Early Childhood CURRICULUM
For 2-year Olds

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Indiana District -- LCMS Two’s Curriculum

**Spiritual Foundation:**
Early Childhood Centers are an integral ministry of their congregations. Early Childhood Centers are committed to sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with both members and non-members. Early Childcare Centers are focused on the total growth and development of children and strive to enrich the spiritual, cognitive, physical, creative, and social lives of children. Early Childhood Centers also are committed to supporting parents in this changing world while assisting parents in nurturing their children in the faith. Christian faith formation for young children is integrated throughout the daily routine.

**Overview of Curriculum:**
The 2’s stage of development is marked by the tension between the desire for independence and the need for continued dependence on a trusted caregiver.

Caregivers need to understand that 2’s are struggling for autonomy, are egocentric, have difficulty expressing themselves, need to test limits, and are experimenting to learn about their world. Typical behaviors (biting, tantrums) should be expected. Caregivers’ expectations for 2’s need to be reasonable.

Caregivers should be sensitive to the range of development and the individual needs of 2’s. Learning at this stage occurs when experiences are meaningful for the child and his/her specific needs. 2’s need ample time to fully participate in experiences that build their self-confidence and sense of autonomy. Such experiences can be woven throughout the day – particularly during daily routines.

Whether it is time to play, time for a snack, a nap, or a loved one to return, consistency provides a sense of security for the young child. When children feel this sense of trust and safety, they are free to do their “work,” which is play, explore and learn.

**Adult-Child Interactions:**
Teachers must be calm. They must model empathy and caring. Verbal statements need to be positive, telling children what they *can* do, not what they *can’t* do.

Teachers must be responsive to children’s individual needs and support the development of self-esteem, self-expression, autonomy, social competence, and school readiness.
Teachers are nurturing and responsive when they:

- Frequently express warmth to individual children (examples: sitting near children, holding children on their laps, having social conversations, laughing, smiling, communicating at the child’s eye-level, sitting on the floor and playing with individual children while following the child’s lead)
- Provide attentive, consistent, comforting and culturally sensitive care
- Are consistent and predictable in their physical and emotional care of children and when implementing program rules and expectations
- Recognize signs of stress in children’s behavior and respond with appropriate stress-reducing activities
- Model Christ’s love and forgiveness

**Learning Environment:**

- Provide a consistent, predictable daily routine
- Provide learning centers (blocks, toys, housekeeping, books, art, music, writing, etc.)
- Have sufficient materials and duplicates of “favorites”
- Display toys/materials on low, open shelves where children can easily reach them and put them away
- Rotate toys/materials frequently to provide new interests
- Provide safe opportunities for exploration both indoors and outdoors
- Provide space to be alone as well as space for small group play
- Prepare children for transitions (example: 5-minute warning; use of a transition song)
- Provide indoor and outdoor play daily
- Provide movement and dance opportunities
- Provide multiple sensory experiences

**Materials:** See “In His Hands,” Chapter 8: Appendix: Environment (available through Luthed.org)
**Progress Reports for Two’s:**

It is recommended that written progress reports for 2’s are prepared several times a year and are shared with parents/guardians at a conference. The progress report includes information about a child’s development, strengths, and concerns. Recommendations and goals are shared. The progress report is based on observations and documentation of the child’s progress in a range of activities over time and may include samples of a child's work.

Information on children is gathered across all domains. Some methods of recording children’s progress include:

- Anecdotal notes
- Observations
- Checklists
- Portfolios
- Rating scales

**Domains:**

The Indiana District’s Two’s Curriculum includes the following domains. Each domain has several sub-categories. Suggested supports and suggested learning activities are included. Early learning and development are multi-dimensional. Developmental domains are highly interrelated. Developmental domains cannot and should not be considered in isolation from one another.

- Religion
- Language/Literacy
- Math
- Social-Emotional
- Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Health and Wellness
- Creative Arts
Resources Used in the Development of the Indiana District’s Curriculum for Two’s:

- Pacific Southwest District’s -- LCMS Curriculum
- Michigan District’s – LCMS Curriculum
- Massachusetts’ Early Childhood Curriculum
- New Jersey’s Early Learning Curriculum
- University of Mississippi Early Learning Assessment
- High/Scope’s Key Developmental Indicators
- Head Start Early Learning Framework
- Indiana Foundations for Early Learning (2012 and 2015)
- Teaching Two’s and Three’s, A Comprehensive Curriculum by Deborah Filasco
- AdvancEd Early Childhood Tools
- In His Hands – Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod
- 365 Days of Creative Play for Children 2-years and Up (3rd edition) -- Sheila Ellison and Judith Gray
- More to Do While I’m 2 by Deborah McNeils
- Ages and Stages
- NAEYC website
- Born Learning
- Indiana’s First Steps
Religion

Adults working with young children in a Lutheran early childhood program need to create a nurturing environment and be able to plan age-appropriate activities, be able to model, and be able to share experiences about the love of Jesus.

Spiritual guidance for young children must include Bible stories and Bible words. Games, activities, props and play help children reflect on the Bible story and apply it to their daily lives.

Children need to understand that the Bible is a special book because God speaks to them through the written Word in the Bible. The Bible is a special book because it tells us about Jesus, God’s Son and the Savior of the world.

Young children enjoy rhyme and music. Songs, finger plays, cheers/chants, and movement activities are integral parts of the religion curriculum.

Adult caregivers should include simple prayers as they lead young children in talking with their God and Savior, Jesus Christ.

As adults care for, talk with, and design fun and engaging religious learning experiences, they help children develop a sense of security and teach young children to trust in their Lord and Savior.

**Jesus is My Friend and Savior:** Young children need adults who tell them, “Jesus loves you.”

- **R1:01** Listens to Jesus stories read/told by the teacher
- **R1:02** Demonstrates and verbalizes that Jesus always loves and cares for him/her
- **R1:03** Develops a sense of trust in Jesus
- **R1:04** Knows that Jesus died on the cross to save him/her from sin
- **R1:05** Knows that Jesus forgives him/her

*Suggested Supports:

- Use a variety of children’s Bibles and Bible story books at “Jesus Time.”
- Include children’s Bibles and Bible story books in the classroom “Book Area.”
• Use pictures and props to engage children’s interest and help them “visualize” (make Bible stories “real.”-- examples: puppets, sensory bottles, story stones, etc.)

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

• Use 6 resurrection eggs to tell the Easter story.

**Creation and God’s World:** Young children need adults who identify God as Creator and Lord of All.

• R2:01 Identifies that all creation is created by God
• R2:02 Takes care of God’s world
• R2:03 Sees self and others as God’s children in His family
• R2:04 Feels secure in God’s love and care
• R2:05 Realizes the need for God’s love

**Suggested Supports:**

• Remind children often that they are God’s special creation – that each child is unique and loved by God.
• Pray for children by name.

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

• Create a “creation” mural with cut-outs and drawings.
• Involve children in clean-up and recycling projects. (examples: pick up litter on the playground or around the school, use recycled items for projects in the classroom, recycle paper, etc.)
• Go on a hike or stroll. Give each child an egg carton. Talk about the wonders and miracles of nature. Collect rocks, seeds, flower petals, twigs, etc. When you return to school, glue the “treasures” into the recesses of the egg carton. Glue a photo in one too to show that each child is also a “treasure” of God.

**I Respond to God’s Love:** Young children need adults who pray for them, worship with them daily, and help them share God’s love with others.

• R3:01 Repeats prayers
• R3:02 Participates in Jesus songs and action poems
• R3:03 Participates in age-appropriate worship activities
• R3:04 Sings Christian songs
• R3:05  Thanks God for members of his/her family
• R3:06  Thanks God for things he/she sees and does
• R3:07 Identifies common faith-related items: Bible, cross, church, Jesus, praying hands, etc.
• R3:08  Enjoys looking at beginning Bible and religious books independently
• R3:09 Loves and shares with others

**Suggested Supports:**

• *Teach simple prayers. Repeat them often.*
• *Teach action Jesus songs and action rhymes. Repeat them often.*
• *Help children pray for others.*

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

• *Use “visuals” in helping children learn to pray spontaneously.* (examples: prayer basket, etc. See Flame Ministry online for additional ideas – Play Dough Prayers, Bubble Prayers, etc.).
• *Create a classroom “Worship Center.” Use it during “Jesus Time.” Make it an “active” center by encouraging children to “recreate” worship experiences and retell Bible stories with a variety of props.*
• *Purchase and use the “worship book” from CPH. (included in the “One in Christ” preschool curriculum.*
• *Identify others in the church/community who are lonely or in need. Involve children in simple service projects.* (examples: bringing food for a food bank, visiting a nursing home, making cards for shut-ins, etc.)
• *Create a “prayer pail.” Write the title of the prayer on a tongue depressor. A prayer leader can select a prayer for mealtime, beginning/end of the day, a prayer for others, etc.*
**Language/Literacy**

Language and literacy are essential for individuals to function in all societies. Language acquisition enables children to articulate and share ideas, feelings, and respond to others.

Young children learn the languages of their families and cultures through the natural interaction that occurs as a part of caregiving and everyday experiences. The ability of young children to understand and use language to communicate supports the development of social/emotional, cognitive, and physical skills as well as their relationships to others.

**Communication:**

**Listening and Understanding:** Young children develop skills to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes.

- **L1:01** Shows interest in listening to sounds
- **L1:02** Listens with interest to language
- **L1:03** Responds to verbal and nonverbal communication
- **L1:04** Understands gestures, words, phrases, or questions
- **L1:05** Responds with actions or words to simple questions
- **L1:06** Follows simple 1-2 step directions

**Suggested Supports:**

- Read rhymes with interesting sounds.
- Talk about what you and others are doing or saying and describe what you see.
- Name objects or actions in picture books.
- Describe simple routines and provide commentary (example: “You are putting on your red coat. “ “You have chosen to build a tower with the cardboard blocks,” etc.)
- Use descriptive words (example: “bad dog,” “pretty flower,” “big ball,” “heavy box,” “fuzzy sweater,” etc.).
- Name and describe the position of objects (example: on, near, above, between, etc.).
- Intentionally introduce new vocabulary.
- Use synonyms (example: big/huge/enormous).
- Read books with repetition.
- Vary tone and voice level.
- Provide a listening center with CD’s of stories and songs.
Suggested Learning Activities

- Play games where children try to guess environmental sounds.
- Play “Wesley Says.” This is an adaptation of “Simon Says.” Start by saying, “Teacher (Miss/Mrs. ______) says, touch your toes.” Demonstrate. Let children take turns being the leader. Example: “Wesley says, jump up and down.”
- Play “Give Me 2” or “Give Me 3.” The teacher gives 2 or three directions and children follow the directions. Examples: “Touch your nose; then touch your toes” “Clap your hands; then turn around.”
- Play “Touch and Remember.” This is a fun memory game. Go touch an item in the room, then touch another. Tell the child to touch the same two objects in the same order.

Speaking: Young children develop skills to communicate effectively for a variety of purposes.

- L2:01 Uses 2 – 5 word sentences to communicate with others
- L2:02 Converses with caregivers and peers
- L2:03 Initiates conversation
- L2:04 Takes turns using language in simple back and forth conversations
- L2:05 Asks questions – uses what, why, where questions to get more information/help
- L2:06 Talks about past, present, and future events
- L2:07 Responds to a request for clarification
- L2:08 Communicates clearly enough to be understood by familiar and unfamiliar listeners
- L2:09 Uses personal nouns (I, you, and me) and plural nouns
- L2:10 Uses position words
- L2:11 Shows an increase in the number of vocabulary words
- L2:12 Begins to use words like but, because, if, and so to connect ideas

Suggested Supports:

- Provide materials and experiences that encourage face to face interactions.
- Use descriptive vocabulary and slightly more complex sentences to expand and extend children’s language.
- Provide interesting materials and experience in the classroom to encourage language.
- Speak in complete sentences using correct grammar.
- Talk about past and future events in everyday conversations.
- Repeat and expand on what the child is talking about. Rephrase children’s comments in complete sentences.
- Talk a little; listen a LOT.
**Suggested Learning Activities**

- While walking with the children, play this game. Ask children to find the smallest stone they can find. Next ask them to find a smooth stone. Continue to find round, speckled, wet, white, brown, gray, stones, etc. Help as needed. Save some interesting stones for a class stone collection.
- Teach the children the words stretch, leap, slide, run, crawl, fall, spin, turn, etc. Make a dance using 2 – 3 of the words.
- Have pretend telephone conversations with children.
- Ask children to tell you about objects. Simply point to an object and say, “Tell me about that.”
- Using a clear glass and the small figure of a person, place the person in various locations: “on top of,” “next to,” “behind,” “in front of,” etc.

**Emergent Reading**
- Young children develop skills in understanding alphabet awareness, phonological awareness, concepts of print, and comprehension.
  - L3:01 Shows interest in songs, rhymes, and stories
  - L3:02 Pretends to read books
  - L3:03 Looks at books independently
  - L3:04 Develops interest in and involvement with books and other print materials
  - L3:05 Distinguishes between words and pictures
  - L3:06 Recognizes and identifies some upper case and lower case letters
  - L3:07 Engages in word and sound play with adults (rhyming games and sounds)
  - L3:08 Holds book with 2 hands, right side up and turns pages from front to back
  - L3:09 Recites parts of well-known stories, songs, and rhymes. Tells a story from pictures in a book
  - L3:10 Responds to simple questions about stories
  - L3:11 Tracks print
  - L3:12 Acts out stories with toys and props
  - L3:13 Recognizes own first name in print
  - L3:14 Recognizes the first letter of his/her name and associates it with others whose names start with the same letter
  - L3:15 Asks what a sign says
  - L3:16 Recognizes that a word can stand for a person or object
**Suggested Supports:**

- Read books with rich descriptions, pictures, and vocabulary.
- Talk to children about the pictures as well as the story.
- Use puppets and other props to maintain interest in books and stories.
- Create a daily reading routine.
- Place interesting books, signs, and posters in all interest areas.
- Provide children with books with interactive features (or create your own).
- Points to words, letters, labels, and signs; read them.
- Provide an environment filled with age-appropriate learning materials – fiction, non-fiction, magazines, charts, poems, toys with words on them, food packaging, etc.
- Read books over again and encourage the child to join in with words he/she knows.
- Change the tone of voice while reading to the child to show emotion or excitement.
- Engage children in regular story-time experience that include exposure to books, poems, finger plays, songs, rhymes, etc.
- Visit the library. Invite a librarian to come to the classroom, for a story-time.

**Suggested Learning Activities**

- Encourage children to read books alone/aloud. (example: read to a stuffed animal)
- Make a class book with pictures about an outing. Write down the child’s/children’s comments about the pictures.
- Play clapping games (or use musical instruments) to help children hear and identify separate sounds and syllables in words.
- Play games that focus on the beginning sounds in words.
- Create “story baskets” that include a favorite book and props so children can “read” and retell stories. Example: The Three Little Pigs book, three wooden spoons painted pink with pig faces, sticks, red Duplo or Lego blocks, and straw.
- Create “name sticks.” Using a paint stirrer, attach a child’s photo to the top of the stick. Use sticky letters and spell the child’s name vertically down the stick. Give the child clothespins with a sticky letters from his/her name attached to each one. The child uses the clothespins and matches/clips them to the letters of his/her name.
- Make a “name puzzle” for each child. Use a large photo of the child and write the child’s name below the photo. Cut the photo vertically – one letter on each strip. Challenge children to put their name puzzles together. Store in Ziploc bags.
**Emergent Writing:** Young children develop skills in the mechanics of writing, the ability to tell a story, and write for a variety of purposes.

- **L4:01** Explores drawing, painting, and writing as a way of communicating
- **L4:02** Makes scribbles, pictures, and letter-like shapes to convey meaning and express ideas
- **L4:03** Imitates simple lines and shapes
- **L4:04** Asks an adult to write or draw something – my name, picture of a dog, etc.
- **L4:05** Dictates a story for an adult to write
- **L4:06** Experiments with a variety of writing tools, materials, and surfaces
- **L4:07** Grasps writing tools – with adult help; uses a pincer grip
- **L4:08** Associates writing with words and sounds

**Suggested Supports:**

- Provide many activities that foster the development of fine motor skills and strength through the use of scissors, play dough, finger plays, rattles, stringing beads, and lacing.
- Provide a variety of writing materials and allow time for scribbling and drawing.
- Label objects and areas in the classroom.
- Help the child to recognize and write his/her name.

**Suggested Learning Activities**

- Make books with the child about their interests and outings or a class book that relates to a favorite story. (example: *Brown Bear* – “Casey, Casey what do you see?” “I see a ______ looking at me.”)
- Take class dictation and write it on a chart. (example: “Tell me what you liked about our visit to the park.”)
- Write down a story about a picture a child draws and talk about it.
- Provide opportunities for children to write in shaving cream, salt, sand, etc.
- Make signs with the children to use with blocks and pretend play.
- Rather than a “Writing Center,” create a “writing table.” Make it simple and clutter-free. Each day put out 2 – 4 items. Examples: pencils, notebooks, blank books, markers, crayons, alphabet cards, alphabet stamps, clip boards, tape, scissors, glue, rulers, a variety of papers, etc. An adult needs to be available to interact with children at the “writing table.” Be sure to display children’s writing.
- Place a large dry erase board on a table top. Provide dry erase markers and encourage children to “write.”
Math

Math helps children survey their environment and start to form a sense of order. Providing daily opportunities for problem-solving, reasoning, communicating connections, and representations makes it possible for young children to learn the content of math.

Children’s mathematical development is nourished by everyday play activities and exploration of the world around them.

Numeracy: Young children begin to develop skills in learning to understand counting, cardinality, written numerals, quantity, and comparison.

- M1:01 Counts in sequence from 1 – 5 (1 – 10)
- M1:02 Begins to demonstrate an understanding of one-to-one correspondence (sets 1 – 3)
- M1:03 Begins to recognize that number symbols indicate quantity
- M1:04 Begins to recognize that different numbers indicate different quantities
- M1:05 Understands some, none, first, last, bigger, smaller
- M1:06 Uses fingers to show how many or age of self
- M1:07 Identifies which set is more
- M1:08 Describes sequence: first, middle, last

Suggested Supports:

- Sing songs and recite nursery rhymes and finger plays that include numbers (examples: “Baa, Baa Black Sheep,” “Five Little Speckled Frogs,” etc.)
- Read colorful books with numbers (examples: Ten, Nine, Eight by Molly Bang, A Feast for Ten by Cathryn Falwell, etc.)
- Use words that refer to quantity (examples: “You have on one shoe.” “Look how many birds there are outside.”)
- Use everyday activities as an opportunity to count (example: “Let’s count how many boys are here today.”)
- Post numerals and matching number sets in centers
- Point out one-to-one correspondence (example: “Here’s one cup for you and one cup for me.”)
- Provide objects with naturally occurring numbers: clocks, calendars, measuring cups and spoons, computer, etc.
- Provide a variety of collections (blocks, cars, animals, etc.) for children to organize, sort and count
**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Create “I Spy Number” trays. Use the numerals 0 – 5. One tray would have “0” on it and nothing else. One tray would have the numeral “1” on it and 1 of each of a variety of items. Another tray would have the numeral “2” on it and 2 of each item, etc.
- Play “Snack Math.” Provide number cards with a numeral and matching number of circles. Give children Cheerios and have them place one Cheerio on each circle – “4; 4 Cheerios on each of 4 circles..)”
- “Caterpillar Counting” utilizes cards with a caterpillar head, a numeral, and a number word. Next to the caterpillar head draw circles that correspond with the numeral. Children use pom-poms and place the correct number of pom-poms on the circles.
- Attach a numeral (1 – 5+) to a pipe cleaner. Use pony beads to correspond to the numeral
- Play “Toy Hunt.” Create large number cards. Write one numeral at the top of the card and draw a corresponding number of large circles. Children hunt for toys to place on the number cards.

**Computation and Algebraic Thinking:** Young children begin to develop skills in learning to understand mathematical structure and patterning.

- M2:01 Describes that something has been taken away from a group
- M2:02 Identifies that an object has been added to a group
- M2:03 Makes reasonable estimates of quantity
- M2:04 Follows along and imitates patterns of sound and movement
- M2:05 Verbally or non-verbally predicts what comes next when shown a simple ABAB pattern of concrete objects

**Suggested Supports:**

- Point out patterns that the children make, “You made a pattern: red car, blue car, red car, blue car.”
- Point out patterns in the daily routine, “After lunch, Emma’s mother will come to pick her up.”
- Recite finger plays, songs, nursery rhymes with repeating patterns such as “Where is Thumbkin?” and “Two Little Blackbirds.”
- Provide toys children can use to make patterns – large stringing beads, colored blocks, pegs and peg boards.
**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- **Make a pattern using small blocks or pegs.** Invite children to make a pattern that looks the same.
- **Create a simple pattern by coloring (or using stickers) on strips of paper.** Provide matching colored pom-poms. Children recreate the patterns by placing the colored pom-poms on the patterned strips of paper. **Challenge:** Can they extend the pattern?
- **Play “Clap with Me.”** Clap a simple pattern. Ask children to repeat the clapping pattern.
- **Create simple dance steps that have a pattern – jump two times, stop; jump two times, stop; repeat.**
- **Create patterns on craft sticks with colored sticky dots.** Children create the pattern by placing matching colored pom-poms on the colored dots. **Challenge:** them to extend the pattern.
- **Place unlike objects on a tray (book, fork, slice of bread, toy, etc.)** Remove one of the items. Ask which one is missing. Continue until all objects have been taken away. Repeat the game with other objects or use two of the same object (2 different forks or 2 different books).

**Data Analysis:** Young children begin to understand concepts of classification, data collection, organization, and description.

- **M3:01** Shows interest in matching and sorting according to color, size, and shape
- **M3:02** Identifies attributes of objects (color, size, shape, texture)
- **M3:03** Identifies similarities and differences in objects

**Suggested Supports:**

- **Provide shape sorters and peg boards.**
- **Provide simple shape puzzles with inserts that match the puzzle pieces.**
- **Point out similarities and differences.** (example: “This car is red. Let’s find another red car.”)
- **Use words that refer to size.** (example: “This block is bigger than that block.”)
- **Provide small colorful items of different matching shapes and sizes that children can manipulate.”**
**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Draw several colored circles onto a large piece of paper. Provide Froot Loops. Encourage children to sort by color, placing colored Froot Loops inside the matching colored circles.

- Make a “Toy Graph.” Use painter’s tape and create a large graph on the floor. Use a variety of vehicles: vans, race cars, construction equipment, fire trucks, etc. Children sort the toys and graph them by placing them in the correct part of the graph.

- Red or Black? Give children a deck of cards. Have them sort the cards into two piles – red and black. If you want to add movement, have children take the red cards to one area in the room and the black cards to a different area.

**Geometry:** Young children begin to develop skills and understanding of shapes and spatial relationships.

- M4:01 Completes basic shape interlocking puzzles
- M4:02 Completes lined tangrams or pattern block puzzles
- M4:03 Uses position words: in, on, under, etc.
- M4:04 Identifies basic shapes (circle, triangle, square, star, heart)
- M4:05 Matches shapes that are different in size and orientation
- M4:06 Stacks some nesting toys in order of shape

**Suggested Supports:**

- Provide a variety of shapes for children to manipulate – fitting shapes into correct locations (puzzles, shape sorters, blocks, etc.)
- Name shapes for a child
- Talk about size during play and meals

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Help children learn shapes by creating “road shapes” with tag board. You can mark a center line with masking tape. Design a circular road, a square road, a triangular road (plus other shapes if desired). Children can drive matchbox cars along the roads.

- Make shape collages (children glue lots of square shapes on a square piece of paper; glue circles on a circular piece of paper, etc.) or make shape prints (circles with toilet paper tubes, round toys, pencil eraser, etc.)
Measurement: Young children begin to understand concepts of time and measurement.

- M5:01 Follows steps in a simple routine
- M5:02 Understands simple time limit cues
- M5:03 Practices transitions from one activity to another
- M5:04 Tells what activity comes before or after
- M5:05 Uses basic words or gestures to express measurable attributes (example: hot/cold, big/little, long/short).
- M5:06 Sorts objects into categories based on attributes (color, size, shape, texture)
- M5:07 Explores measurement using non-standard tools

Suggested Supports:

- Provide tape measures and rulers
- Use 1 minute, 5 minute, and 10 minutes timers
- Involve children in simple cooking experiences.

Suggested Learning Experiences:

- Play “How Many Songs?” “How many songs does it take before we’ve cleaned up the room?” “How many songs before we all have our coats on and are ready to go outside?”
- Stuff a glove with paper. Place the numeral “5” on the glove. Place the glove on a stick. Five minutes before a transition, have a child carry the “5-minute stick” around announcing, “Five more minutes.”
**Social/Emotional Development**

Social emotional development encompasses a child’s ability to relate to and interact with people. Relationships are foundational to children’s social development.

Adults are models of appropriate social behavior. This modeling is a consistent source of information for children and their ability to respond to the world around them.

Success in the core social emotional skills of pro-social behavior, along with nurturing and satisfying relationships leads children to a positive sense of self.

**Sense of Self:** Young children begin to develop skills that support self-awareness, confidence and the identification and expression of emotions.

- **SE1:01** Recognizes self as a unique child of God.
  - Identifies self and familiar people.
  - Says own name.
  - Describes personal characteristics (boy/girl, size, etc.)
  - Shows knowledge of own abilities
  - Identifies eyes, nose, mouth, and other body parts

- **SE1:02** Uses personal pronouns (me, I, my, mine, etc.)
- **SE1:03** Begins to express likes and dislikes
- **SE1:04** Shows confidence in increasing abilities
- **SE1:05** Shows a range of emotions (anger, joy, confusion, loneliness, sorrow, etc.)
- **SE1:06** Recognizes own emotions and the emotions of others (“reads” facial expressions and body language of others; “You are happy/sad,” etc.)
- **SE1:07** Shows care and concern for other children
- **SE1:08** Begins to use words to label and express feelings
- **SE1:09** Begins to show independence by occasionally resisting adult control
- **SE1:10** Expresses both positive and negative feelings about participating in activities through beginning stages of verbal communication, gestures and body language
- **SE1:11** Turns to adults for social assistance
- **SE1:12** Begins to demonstrate a need to complete tasks on own

**Suggested Supports:**

- Provide regular and purposeful interactions that include, holding, talking, cuddling, hugs, pats on the back.
• Read books that have pictures of children showing emotions.
• Help children identify feelings as they are occurring. “You look worried. Do you need some help?”
• Provide long periods of uninterrupted time for children to engage in activities they enjoy.

Suggested Learning Activities:

• Provide opportunities for children to pay attention to who is in their group. Plan activities where children find their picture on a card. Acknowledge who is missing and provide words to describe feelings about missing friends. (example: Use a “Look Who’s Here” board)
• Create faces depicting various emotions. Attach the faces to craft sticks. Sing the song, “If You’re Happy and You Know It.” Faces and the song can be downloaded from sunflowerstorytime.com.

Self-Regulation: Young children begin to develop skills that support impulse control, planning skills, and emotional regulation.

• SE2:01 Responds to basic guidance and regulation
• SE2:02 Begins to understand simple routines, rules and limitations
• SE2:03 Follows simple routines with adult support
• SE2:04 Begins to manage own actions, emotions, and behavior
• SE2:05 Begins to demonstrate awareness of behavior and its effects
• SE2:06 Manages transitions and adapts to changes in schedule, routines, and situations with adult support
• SE2:07 Participates in group routines

Suggested Supports:

• State clear expectations and boundaries while supporting children and their learning.
• Use positive statements when giving directions. “Blocks are for building.” “We hug our friends.”
• Use “yes” instead of “no.” If a child says he wants a book NOW, say, “Yes, you can have a book after snack.”
• Notice children needing attention. Give a hug, smile, or share a positive comment. Children will not need to engage in as many negative behaviors to get your attention.
• Notice positive things.
**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- **Play simple games (“Ring Around the Rosy;” “Duck, Duck, Goose;” etc.)**
- **Teach children calming deep breathing techniques by playing “Smell the Flowers; Blow Out the Candle.”** Give each child an artificial flower. Instruct them to “smell the flower” by inhaling slowly. Then they hold up five fingers (candles) and slowly exhale “blowing out the candles.” You can later just “pretend” you have a flower and use this deep breathing technique at any time during the day.
- **Make simple stress toys by cutting a pool noodle into 2 inch pieces with a serrated knife or filling balloons with beans or play dough.**

**Conflict Resolution:** Young children begin to develop skills that support conflict resolution.

- **SE3:01** Begins to use language skills instead of force to resolve conflicts with adult support
- **SE3:02** Begins to develop problem-solving skills with adult support
- **SE3:03** Engages in simple conflict resolution with adult support strategies

**Suggested Supports:**

- When low-level conflicts occur, encourage children to speak to one another instead of “through” you.
- **Help children name and articulate feelings.**
- Don’t always provide answers. Instead say something like, “It looks like we don’t have a shovel for everyone. What can we do?” Or, “Ashley hit Mario. The rule is no hitting. This is a problem. What should Ashley do? What should Mario do?”

**Suggested Learning Experiences:**

- **Teach these simple three steps:**
  - Look at the other child and say the child’s name, “Sarah” (ensures listening)
  - Give an “I” message: “I feel sad when you don’t share.” (informs)
  - Tell the other child what you want: “Let’s share.” (offers solution)
**Building Relationships:** Young children begin to develop skills that support social development and engagement with others.

- SE4:01 Responds to peers
- SE4:02 Talks to and with others
- SE4:03 Demonstrates increasing comfort with most adults
- SE4:04 Seeks adults for information to support understanding things and for social assistance
- SE4:05 Uses pretend play to learn and practice new roles and relationships
- SE4:06 Begins to participate in cooperative play with adult guidance
- SE4:07 Is learning to take turns/share
- SE4:08 Begins to assist with tasks at school and at home

**Suggested Supports:**

- Model and provide words to help children learn to share materials with each other.
- Have duplicates of favorite toys.
- Allow children to complete tasks on their own with adult support.
- Assign classroom jobs: passing out cups/napkins, wiping tables, putting toys where they belong, etc.

**Suggested Learning Experiences:**

- Teach this “Good Morning” Song: (sing to the tune “Happy Birthday to You”)
  
  Good morning to you.
  And how do you do?
  I’m happy to see you.
  Good morning to you.

- Teach all children simple sign language (See The Kindness Curriculum by Judith Anne Rice; check Pinterest; sign language books for children are also readily available). Sign language helps facilitate communication between children and is especially useful when engaging children with speech delays and second-language learners.

- “One for You.” Give a child an object, then ask him/her to give another object to another child. “Here’s a book for you. Now choose a book to give to a classmate.”

- “Drop It.” Have a child stand up and drop small items into a plastic container. Each time a child drops an item into the container, everyone else cheers. You may want to make newspaper pom-poms for your “cheer-leaders.” Note: This activity so adaptable and children love it.
Science

Science, when viewed as a process of exploring, questioning, understanding and developing ideas is a natural focus of an early childhood program. Young children are natural scientists. They have an innate sense of curiosity. Such curiosity leads them to an exploration of the world around them.

As children investigate using all of their senses, they acquire knowledge. Scientific knowledge helps them predict what might happen and helps them solve problems.

**Physical Science**: Young children develop skills in learning and understanding the properties of objects and changes in the physical world.

- S1:01 Uses senses to explore people, objects, and the world
- S1:02 Uses tools to explore the physical environment
- S1:03 Notices cause-effect
- S1:04 Describes physical properties using simple words (big/little, hot/cold, soft/hard, etc.)
- S1:05 Identifies and solves problems in the environment through active exploration
- S1:06 Recognizes simple forms of matter: solid/liquid

**Suggested Supports:**

- Provide various tools and objects for children to explore. (example: Magnetic wands and magnetic/non-magnetic objects; magnifying glasses and shells, bark, stones, seeds, pine cones, etc.; arm balance and cars, blocks, counting bears, etc.)
- Point out and describe cause-effect. (example: “When you flip the switch, the light turns on/off.”)
- Provide a variety of sensory bottles.
- Invite children to make predictions. (example: As you read a story, ask, “What do you think will happen next?” “How many scoops of water do you think we can put in the bucket before it overflows?”)
- Talk about possible ways to solve a problem. (example: “It’s raining and we can’t go outside, what can we do instead?”)
- Ask “what if...” and “why?” questions.
- Allow extended time for exploration and problem-solving.
**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Put various items in a muffin tin (crayon, pencil, candy, paperclip, etc.) Place the muffin tin in the sun. Try to predict what will melt. Wait. Were the predictions correct?
- Pour 1 T. of whipping cream into a baby food jar. Screw the lid on and shake vigorously. Soon a solid lump of butter will form inside. Remove the butter, spread on some crackers. Enjoy.
- Place crayons in a muffin tin. Let them melt in the sun. Children can enjoy using the giant crayons they’ve created.
- Have fun “ice-painting.” Pour different colors of liquid tempera paint into ice cube trays. Add craft sticks (place plastic wrap over the cubes and insert sticks if they don’t stand up on their own). Let children “paint” with the ice. The frozen cubes will begin to melt from the warm air and warm paper.
- Make ice-cream. Place ½ cup cream (plus a little vanilla and sugar) in a sandwich bag. Place this bag inside another sandwich bag. Place both bags inside a gallon bag and fill the gallon bag with ice. Place this bag inside a plastic grocery bag. Shake, toss, roll for about 8 minutes. Ice-cream will be of soft-serve consistency. Freeze or eat right away.

**Earth and Space Science:** Young children develop skills in learning and understanding the natural world through exploration of the earth, sky, weather, and seasons.

- **S2:01** Explores the natural environment using various tools
- **S2:02** Names objects in the sky
- **S2:03** Notices shadows of self, others, and objects
- **S2:04** Describes different objects in the sky and various earth materials
- **S2:05** Names different kinds of weather
- **S2:06** Communicates awareness of changes in the environment, weather, and seasons

**Suggested Supports:**

- Display books/photos with pictures of nature items in the sky/earth. (example: sky, sun, moon, stars; animals, leaves/plants, flowers, rivers, lakes, oceans, deserts, mountains, forests, etc. and various kinds of weather.
- Use the sensory table on a daily basis. Fill it with sand, water, soil, grass, hay, leaves, ice, etc. Provide a variety of tools.
**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Take photos of various seasons. Create a documentation panel. Include children’s comments.
- Make a weather graph (sunny, rainy, cloudy, snowy, etc.)
- On a sunny day, have children find their shadow. By moving around and changing directions have them see what happens to their shadows. Ask them to try to catch their shadows. Ask them to step on someone else’s shadow.
- Make “rain.” You’ll need a large clear jar, a sponge, a squeeze bottle, water and food coloring. Place the sponge over the top of the bottle. Fill the squeeze bottle with water tinted blue. Let children squirt water onto the sponge until it absorbs water and begins to drip into the bottle.

**Life Science:** Young children develop an understanding of the characteristics of living creatures and plants.

- S3:01 Names living organisms by name (plants, animals, and people)
- S3:02 Names characteristics of living organisms
- S3:03 Names body parts
- S3:04 Shows appreciation for God’s creation of living things

**Suggested Supports:**

- Include a variety of plants in the learning environment. Allow children to help care for them.
- Consider adopting a pet/pets – fish, guinea pig, rabbit, hermit frog. Allow children to help care for them.

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Set up a bird feeder where it is visible to young children.
- Provide bug catchers (punch a hole in the top of a plastic container).
- Go on a nature walk. Look for birds, animals, insects, worms, spiders. (Use binoculars made from two toilet paper rolls.)
- Have children choose a body part and then try to touch another body part with it. Example: hand to heel; nose to knee, etc. Try this activity in pairs: head to back; elbow to elbow; ear to shoulder, etc. Enjoy touching, twisting, and learning
- Collect leaves, sticks, and other nature items. Make a nature book (Ziploc bag book) or a mural after enjoying a nature walk.
- Plant beans or herbs.
• Visit a park, zoo, pet store, farm, a florist, or botanical garden.
• Invest in a butterfly farm, a worm farm, or an ant farm.
• Play games/sing songs that include names of body parts.

Engineering: Young children develop skills in learning and understanding how to solve problems.

• S4:01 Shows imagination and creativity in solving problems
• S4:02 Uses tools to help solve a problem
• S4:03 Notices whether a solution was successful

Suggested Supports:

• Provide a variety of tools and equipment for children to use both indoors and outside. (example: tongs, ramps, tunnels, rope, etc.)
• Place toys and household items in your Toy/Manipulative Area that pose problems for children to solve. (examples: empty containers with matching lids, nesting bowls, shape sorters, large wooden stringing beads, puzzles, toys with “on/off” switches, etc.)

Suggested Learning Activities:

• Encourage children to experiment with new uses for familiar objects. (example: a piece of fabric, a plastic plate, etc. – “What else could it be?”)

Scientific Thinking: Young children develop skills in learning and understanding about the world around them through exploration and investigation.

• S5:01 Demonstrates curiosity
• S5:02 Solves problems through trial and error
• S5:03 Uses tools to explore the environment

Suggested Supports:

• Make a variety of puzzles available

Suggested Learning Activities:

• Take a flashlight apart and challenge children to put it back together again.
**Social Studies:**

The study of people, relationships, and cultures is called Social Studies. Social Studies includes learning about the environment; how people lived in the past and how they live today; how they work and get along with others; and what it means to be a good citizen.

**Self:** Young children begin to develop an understanding of the concept of self within the context of family and community.

- SS1:01 Demonstrates a sense of belonging to a group
- SS1:02 Begins to engage in cooperative play
- SS1:03 Identifies self and familiar people
- SS1:04 Recognizes and asks simple questions about his/her family and extended family
- SS1:05 Asks simple questions about self, family, and community
- SS1:06 Becomes aware of the similarities and differences between self and others
- SS1:07 Begins to ask simple questions about the similarities and differences between self and others

**Suggested Supports:**

- Display photos of children and their families in the classroom. (example: photo album or family tree)
- Read books that include photos/pictures of people from different cultures, people of varying ages and abilities.
- Include posters, puzzles, etc. in the learning environment that depict various cultures, ethnic groups, ages, and differing abilities.

**Suggested Learning Activities:**


**History:** Young children begin to develop an understanding of the passage of time.

- SS2:01 Recalls past information (examples: repeats parts to songs, stories, finger plays)
- SS2:02 Recalls details from his/her immediate past
- SS2:03 Anticipates sequence during daily activities
• SS2:04 Begins to communicate the concept of time (today, yesterday, later, etc.)
• SS2:05 Notices changes over time (examples: height, abilities; trees losing leaves, etc.)

**Suggested Supports:**

- Establish a consistent, predictable daily routine.
- Sequence recurring events. (example: “After lunch, we will take a nap.”)
- Ask child to recall what happened “last night,” “yesterday.”
- Label events using the terms “today,” “tomorrow” “later,” “next,” “long ago.”
- Use names of the days of the week in context. (example: “Tuesday we will go to the park.”)
- Use correct terms when talking about time and order. (examples: first/last, before/after, etc.)

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Display a daily routine board with pictures.
- Use a “history calendar” to talk about what happened in the past and what will happen in the future. (Note: A “history calendar” uses simple pictures to denote events – birthday cake for child’s birthday; drawing of church for chapel; swing for a visit to the park, etc.)

**Civics and Government:** Young children will begin to understand the function of rules and order.

• SS3:01 Becomes aware of immediate community (grocery store, fire station, police stations, post office, church, school, etc.)
• SS3:02 Identifies people and their roles (pastor, teacher, custodian, doctor, dentist, veterinarian, police officer, etc.)
• SS3:03 Begins to demonstrate and understand rules and the purpose they serve
• SS3:04 Follows simple directions

**Suggested Supports:**

- Post pictures/photos of familiar community locations – stores, parks, buildings, etc.
- Display a list of simple classroom rules and review them often. (example: quiet voices, walking feet, helping hands, etc.)
• Remind children about other rules (what they should do/shouldn’t do) and remind them why they need to follow these rules.

Suggested Learning Activities:

• Invite community/family members in for a brief visit to talk about their job. (plumber, mail carrier, police officer, etc.).
• Take field trips to a police station, fire station, restaurant, grocery store, etc.
• Play games with rules. (examples: “Duck, Duck Goose”)

Citizenship: Young children begin to understand expected behavior in a democratic society.

• SS4:01 Participates in simple routines with adult support
• SS4:02 Assists with daily routines and responsibilities
• SS4:03 Begins to initiate “helping tasks” (picking up toys, throwing away trash, passing out cups/napkins, etc.)
• SS4:04 Begins to work cooperatively with others
• SS4:05 Notices differences and similarities in others
• SS4:06 Begins to show respect for others
• SS4:07 Makes choices

Suggested Supports:

• Provide opportunities for children to make choices.
• Assign simple classroom jobs. (examples: pass out napkins, choose a song from our class Song Book, pick up toys, hold the door, etc.
• Read stories about helping, cooperating, sharing.
• Model sharing and other behaviors you want to encourage. (examples: “please,” “excuse me, “thank you,” “I’m sorry,” etc.)

Suggested Learning Activities:
Physical Health and Well-Being

Early childhood is the time for a child to begin the development of an active healthy lifestyle. Children learn through active movement. The developmental skills, knowledge, and attitudes that lead to such a lifestyle must be taught and should begin early in order to ensure a lifetime of good health.

Physical well-being and movement are contributors to a young child’s brain development. Research indicates that the correlation between a child’s physical well-being, health and motor development is directly connected to early development and learning and is key to school readiness. Physical health and well-being is central to a child’s entire learning experience and is crucial to cognitive development.

Gross Motor Development: Young children gain skills that support gross motor development.

- **PH1:01** Moves body, arms, and legs with coordination
- **PH1:02** Runs, marches, dances to music
- **PH1:03** Jumps in place
- **PH1:04** Squats, bends
- **PH1:05** Climbs/descends stairs while holding on to a railing
- **PH1:06** Balances/stands on one foot for one to two seconds
- **PH1:07** Pushes/pulls a cart while walking
- **PH1:08** Tries to ride a tricycle or other riding toy with pedals
- **PH1:09** Climbs on a stool to reach things that are up high
- **PH1:10** Catches a ball trapping it with arms and hands
- **PH1:11** Throws balls
- **PH1:12** Kicks balls
- **PH1:13** Walks on tiptoe
- **PH1:14** Walks backwards

**Suggested Supports:**

- Provide space inside and outside to walk, run, jump, and climb.
- Provide daily opportunities for children to run, jump, climb, push, and pull items.
- Allow large periods of time for unstructured activities every day.
- Provide opportunities and supervision for visits to playgrounds/parks to exercise and play on various types of play equipment.
- Provide riding toys.
- Provide wagons and carts to allow children to develop pushing/pulling skills.
- Provide different kinds and sizes of balls.
- Provide containers to throw/kick balls into.
- Create simple obstacle courses.
**Suggested Learning Experiences:**

- Play large motor games that require coordination, words, and movement: “Hide and Seek,” “Ring ‘Round the Rosy,” “Duck, Duck, Goose.”
- Play balancing games. Put a piece of tape on the floor or put a chalk line outdoors for children to walk along (hold hand if necessary)
- Choose familiar animals: cat, dog, bird, duck, horse, snake, elephant, etc. Say, “If you were a cat, how would you move?” Don’t tell them or show them how to move. Instead let them create their own movements. (Note: good transition activity)
- Make a long line with a stick. Make another line about six inches away from the first line. The lines represent the banks of the river and the idea is to jump across the river without getting wet. If it’s too easy, draw the lines further apart. Option: Play indoors – use painter’s tape.
- Wad up pieces of newspaper. Provide a variety of containers (bucket, box, large Cool Whip container, etc.) Challenge children to throw the newspaper “balls” into the containers.
- Set up large plastic cups (upside down). Ask children to roll or throw a ball and try to knock over the cups.

**Fine Motor Development:** Young children gain skills that support fine motor development.

- PH2:01 Engages in finger plays
- PH2:02 Uses pincer grip (with thumb and finger) to wind up a toy
- PH2:03 Digs in sand with a spoon/small trowel
- PH2:04 Pushes/pats puzzle pieces into place
- PH2:05 Stacks 2 – 4 blocks on top of each other
- PH2:06 Begins to use pincer grip when handling spoon and fork
- PH2:07 Opens cabinets and doors
- PH2:08 Bends over and picks things up without falling
- PH2:09 Unbuttons large buttons
- PH2:10 Unzips large zippers
- PH2:11 Turns pages in a book
- PH2:12 Tries to cut paper with scissors
- PH2:13 Hits pegs with a small hammer
- PH2:14 Uses hand-eye coordination to manipulate small objects with increasing control
**Suggested Supports:**

- Use finger plays.
- Provide crayons and markers and paper for scribbling.
- Provide an easel and paintbrushes.
- Provide connecting blocks and linking toys.
- Provide playdough, modeling clay, hammers, rolling pins, and cookie cutters.
- Provide toys and materials that offer practice for fine motor and eye-hand coordination: puzzles, pegs and pegboards, lacing cards, beads to string, blocks, shape sorters, nesting cups, stacking rings, and construction toys.
- Provide lots of opportunities for sensory experiences with sand, water, and other materials using buckets, shovels, spoons cups, and other containers.
- Include drums, triangles, tambourines, finger cymbals and xylophones in the Music Area.
- Provide jobs that use small muscles – wiping tables, placing napkins out for snack, putting toys away.
- Provide art and drawing and writing materials: crayons, markers, pencils, paint brushes, glue, collage materials, scissors, etc. and a variety of paper.

**Suggested Learning Experiences:**

- Let children tear paper into small pieces and paste them onto another piece of paper.
- Attach pieces of painters tape to a table top (or underneath the table). Ask children to peel off the tape.
- Place sponges in the sensory table and let children squeeze water out of the sponges.
- Encourage children to finger paint.
- Provide a colander and pipe cleaners. Children push and bend the pipe cleaners into the holes in the colander. Or, use artificial flowers.
- Provide jobs that use small muscles – wiping tables, placing napkins out for snack, putting toys away.
- “Paint” outdoors with a large paintbrush and water.
- Let children pound golf tees into a large piece of Styrofoam with a small hammer (or into a cardboard box).
- Create a pouring station. Place a variety of cups and containers into a small tub of water (or in the sensory table). Let children enjoy pouring and filling the various containers.
- Place large sunflowers on a tray. Give children tweezers and have them remove the sunflower seeds with the tweezers.
- Purchase large nuts and bolts from a hardware store. Let children twist the nuts onto the bolts.
- Provide a hole punch and scrap paper. Let children punch holes in the paper.
Physical Health and Well-Being: Young children develop skills and habits that support healthy, safe, and nutritious practices.

- PH3:01 Uses a tissue to wipe nose
- PH3:02 Washes and dries hands with help
- PH3:03 Brushes teeth with help
- PH3:04 Feeds self with a spoon and/or fork
- PH3:05 Drinks from a cup/glass
- PH3:06 Is able to drink from a straw
- PH3:07 Pours own milk/water from a small pitcher into a cup
- PH3:08 Demonstrates basic understanding that eating a variety of foods helps our bodies grow and stay healthy
- PH3:09 Distinguishes between nutritious and less nutritious foods
- PH3:10 Helps caregiver when being dressed
- PH3:11 Pulls off socks
- PH3:12 Gives signs he/she needs to use the toilet
- PH3:13 Demonstrates basic safety knowledge
- PH3:14 Follows simple safety rules while participating in activities
- PH3:15 Climbs into car seat when asked and cooperates while getting buckled in
- PH3:16 Holds adult’s hand when crossing the street
- PH3:17 Accepts other suggestions or redirection when engaging in unsafe behaviors
- PH3:18 Picks up toys after hearing/singing a clean-up song
- PH3:19 Identifies the difference between sick and well
- PH3:20 Understands that germs can make us sick
- PH3:21 Demonstrates basic understanding that physical activity helps the body grow and be healthy

Suggested Supports:

- Make sure sink, soap, towels, and tissue are readily available and accessible.
- Read stories about self-help skills – washing hands, blowing noses, brushing teeth.
- Store toys on low shelves and in easily accessible containers so children can select/put away toys independently.
- Use child-size serving utensils such as a small pitcher so children can pour own milk.
- Provide opportunities for children to practice safe behaviors – taking walks, being in the community.
- State clear expectation for using unsafe behavior and closely supervise children.
- Read stories about crossing streets, touching animals, staying close to caregivers.
- Establish naptime/meal time routines.
- Post rebus signs reminding children of the steps in washing hands, using the toilet, using a tissue, etc.
• Allow enough time in the daily schedule for children to be able to practice putting on socks, shoes, jackets, and hats by themselves.
• Discuss any developmental concerns with parents/guardians and encourage follow-up for further evaluation.

Suggested Learning Experiences:

• Have a “tasting party.” Give children an opportunity to taste a variety of foods
• Give each child a clear plastic cup. Provide fresh fruit, pudding, Cool Whip, and other edibles (chocolate chips, raisins, granola, coconut, nuts, cereal, etc. Have children layer ingredients and make individual parfaits. Caution: Beware of food allergies.
• Engage children in other simple “cooking” experiences.
Creative Arts

The purpose of including creative arts in early childhood education is to provide a range of activities for children to creatively express themselves. Creative arts engage children’s minds, bodies, and senses. The arts invite children to listen, observe, discuss, move, solve problems, and imagine using multiple modes of thought and self-expression. Fine arts curricula provide opportunities for young children to acquire and apply skills in other domains.

**Music:** Young children develop skills that support creative expression through voice, instruments, and objects.

- **CA1:01** Listens to a variety of music (children’s songs, jazz, classical music, Top 40, blues, music from other cultures)
- **CA1:02** Responds to music by clapping, swaying, dancing, etc.
- **CA1:03** Explores sound (pitch, volume, tempo)
- **CA1:04** Begins to sing along to favorite songs

**Suggested Supports:**

- Provide rhythm instruments: bells, rhythm sticks, tambourines, triangles, drums, etc. and other items that make noise: pie pans, spoons, metal or plastic containers, etc.
- Play a wide variety of music.
- Sing favorite songs again and again.
- Clap rhythmic patterns to names, poems, nursery rhymes, etc.
- Clap and dance to music with children.
- Use body actions to actions (i.e. “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes”).
- Sing songs with finger plays (i.e. “Itsy Bitsy Spider”).
- Use music and songs for transitions.
- Teach songs and rhymes; repeat them often.
- Sing songs as a part of the daily routine: greeting/good-bye, clean-up, snack, etc.

**Suggested Learning Activities:**

- Sing a song starting it loud. Begin to sing more softly. Sing some more, this time getting louder and louder. This helps children understand the dynamics of sound and music.
- While chanting a nursery rhyme, have children tap out the rhythm on an oatmeal box or coffee can “drum.” Option: Add bells, spoons, or shakers.
- Place a variety of stainless steel and aluminum pans, bowls, lids, and plastic bottles/containers in the sensory table along with water and “ strikers” – wooden spoons, metal spoons, sticks, etc. Let children experiment “making music.”

Dance: Young children begin to develop skills that support creative expression through movement.

- CA2:01 Uses whole body to respond to music
- CA2:02 Uses dance as a means of self-expression
- CA2:03 Conveys ideas and emotions through creative movement (with or without music)

Suggested Supports:

- Move and dance to music with children.
- Provide props to use with creative movement: ribbons, scarves, crepe paper streamers, etc.

Suggested Learning Activities:

- Give each child an air-inflated balloon on a short length of string. Holding the string do turning and wave-like movements with the balloon. Toss the balloon into the air and let it float down. Follow it and copy it and have the body go up as the balloon goes up and downwards as the balloon floats down.
- Make a “bumblebee” for each child. Partially fill a yellow balloon with flour. With a permanent marker, draw eyes and “bee stripes.” Sing the song, “I’m Bringing Home a Baby Bumblebee.” Make up actions/movements for each verse.
- Have the children play the “Traffic Light Dance.” Use three large circles (paper or foam) –green, yellow, red. Play music. Children dance quickly and freely when they see the green circle. They dance slowly when they see and yellow circle and stop when they see the red circle.

Visual Arts: Young children begin to develop skills that support creative expression through the process, production and appreciation of visual art forms.

- CA3:01 Explores building materials and art materials
- CA3:02 Uses a variety of media
- CA3:03 Enjoys the art process and delights in art creations
- CA3:04 Expresses preference for certain art materials/experiences
- CA3:05 Compares and contrasts own creations with those of others
Suggested Supports:

- Make art materials readily available: crayons, markers, paint, pencils, play dough, clay, collage materials, a variety of paper, glue, etc.
- Encourage daily exploration by providing additional art materials: cotton balls, tape, string, sticky contact paper, finger paint, etc.
- Display children’s art work in the classroom and hallways at children’s eye level.
- Use the outdoors as a place for art – walls, fence, side-walks, water, sand, rocks, wood
- Display art reproductions in the classroom; point out distinguishing features; talk about the works of art.
- Engage children in frequent and varied sensory experiences.

Suggested Learning Activities:

- Place two primary colors of tempera paint in a Ziploc bag. Tape the bag to the table top. Let children mix colors and finger paint. No mess!
- Give children containers of water and brushes and/or sponges. Find a safe place – sidewalk, driveway, parking lot, etc. Let children paint large pictures with water.
- Cut or tear tissue paper. Mix glue and water (2 parts glue to 1 part water). Brush glue mixture onto a bottle. Attach pieces of tissue paper. Brush over with the glue. Let dry completely. Use as a vase.
- Mix salt with powder paint. Have the child brush or dribble glue to make a pattern on paper. Sprinkle salt over the glue. Wait until the glue dries. Tip off excess salt.
- Use clothespins to hold cotton balls or small sponges. Provide paint. Let children “dab” and paint. Option: Add ingredients to the paint for dramatic results – salt, glitter, sand, baby oil, dish soap, etc.
- “Marble paint” with golf balls or small rubber balls. Tape paper into a cake pan with a lid or another closed container. Place some paint and the balls into the container and let children move and shake the container.
- Place painters tape onto a large piece of paper to create a design. Let children paint over the paper and tape. When the paint has dried, remove the tape.
- Mix food coloring with some water in muffin tins (3 – 4 colors). Fold a coffee filter, napkin, or paper towel any way you want. Dip the corners briefly into the colors. Let the paper dry. Carefully unfold. Press the paper flat. Mount it on tag board or cardboard.
- Using paint chips and rings, create color books – a blue book, a red book, a yellow book, etc.
Dramatic Play: Young children begin to develop skills that support creative expression through dramatic play.

- CA4:01 Imitates and pretends to take on the characteristics of a person, character or animal
- CA4:02 Expresses self through dramatic play
- CA4:03 Uses a variety of props while playing and pretending

Suggested Supports:

- Foster imagination by frequently reading fanciful stories.
- Create a House Area (Dramatic Play Area) and Block Area. Equip these centers with a variety of props (i.e. baby dolls, hats, bags/purses, a mirror, etc. and trucks, cars, “block people,” roads, signs, etc.
- Create other dramatic play centers: Pet Shop, Florist Shop, Restaurant, etc.
- Engage in play with the children. Get down to their level. Talk/interact. Follow their lead.

Suggested Learning Activities:

- Laminate pictures of food to fit the pots, pans, and plates in the House Area.
- Printable can labels are available from Vanessa@pre-kpages.com.
- Provide lengths of material in varying widths and lengths. Provide clothespins. Help children use the fabric for shawls, head coverings, skirts, etc.
Sample Schedules for 2’s

Adjust as needed to meet the individual needs of the children in your program.

Caregivers must maintain an overall routine as consistently as possible while flexing it to accommodate individual children’s natural rhythms and temperaments. A consistent daily routine provides young children with the security they need.

Early Morning Extended Care:
7:00 – 8:15 a.m.: Extended Care – Manipulatives (centers), stories/songs/finger plays, art activity, breakfast

A.M. Preschool:
8:15 – 8:30 a.m.: Gathering Time -- Students arrive, parent/teacher communication, attendance routines, hand washing and pre-session activities

8:30 – 8:50 a.m.: First Group Time -- Helpers, language experiences, music/movement, orientation to the day’s activities and centers

8:50 – 9:50 a.m.: Learning Centers -- art, sensory, blocks, dramatic play, toys/puzzles (manipulatives), discovery (science/math), music, listening, books

9:50 – 10:00 a.m. – Clean-up/transition

10:00 – 10:20 a.m. -- Snack

10:20 – 10:50 a.m.: Second Group Time – Jesus Time

10:50 – 11:20 a.m.: Outdoor Play (In increment weather, plan a gym activity if gym is available, or another Group Time with planned movement activities)

11:20 –11:40 a.m.: Dismissal (and transition to extended care)

Preschool Chapel: Once a month age-appropriate worship experience with other children conducted by the pastor (preferable) or teachers are recommended. Several times a year, all-school chapel services are recommended.

Gym Time: Basic locomotive activities, games and other large motor activities can be planned for the gym or other indoor play area if such an area is available.
Afternoon Extended Care:
11:40 – 11:50 a.m. -- Preparation for Lunch – toileting and hand washing

11:50 a.m. – 12:20 p.m. -- Lunch

12:20 – 12:50 p.m.: Outdoor Play (In increment weather, plan a gym activity if gym is available, or another Group Time with planned movement activities)

12:50 p.m. -- Preparation for rest time – Books, settle in for rest time

1:00 – 2:30 p.m. -- Individual rest time as needed for individual resting patterns

2:30 p.m. -- Toileting, hand washing, quiet activities

3:00 – 3:20 p.m. -- Afternoon snack

3:20 – 3:30 p.m. – Dismissal or transition to late afternoon extended care

Late Afternoon Extended Care
3:30 – 4:10 p.m. – Outdoor Play (In increment weather, plan a gym activity (if gym is available) or another Group Time with planned movement activities.)

4:10– 5:00 p.m.: Manipulatives, stories/songs/finger plays, art activity

Comments on the Various Parts of the Daily Schedule:

- **Arrivals/Departures:** Caregivers work with parents to ensure that arrivals and departures are pleasant and reassuring for children. These times allow children to extend the bonds of trust they have with their parents and the caregivers in the program. The physical locations where arrivals and departures take place depend on the needs of the children and their parents.

- **Choice Time/Free Play:** During this part of the daily routine, caregivers are attentive and offer emotional and physical support to children as the children play and explore their environment at their own pace. Caregivers tailor their responses to children’s ideas, engage in give-and-take communication with the children, imitate children’s actions, support children’s play with other children, and assist children in problem-solving.
• **Group Times:** Caregivers plan the activities and prepare the materials. During this time, children enjoy shared experiences with caregivers and other children. Adults allow and encourage child-choice, creativity, and innovation. Adults follow the children’s cues (example: deciding how long the activity lasts based on children’s interest levels.).

• **Outside Time:** This segment of the day allows children to explore the outdoor world. Adults support children’s exploration and interests providing open-ended materials and a variety of experiences. Two’s use the open area of the play space for a wide range of physical movements, simple games, and problem-solving as they pursue their interests.

• **Caregiving Routines:** Caregiving routines (meals, rest, and bodily care routines) offer the opportunity to strengthen bonds with children as caregivers talk with, sing, and playfully interact with young children. Caregivers strive to find ways to encourage children to play an active role. Caregivers fit these times around children’s exploration and play. Length of naps is based around each child’s individual needs with quiet alternatives provided for non-nappers. Adults also accommodate children’s individual styles of waking up. Adults take cues from the children about diaper changes and feeding times – adjusting the schedule as needed.

• **Transitions:** The timing of transitions is flexible, based on children’s needs and engagement in their play. The shifts in events/activities should be kept low-key and comfortable. Caregivers organize the parts of the day in a logical fashion alternating active and quiet activities. Caregivers strive to overlap transitions and avoid unnecessary transitions (example: having children remove all of their outdoor play clothing and then putting it back on again to go home after a brief indoor group time).