

**Building  
A Strong  
Foundation  
for School Success**  
Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards



## Kentucky Early Childhood Standards Overview – Summary

The *Kentucky Early Childhood Standards* document was designed to reflect the range of developmental abilities typical of young children, birth through four years of age. The critical knowledge and skills learned in the early years are presented in developmental domains for children birth-to-three years of age and in content areas for three-and-four-year-old children. This content for learning is intended to support early care and education professionals as well as parents in planning experiences to promote progress toward along the developmental continuum.

The *Kentucky Early Childhood Standards* document consists of standards, benchmarks, developmental continuum and example behaviors and is linked to the *Kentucky Department of Education K-12 Program of Studies* and to the *National Head Start Outcomes*. Definitions of the major components in the standards are:

- ❖ **Standard:** A general statement that represents the information, skills, or both that a child should know or be able to do.
- ❖ **Benchmark:** A subcomponent of a standard that translates the standard into what a child should understand or be able to do at a specific developmental level.
- ❖ **Developmental Continuum:** A predictable but not rigid sequence of accomplishments that describe the progressive levels of performance in the order in which they emerge in most children.
- ❖ **Example Behaviors:** Observable “samples” of what children might do as they demonstrate accomplishment at each level of the developmental continuum.

Within early childhood settings, *instruction*, *curriculum* and *assessment* are appropriately joined to promote each child’s progress in building a strong learning foundation.

- ❖ **Instruction:** Activities, materials and experiences are provided that address all items along the developmental continuum.
- ❖ **Curriculum:** Experiences are planned that will promote children’s progress towards achieving benchmarks.
- ❖ **Assessment-Classroom/Instructional:** Observing, recording and documenting what children do and how they do it in all developmental domains and using the information to help the child develop further.

Survey results from early childhood programs indicate that the *Kentucky Early Childhood Standards* are used to:

- ❖ Align to school district’s curriculum (Curriculum)
- ❖ Create a curriculum map (Curriculum)
- ❖ Check units of study against standards (Curriculum)
- ❖ Develop new learning centers and classroom activities (Instruction)
- ❖ IEP development (Instruction)
- ❖ Assess learning through observations (Assessment)
- ❖ Use as a part of on-going assessment (Assessment)

The *Kentucky Early Childhood Standards* are available to download from this web site:

<http://www.kidsnow.ky.gov>

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