

Early Childhood Developmental Norms Guide

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE:

The Elwyn ELS Early Childhood Developmental Skills Reference Guide is a resource to provide early childhood and ELS staff with information as it relates to general, typical developmental skill trajectories across the preschool age range. This resource is organized by each of the major developmental domains addressed within preschool early intervention and aligns with Pennsylvania's early learning standards to facilitate the development of effective Individualized Educational Plans (IEP). It is important to note that these lists have been adapted from a number of references to ensure a cohesive, widespread portrayal of development specific to the preschool early intervention population. These references are cited at the conclusion of this document.

Please note that this document should serve as a resource **ONLY** and should not be used as a method to indicate a formal delay in development. This document does not serve as a screening or assessment tool. This document may be used to facilitate the creation of an IEP, to monitor a child's progress, and to support or coach families and staff. When reviewing a student's current level and/or progress, please ensure information gleaned from this resource is coupled with information from a formal assessment. Developmental targets should always foster a student's functional participation in their education. Finally, please note this resource does not offer an exhaustive list of developmental skills, as early childhood development is variable and comprehensive. Additional developmental resources can and should be sought when needed.

**DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAINS:
COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Age Range	Skill (s)
By 2 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finds things even when hidden under 2 or 3 covers • Beginning to sort shapes and colors • Completes sentences and rhymes in familiar books • Builds towers of 4 or more blocks • Follows 2-step directions (ex. pick up your shoes and put them in the closet)
2-3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can work toys with buttons, levers, and moving parts • Does puzzles with 3 or 4 pieces • Understands what “two” means • Turns book pages one at a time • Builds towers of more than 6 blocks • Screws and unscrews jar lids or turns door handle
3-4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names some colors and some numbers • Understands the idea of counting • Starts to understand time • Remembers parts of a story • Understands the idea of “same” and different” • Tells you what he/she thinks is going to happen next in a book
4-5 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counts 10 or more things • Knows about things used every day, like money and food
5-6 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counts up to 20 objects • Tells month and day of birth • States use of at least 3 body parts • Reads 10 or more words

DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAINS: COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT

Age Range	Skill (s)
By 2 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Points to things or pictures when named • Knows names of familiar people and body parts • Says sentences with 2-4 words • Points to things in a book • Follows 2-step directions
2-3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows instructions with 2-3 steps • Can name most familiar things • Understands words like “in,” “on,” and “under” • Says first name, age, and sex • Names a friend • Talks well enough for strangers to understand most of the time • Says words like “I,” “me,” “we,” and “you” and some plurals (cars, dogs, cats) • Carries on a conversation using 2-3 sentences
3-4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tells stories • Sings a song or says a poem from memory such as the “Itsy Bitsy Spider” or “Wheels on the Bus” • Knows some basic rules of grammar, such as correctly using “he” and “she” • Can say first and last name
4-5 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks very clearly • Tells a simple story using full sentences • Uses future tense; for example “Grandma will be here” • Says name and address
5-6 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses irregular plurals • Knows what to do in each season • Tells simple jokes • Identifies left and right on own body • Can identify at least 3 units of currency

**DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAINS:
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Age Range	Skill (s)
By 2 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows defiant behavior • Solitary Play- mainly alone but is may be beginning to include other children • Begins to play next to other children • Unable to share and competes with others for toys
2-3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitates adults and friends • Parallel Play- plays alongside others but does not play with others • Pays attention for 3 minutes • Shows ownership- claims certain items as his or her own
3-4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engages in make-believe/pretend play • Prefers to play with other children than by him/herself • Will occasionally share toys with peers • Talks about likes/interests
4-5 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes demanding and sometimes cooperative • Cooperative Play- begins taking turns and negotiating • Enjoys playing games with simple rules • Plays imaginatively (house, dress up, fire fighter rescue)
5-6 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play is organized

DEVELOPMENTAL DOMAINS: SELF AWARENESS & SELF MANAGEMENT

Age Range	Skill (s)
By 2 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explores varied environments such as a new playground • Enjoys being swung and gently thrown in air • Is able to be away from parents when with supportive and familiar people
2-3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognizes when another person is happy or sad • Shows wide range of emotions
3-4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses facial expressions and body language to demonstrate emotions • Expresses empathy • Is able to participate in messy activities that result in dirty hands • Enjoys swinging, being thrown in air, and roughhousing • Enjoys playing with a variety of toys and textures • Is able to take appropriate bites of food, does not always stuff mouth • Is aware of sensations such as a wet diaper or underpants • Is able to adapt to changes in routine • Does not require an excessive routine to calm • Enjoys playing near peers
4-5 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talks about own feelings, shows pride in accomplishments • Selects clothing appropriate to temperature • Likes to sing, dance, act • Participates in crafts / activities that involve wet textures, such as glue • Enjoys rough but safe play with peers, siblings, or parents • Enjoys sitting to look at or listen to a book • Usually does not bring non-food objects to mouth • Is able to transition to new environment or activity
5-6 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologizes if hurts someone’s feelings • Remains calm when small requests are denied • Interested in exploring varied environments, such as new playground or friend’s house • Is aware of risky and unsafe environments and behavior • Eats a diet rich in various foods, temperatures, and textures • Need for crashing, bumping and moving fast does not interfere with participation in activities and family life • Is able to calm self down after upsetting event • Is able to pay attention and is not distracted by sounds not noticed by others • Is able to cope with an unexpected change

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT: GROSS MOTOR

Age Range	Skill (s)
By 2 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can jump • Begins to run • Climbs furniture/low play equipment • Kicks a ball • Can walk down stairs with hand held
2-3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walks up stairs alternating feet • Jumps and lands with both feet together • Walks on tiptoes; climbs on and off furniture without assistance • Catches a ball, trapping it against body • Picks up toys off the floor and puts away
3-4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can run • Can balance on 1 foot • Walks down steps alternating feet • Jumps over objects and lands with both feet together • Can run around objects • Jumps forward with both feet (at least 20 inches)
4-5 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balances on one foot (for at least 10 seconds) • Can catch a bounced ball • Can skip • Can march in time to music • Can swing self on swing • Hangs from a bar for at least 5 seconds • Turns a somersault
5-6 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can dribble an 8-10 inch ball with one hand • Able to use jump rope • Drops a ball and kicks it forward before it hits the floor

**MOTOR DEVELOPMENT:
FINE MOTOR**

Age Range	Skill (s)
By 2 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitates circular, vertical and horizontal strokes • Turns knobs • Puts rings on a stacker • Puts pegs in pegboard • Paints with whole arm movements • Switches hands • Can keep scribbles on a piece of paper (with supervision)
2-3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snips with scissors • Strings large beads • Turns pages of a book • Uses one hand more consistently • Rolls, pounds and squeezes playdoh
3-4 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies a circle, cross and square • Uses non-dominant hand to stabilize paper
4-5 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapidly touches thumb to each finger • Cuts along a line • Cuts out square • Can connect dots on paper • Colors within lines • Can draw a person with 3-6 parts
5-6 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuts out simple shapes • Copies triangle • Uses a functional grasp on writing device • Pastes and glues appropriately • Draws basic pictures