that require more than a 'yes or no' response.*

In the area of expressive language:

- The children will develop skills to communicate in negotiation, expression of opinion, choice and/or to give instructions.
- The children will dictate simple stories and describe what their intent or meaning is with meaning.

In the area of expressive language:

- *The parents will lead conversation to encourage children to express their thoughts and feelings*

*through conventional conversation practices.*

- *When children respond to questions and/or are in conversations the parents will encourage the children to extend and expand upon the discussion topic.*

In the area of Family Engagement in transitions:

- *This allows parents and family support and advocate for their child's learning and development as they transition to new learning environments.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: All activities will support Language Development.

### **Literacy Knowledge and Skills**

In the area of book appreciation:

- The children will show interest and engage in reading experiences as a group and/or independently.
- The children will demonstrate retelling stories through conversation, creative movement, flannel/folder stories and/or through dramatic play.

In the area of book appreciation:

- *The parents will promote interest in books by reading to or having children read to them.*

*The parents will encourage the retelling of a book the children heard in school.*

In the area of phonological awareness:

- The children will develop skill in identification of syllables in words through tapping and/or clapping.
- The children will show progress in words that rhyme through matching, use of materials or language.

In the area of phonological awareness:

- *The parents will encourage phonological awareness by tapping or clapping out familiar words and names with the children.*
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- *The parents will engage in games that promote the recognition of rhyming words—both factual and fun.*

In the area of alphabet knowledge:

- The children will increase knowledge in recognizing that each letter has a different sound associated with it.
- The children will show growth in understanding the beginning of words and sounds in familiar words.

In the area of alphabet knowledge:

- *The parents will promote knowledge of the alphabet by naming the letters in the child's name and familiar items, family members' names and pets.*
- *The parents will sound out letters of words such as 'b, b, b, ball'.*

In the area of print concepts and conventions:

- The children will demonstrate recognition of print in everyday life: numbers, letters, their names and friend's names, classroom environment and community.
- The children will show progress in understanding that the printed word conveys meaning.

In the area of print concepts and conventions:

- *The parents will point to words of interest to the child and to words in books they read.*
- *The parents will point out environmental print to children and ask children to do so as well. Environmental print such as: STOP, EXIT, and McDonald's.*

In the area of early writing:

- The children will demonstrate use of a variety of writing tools and materials.
- The children will use a variety of tools to convey messages in writing by use of scribbles, shapes, pictures and letters that represent stories, experiences and ideas they wish to share.



In the area of early writing:

- *The parents will encourage children to write with a variety of tools and materials to make lists and notes.*
- *The parents will role model the use of writing materials and tools in their daily lives.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: 10, 20, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 33, 35, 36, 37, 39, 41, 42, and 48.

## **School Readiness Domain: Cognition and General Knowledge**

### **ELOF Domain: Cognition**

#### **Logic and Reasoning**

In the area of reasoning and problem solving:

- The children will show growth in identifying a problem and attempts to solve problems and challenges independently or with assistance.
- The children will demonstrate the use of ‘trial and error’ or ‘experimentation’ methods to figure out a task or challenge.

In the area of reasoning and problem solving:

- *The parents will encourage children to share ideas as to how to solve a problem.*
- *The parents will encourage the use of trial and error to see what will work out problems with a task or challenge.*

In the area of symbolic representation:

- The children will demonstrate creative representation with materials in building and creating (for ex: the use of materials that represent another item — blocks become a castle, play dough becomes a cookie).
- The children will gain confidence in acting out in pretend play and role play (dressing up and acting out and speaking in the voice of the characters of their choice).

In the area of symbolic representation:

- *The parents will encourage children to be creative in use of the materials they have to use; play dough becomes animals and blocks in a pot become soup.*
- *The parents will support children in acting out in play the roles they know with use of proper tone of voice. Allowing the children to step into 'character'.*

In the area of families as advocates and leaders:

- *Parents and families participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, and community and state organizing activities to improve children's development and learning experiences.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: 5, 7, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 36, 41, 42, 45, 46, 50 and 52.

### **Mathematics Knowledge and Skills**

In the area of number concepts and quantities:

- The children will show progress in understanding numbers represent quantities (ex: in counting using one to one correspondence, the last number counted represents the total number of items).
- The children will show growth in understanding 'how many' questions, counting one to one correspondence to ten items.

In the area of number concepts and quantities:

- *The parents will encourage the use of number names and counting in real world use. In setting the table: we need four spoons – the child can get and count the spoons.*
- *In children's play parents will ask 'how many' items are present and count one to one with their child naming the amount of items they have.*

In the area of number relationships and operations:

- The children will show progress in comparing the quantity in two sets of object and use terminology to describe if there is more, less, greater, fewer, equal or the same amount of items present.

- The children will gain knowledge in identifying the new number created when items are added or taken away from a set of items.

In the area of number relationships and operations:

- *The parents will encourage children to count and gain in the understanding that when more is added the number increases and when something is taken away it is subtracted and the number decreases.*
- *The parents will show simple patterns in their daily life: setting the table – fork, spoon, plate and then repeat the pattern at the next setting.*

In the area of geometry and spatial sense:

- The children will demonstrate naming shapes regardless of their size.
- The children will develop skills in naming the order of objects and their location (ex: top, bottom, above, below, in front of, forward, behind, in back of, over and under).

In the area of geometry and spatial sense:

- *The parents will talk about the shape of items children come into contact with within their day.*
- *The parents will use position and direction words in speaking with their children. This will be done in play as well.*

In the area of patterns:

- The children will demonstrate knowledge in describing and/or replicating a simple pattern.
- The children will show progress in sorting, classification and seriation by use of attributes; such as, color, size and shape.

In the area of patterns:

- *The parents will talk about patterns that may be present on the children's clothes.*
- *In singing or music activities parents will ask the children if they recognize a pattern.*

In the area of measurement and comparison:

- The children will develop skills in the use of standard and non-standard use of tools to measure and compare.
- The children will show progress in the uses of descriptive vocabulary in the area of length, height, weight, volume and size; such as: small, large, big, tall, short, small, empty, full, heavy and light.

In the area of measurement and comparison:

- *The parents will encourage the children to use conventional and unconventional tools to measure.*
- *During conversations, parents will ask questions about more/less, bigger/smaller and light/heavy and have the children describe why and how they know what they know or deduce as to why.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: 1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 22, 30, 32, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 50 and 52.

### **Science Knowledge and Skills**

In the area of scientific skills and method:

- The children will demonstrate using a variety of tools and materials in order to test predictions through active experimentation (ex: use of magnifying glass to examine items, participation in mixing paints, sink and float activities).
- The children will show growth in making predictions, explanation and generalizations on previous knowledge and experiences and activities, use of materials and objects.

In the area of scientific skills and method:

- *The parents will encourage children to manipulate materials and items to explore how to resolve a problem or get materials/items to work.*
- *In conversation with children, parents will ask 'what will happen if?' or 'how can you \_\_\_\_\_?' and they will accept both verbal and non-verbal responses if they do not have vocabulary and parents will provide the words for them.*

In the area of conceptual knowledge of the natural and physical world:

- The children will observe and discuss changes in weather and seasons using common weather related vocabulary (ex: rainy, sunny, snowy, windy, cloudy, and foggy).
- The children will increase skills in describing, comparing and categorizing objects and materials, as well as the transformation process (ex: planting seeds – grow into plants, ingredients combined become play dough, mixing colors creates a new color).

In the area of conceptual knowledge of the natural and physical world:

- *The parents will engage the children in discussion of the weather and seasons.*
- *The parents will discuss and engage children in the transformation of characteristics of the natural and physical world.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 15, 46, 18, 30, 32, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 49, 50 and 52.

### **Social Studies and Skills**

In the area of family and community:

- The children will demonstrate an understanding of identification of family members, family characteristics and functions.
- The children will show progress in describing how people within their community are alike and different (ex: eat, drink, dress, speak same/differently and some people have challenges and can do what they do but, differently).

In the area of family and community:

- *The parent will discuss the roles of family and how they participate in the family.*
- *The parent will discuss community in relation to neighborhood, schools, community workers and their roles and how they are involved with and for their family.*

In the area of history and events:

- The children will demonstrate an understanding of time and events that happen in the past, present and future; such as, 'when I was a baby', 'I will be five on my birthday' and 'I will go to the big school after Head Start'.
- The children will develop skills in retelling stories and events in sequential order.

In the area of history and events:

- *The parent will encourage discussions that require the description of sequence of events (first... then...)*
- *The children will discuss and talk about what happened in the past and what will occur in the future.*

In the area of people and the environment:

- The children will create representations of topographical features in art work, and/or while playing with blocks, sand while describing what they have created (ex: roads, train tracks, mountains, water, trees, and farms).
- The children will demonstrate an understanding that people, plants and animals share the environment they live in.

In the area of people and the environment:

- *The children are encouraged to have discussions about how people are the same and/or different from themselves and/or their families.*
- *The parents will encourage the children to be responsible for the environment they live in (water plants, clean the classroom, pick up toys at home).*

In the area of family connection to peers and community:

- *Parents and families form connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or education that enhance social wellbeing and community life.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: 11, 19, 21, 22, 23, 25, 35, 41, 42, 46, 48 and 49.

## **English Language Development**

In the area of receptive English language skills:

- The children will show progress in participation of movements and gestures while peers and teachers sing and dance in English.
- The children will demonstrate understanding of simple words and/or phrases and/or directives; such as, 'hello', 'good-bye', 'wash hands', 'get in line' and 'use the potty'.

In the area of receptive English language skills:

- *The parents will work with staff to use words at home that are used in the classroom as well as give the staff words to use in their native language to use in school verbally as well as environmental print.*
- *The parents will be provided with songs and finger plays so that parents and children can sing along together.*

In the area of expressive English language skills:

- The children will increase skill in the use of one or two words and will gain confidence in representation of more ideas; such as, 'play blocks', 'play dolls' and 'ride bikes'.
- The children will increase their expressive language by making requests; such as, 'ball', 'milk', 'doll', and 'paint' for example.

In the area of expressive English language skills:

- *The parents will encourage the children to use both their native language as well as English at home.*
- *When the children share thoughts and part of their day with their families it will be encouraged in both their native language as well as in English.*

In the area of engagement in English literacy activities:

- The children will increase their English language skills by singing or repeating parts of songs, poems and/or finger plays.

- The children will gain confidence in speaking to peers and teachers in English.

In the area of engagement in English literacy activities:

- *The parents will enable the children to speak, sing and express themselves in English to support growth in the English language as well as interpreting stories and songs from their native language into English.*
- *The parents will encourage children to speak to their peers and teachers in English in order to gain confidence in the use of English as their second language.*

### **Try At Home Activities**

Activities: All activities will support English Language Development.

## **Technology**

### **Foundations to Technology**

In the area of foundations to technology:

- Describes types of materials and how they're used:
  - The children will develop skills in explaining the uses of tools and materials and determine whether or not they will or will not work to accomplish their intended task (ex: glue, paper, plastic straws, pipe cleaners, tape and staples).
  - The children will show an understanding for the use of a variety of materials (ex: wood, plastic and fur).

In the area of foundations to technology:

- Describes types of materials and how they're used:
  - *The parents will encourage the children to use materials and engage in conversation as to what their use is, how the items work and why they may work in some instances and not others.*
  - *The parents will support the children in displaying an understanding of how tools and materials work and/or operate.*
- Explores and uses various types of tools appropriately:



- The children will show growth in the use of a variety of tools independently (ex: scissors, hole punch, stapler, computer, tape player and CD player).
- The children will demonstrate skills in the function of a variety of tools (ex: cell phones, computer, microwave and scale).
- Explores and uses various types of tools appropriately:
  - *The parents will encourage and support the children's autonomy in the use of tools and materials independently.*
  - *The parents will discuss the use of tools and engage in conversations to ensure that the children understand and will enable the use of such materials/tools to show competency.*
- Expresses an understanding of how technology affects them in daily life and how it can be used to solve problems:
  - The children will increase knowledge in identification of technology in daily life (ex: cars, cell phones and computers).
  - The children will identify the use of specific technologies (cell phone, computer, cars, and batteries).
- Expresses an understanding of how technology affects them in daily life and how it can be used to solve problems:
  - *Through conversations with the children, parents will discuss how technology is used in the children's lives. (Cell phone emergency call = 911 and then press Send for example).*
  - *The children will describe and identify the differing technological tools and materials they encounter in their 'real world'.*

In the area of using technology:

- Understands the operation of technology systems:
  - The children will increase skills in the use of keyboard, monitor and printer in computer use.
  - The children will increase vocabulary in the area of using descriptive language to delineate the operation of technology (ex: pedal to move a

bicycle, gas moves a car, batteries operate a toy, charge a phone and/or handheld game to make it work.)

In the area of using technology:

- Understands the operation of technology systems:
  - *The parents will introduce and/or expand upon the children's skills on technological systems.*
  - *The parents will encourage the children to expand upon the language and vocabulary to discuss the operations of tools and materials in technology systems and/or how tools/materials work.*
- Uses the knowledge of technology to increase learning:
  - The children will increase skill in using the computer to write, draw, play games and increase cognitive knowledge.
  - The children will show progress in basic skill by using appropriate computer games and interactive stories.
- Uses the knowledge of technology to increase learning:
  - *The parents will introduce/expand upon the children's skill levels in the area of computers to write, draw and/or play games in the area of cognitive development.*
  - *The parents will support the children's appropriate use of skills that increase the child's engagement in interactive stories that support cognitive, language/literacy and approaches to learning development.*

### **HEAD START** **TRY AT HOME ACTIVITIES**

1. Sing songs together. Play music softly during meals and before naps. Ask children to listen closely and teach them to distinguish the different patterns. Clap a rhythm and have the children repeat it or start a sequence and let the children complete it.
2. Stained Glass. Use up those small pieces of crayon by grating on a vegetable grater and place the shavings between two sheets of waxed paper, cover with newspaper and iron until the wax is melted. Trim edges and hang by a cord in the window.
3. Funny finger painting. Spray shaving cream on a cookie sheet and let your child "paint" pictures with their hands. Add food coloring for more fun and color identification and mixing.

4. Make finger paint. You will need  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of liquid starch, 2 drops of food coloring or 1 tbsp. of tempera paint.

5. Comparing and analyzing. On a freezing day, put a dish of water outside for an hour or so. Leave another dish of water inside and compare the results. Discuss what happened to the water in the dishes (one solidified, one did not) and why (discussing that liquids have a freezing temperature point).

6. Listening. Using a pencil or similar object, tap on various materials found in the house, (glass, metal, china, wood, plastics etc.). Listen together to the variation in sounds. Next have your child cover their eyes and tap the objects again and have your child tell you the item that was tapped.

7. Growing seeds. Set a sponge in a meat tray or recyclable, have your child add water, sprinkle with 1 tsp. grass or birdseed. It will sprout in approximately 48 hours. When the seeds begin to sprout use a planter, recyclable or sneakers that are too small for your children to wear; put gravel or small stones on the bottom, add soil, the sprouts or transplant a house plant or make a Mr. Potato Head by cutting off the top of a small potato and scooping out about a hole to put a piece of wet cotton, cover the cotton with grass seed and in a few days the seeds will sprout with a head of green hair.

8. Have your child separate playing cards into suits, reds and blacks and then in numerical order.

9. Numbers. When you take a walk or ride, look for numbers on signs. How many numbers can you find and what are they?

10. Numbers. Make a number book. Materials needed: paper, staples, yarn, glue, scissors, and crayons. Cut object out of the magazine and glue onto paper. Write the number of objects that you have on each page.

11. Sequence/Numbers. Ask your child what gets put on first when they dress. What comes next? Go through the whole sequence. This can be done with meals, their day, their bedtime routine and as they progress you could go over the sequence of their whole day from waking to bedtime.

12. Sorting/Classification. Have your child sort large buttons, spools of thread according to color and have them place them in an empty egg carton or muffin tin. Use recycled lids from milk jugs, beverage bottles and/or peanut butter jars too (expanding into small, medium and large).

13. Sequencing/Language. Have your child tell you about a program they have seen on TV. Have them tell you the beginning, middle and end.

14. Thinking. Ask your child what they need to paint a picture or make a collage -- then ask them to assemble what they have decided to make.

15. Thinking. Place different sized circles or squares or triangles on a sheet of paper. Then ask the child to draw as many different objects as they can think of by using the shapes. You could also do the following: Have them trace the shapes and cut them out, have them arrange them on paper and glue the shapes as they choose or make a picture connecting the shapes.

16. Imaginative Thinking/Language. Place some paint in the middle of a piece of paper and fold it over. Ask your child to describe what they see and write their words on the paper.

17. Thinking. Clip a picture from the newspaper/magazine and ask your child to describe what's happening in the picture. Then read what the caption says and discuss with them.
18. Thinking. Talk about weight in general terms – light and heavy. Have your child guess if the item is light or heavy. Some examples would be: a feather, a piece of paper, crayon, marker, card, baby doll, blocks, cat or dog, the child, parent, a can of soup, box of macaroni and cheese and put them on a scale to check the weights.
19. Thinking. Ask your child to imagine themselves in a situation. What would they do if they lost a favorite toy?, If someone took something they were playing with away from them?, If someone hit them?, If they hurt someone's feelings? If someone had a toy they wanted to play with?, If they found matches or a lighter?, If someone wanted to give them candy or something to eat that was not their parent/guardian? Discuss feelings and emotions and steps they should take if these scenarios happened?
20. Thinking. Ask children why they like a particular story. Sometimes you may have to pose a question first to initiate their ideas, such as: "Is it because the three bears found Goldilocks in Baby Bears bed?" and see what ideas come forth from that point.
21. Thinking. Ask a child to describe their friends, family members and even their pet's appearance – (the color of their eyes, they wear glasses, the clothes they wear, color of fur and things they do for example).
22. Thought Expansion. Stretch memory with questions like these: Does your back door swing in or out? Which sock do you put on first, your left or your right? What color does your mom or dad wear a lot? Who is the slowest eater in the house? What did you have for breakfast and/or dinner last night? What did you do in school? (Name the learning areas that are in the classroom: creative art, housekeeping/home living, blocks, puzzles and manipulatives, easel, listening area and library and science for example).
23. Thinking. Turn your child's 'why' questions around and ask them questions. For example: Why do we need to keep quiet when someone is sleeping, why do you knock on a door before entering, why don't we speak with food in our mouths?
24. Thinking. Encourage round-robin story telling. One person starts with 'one day, a little girl went out walking....' and each person adds a little bit to the story. Have someone write it down and read it back to hear the whole story.
25. Thinking: Ask what would happen if – people had wings, the car was never invented, you knew what your pet was talking about, if you lived by the ocean, in a castle, on a boat...and continue with thoughts and ideas from your child.
26. Reading Readiness. Using a newspaper or magazine pick out a capital 'A' in a headline and say it by name and by the short sound or long sound (sometimes it is difficult for a child to learn two sounds at the same time). Let them trace over the letter and then go on a hunt for the same letter elsewhere in the newspaper or magazine, have your child write it on a piece of paper and create a letter book with their handwriting. Continue to do this with each letter or have a print of the alphabet and ask which letter they would want to learn next.
27. Interpreting and Summarizing. Look at a magazine picture and ask your child to describe what's happening, what probably happened before and what they think may happen next. Ask your child to give the picture a title or caption.
28. Reading Readiness. Have your child dictate or tell you a story. Write the story down. Help your child to read it back to you. Encourage your child to draw the illustrations for the story.
29. Reading and Math Readiness. Go on a 'shape hunt' around the house. Look for triangles, circles, squares and other shapes that they may have learned from school (oval, diamond, heart and rectangle for example). See how many they can

find and graph which shape they may have found more of. You may even wish to cut the shapes out of paper and 'plant' them around the house to have your child go on a hunt for them.

30. Observation Skills. Arrange five items on the table or floor. Ask your child to look closely and then have them close or cover their eyes. Remove one or two items and see if they can remember the piece that you have taken away. Take turns with your child.

31. Reading Readiness. When you read aloud, stop periodically and ask your child what they think will happen next. Let them make up their own endings and/or ask how the events in the story may relate to their own life.

32. Active. Suspend a rubber ball/beach ball by a string from the ceiling, door jam or tree limb. Let the ball swing as a pendulum first sideways and then forward and back. Instruct the child to react out in a steady movement from their shoulders and touch the ball before the ball passes them. To increase the challenge put an eye patch over one eye to see if they can do the task.

33. Language. This activity is a play, listen and do game. Give a series of verbal directions that the child will need to carry out. For example: go to the couch, lie down and pretend to be asleep. Make the directions as complex or simple as needed to keep the child interested and take a turn with your child.

34. Reading Readiness. Alphabet Bingo. This game is easy to make at home from cardboard letters which the children cover-up as they are called. Move to games that use alphabet sounds, sight words and syllables of words.

35. Reading Readiness. Just because your child may not use 'big' words and complicated sentences does not mean that they cannot think and understand. Name things aloud for your child and a label for an item brings order to their world. Talk to them about what is going on and don't use 'baby talk' but rather a rich vocabulary. The language that children hear forms their mental structure that will be with them for the rest of their lives and that one factor probably accounts for the gap between those that succeed in school and for those that meet with challenges. Speak in past, present and future tenses to build awareness of sequences (It was cold yesterday and today it is warmer. What do you think the weather will be tomorrow?). use terms such as 'if...then' it gives them an idea of cause and effect. 'Might, would and should' give the children the opportunity to form hypotheses about unknown or indefinite events.

36. Reading Readiness. In order to read, a child needs to be able to recognize shapes: the alphabet is but a collection of shapes which stand for sounds. A child needs to be able to differentiate – to see the similarities and differences amongst the shapes. Try some shape matching games:

Cut out large duplicate paper shapes (circles, triangles, squares, rectangles, stars, hearts, oval and diamond). Put one shape on the floor or table and ask your child to match the shapes. Write the shapes name on each shape so they learn the shape of the word and it is labeling the shape.

Move on to using smaller shapes as these are closer related to the shapes of the letters and then make cards with the letters of the alphabet. Do not present all the letters at one time, but rather start with two or three and work up to the 26 letters of the alphabet. Introduce the lower case and when your child reaches a level of mastery with the upper case letters have them match the lower case letter to the upper case letter.

Continue with the growth in their development by writing names of the people in their family and then small/sight words. Be sure that when you write the names and words the cards are large enough to have the child match the names/words up.

If your child is really interested in this type of game, introduce other games with numbers.

37. Books and Reading. *Reading to your child is one of the most important things you can do with your young child.*  
By doing so you are doing the following:

- Pleasure – you are presenting books as a means for enjoyment. An addiction to books and reading is one of the most valuable gift parents/adults could give children.
- Vocabulary Development – three year olds enjoy new words. Through stories, they will hear new words in a meaningful context and absorb the meaning.
- Listening Skills – starting with simple picture books and getting more complex, children will develop the skill to follow the simple line of a story. Their attention span will increase with experience.
- Stretching Imagination – books take children out of their immediate environment and into the realm of their imagination.
- Real World – when children are read to they can assimilate what, how, when, why and where what happens in the book relates to their world.
- Talk Written Down – as children see an adult run their finger over the words as they are read, they slowly get the idea that the words that are read are represent sounds and this is a basic pre-reading awareness that it necessary to understanding and success.

38. Reading Readiness. While running errands or going to appointments use your trips to introduce/reinforce letter sounds. ‘S’ – stop, store, school, ‘G’ – go, gas, groceries and so forth. Accent the beginning sounds and encourage your child to say the words with and/or after you say the words.

39. Reading Readiness. In the kitchen, cut bread in to two shapes – such as triangles and rectangles or used a cookie cutter. Mix the shapes up and have your child find a pair. Have your child spread peanut butter on one and top it with the match and enjoy a healthy snack. Have your child have a turn with cutting out shapes as well.

40. Reading Readiness. Listen and do game – from any room in your home. Give simple directions such as: put one foot under the chair, put your hand over the table, sit on the blue chair. Change places and have your child give you directions.

41. Reading Readiness. Use your calendar as a teaching tool. Look at pictures of each month, noting the seasons, colors and any story that can be ‘read’. Use the numbers to practice counting, recognize the number symbol and go over the month, day of the week and year.

42. Reading Readiness. When reading a book to your child do the following:

- Discuss the title and picture on the first page in order to set the basic understanding of what is to come. Ask questions to help the child think. What do they think the book would be about? What gives them an idea of what the book would be about?
- Name the author of the book. What is the meaning of the word ‘author’ and ‘illustrator’? you will be clarifying all words the child does not know as you read along and this should be encouraged as it broadens their vocabulary base.
- As you read to your child turn the pages slowly or have them turn the pages for you. Show the child how the number on the page increases as you read. When you are done you can count the pages or count up to the page where you stop to put a bookmark to finish at another time.

- Hold your child's interest and guide thinking by asking questions as you read?
- Ask your child to re-tell the story. This is a great exercise for the memory and you can guide by asking if what they say comes before or after a particular point in the story. Great sequencing skill development.

43. Textures. Feel and touch activities. Does this apple feel the same as the orange? Does it feel the same as water? Is the pebble smooth or rough? Is the kitten's fur fluffy or feathery? Is snow hot or cold?

44. Phone Manners. Teach your child to pick up the phone by saying 'hello' loudly enough to be heard, to listen and set the phone down gently to go get whomever the call is for.

45. Following Directions. Give one or two simple directions that need to be followed exactly. Gradually increase to three or four directives. If the directions are not followed exactly as you asked have your child repeat the directions to you. Some examples of this game may be as follows:

- One-step directive – Please turn the light off.
- Two-step directive – Please get a plate and put it on the table.
- Three-step directive – Please wipe your feet, close the door and take off your coat.
- Four-step directive – Please get undressed, put your clothes in the hamper, get a bath toy and go potty before your bath.

46. Self-Help Skills. Try the following:

- Match socks
- Sort clothes by color
- Categorize by family member
- Put their clothes away
- Using a butter knife: cut pancakes, butter toast, spread peanut butter, jelly and cream cheese
- Set the table
- Fix their bed
- Clean their room
- Wash low windows or glass doors

47. Miscellaneous: Living Room:

Discuss loud and soft sounds (radio, television etc.)

Develop motor skills by pushing a vacuum, dusting, sweeping and mopping.

48. Miscellaneous: In The Community:

When you are on a walking trip around the neighborhood, make it a listening walk or a scavenger hunt. Make a short list of the items you would like to find. This can also be done in the grocery store, at the library, at the Laundromat, and a doctor's office to pass the time and make it enjoyable for you and your child.

49. Miscellaneous: Outside Your home:

Count steps, stones, flowers

Find birds and identify by color and size

Do a color, shape, letter and/or number hunt

Motor skills are developed by having the children help you rake leaves, water plants, digging in the garden to plant seeds, pulling weeds and washing your car.

50. Miscellaneous: In Your Bathroom:

Let your child use the mirror to name their body parts.

Feel differing textures such as cotton, soap both bar and liquid, a sponge vs. a wash cloth.

Talk about opposites in the bathtub (hot/cold, hard/soft, full/empty, float/sink), sort towels by color, shape and size.

Develop motor and self-help skills by folding towels, washing hands and face, brushing teeth, combing and brushing hair.

Discuss the scents of toothpaste, perfume, hand cream, powders.

Discuss the sounds that you hear in the bathroom, flushing toilet, running water for a bath vs. a shower, water running from the sink and blow dryer.

51. Miscellaneous: Adults as Friends:

Talk about how the doctor keeps us well, the dentist takes care of our teeth, the police officers and firefighters keep us safe. Explain that adults besides parents have authority over children – examples of this are babysitters, relative and teachers. However, children should let parents/guardians know if someone makes them feel uncomfortable. Teach respect for adults and others by role modeling.

52. Miscellaneous: Observation:

Ask your children to look closely at the following objects and tell you how they are different from each other and/or how they are the same.

Two plates or cups of different sizes, shape or color.

Two different purses.

Two different cookies.

Two different hat, mittens, gloves, scarves or boots.

Two different shoes.

53. Miscellaneous: Feelings:

Using body language, take turns with your child in expressing the following feelings:

- Anger, Sadness
- Hurt, Excitement
- Friendly, Worried



- Hap
- Happiness, Shy
- Scared, Sick

54. Miscellaneous: Dramatic Play:

Use a mitten without a mate or a sock that has lost its match.

Make ears, whiskers, nose and eyes out of felt or material and make an animal puppet by gluing on the pieces. You can also make people puppets to work out conflicts with siblings/family members (sometimes a child will speak more freely through the role play of a puppet).

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