Arizona’s Infant and Toddler Developmental Guidelines

Approaches to Learning Domain

Arizona Department of Education
Early Childhood Education Unit

Agenda

- Introductions
- Define “Approaches to Learning”
- It matters: Connecting to School Readiness
- The Role of the Caregiver/Teacher
- Interconnectedness of the Domains
- Intentional planning for implementation of strategies
- Summary

Diaper Bag

Reflection!
Ice Breaker: Taboo

You wanted your group to guess the word. However, you were restricted by the words you could NOT say. That required you to resist the impulse to say the taboo word, or the other words you were not allowed to say. It was an exercise to get us thinking about IMPULSE and the effort it takes to regulate our impulses.

What was involved?

Early Experiences Matter:

- The infant’s brain is literally waiting for experiences to determine how connections are made (Johnson, 2005).
- Before birth, it appears that genes mainly direct how the brain establishes basic wiring patterns.
- After birth, environmental experiences guide the brain’s development.
- The inflowing stream of sights, sounds, smells, touches, language, and eye contact help shape the brain’s neural connections (Johnson, 2007).
- Depressed brain activity has been found in children who grow up in a deprived environment (Nelson, Jeanah, & Fox, 2007).
- Infants whose caregivers expose them to a variety of stimulation—talking, touching, playing—are most likely to develop to their full potential.

2014 Physical and Cognitive Development in Infancy (Santrock, Ch3.pdf)
Infant executive function development is the study of how psychological processes involved in thinking and knowing develop in young children.

Information is acquired in a number of ways including through sight, sound, touch, taste, smell and language, all of which require processing by our cognitive system.

What is Approaches to Learning?

HOW children orient themselves to learning a wide range of skills.
What is the connection?

**Approaches to Learning.**

**Cognitive Development**

The Impact of Approaches to Learning on Cognitive Development

“Approaches to learning are interrelated with executive function skills, an umbrella term for a set of neurologically based processes that involve managing one’s self and one’s resources in order to achieve a goal.”

(4)

“These include the ability to remember and follow multi-step instructions, avoid distractions, control rash responses, adjust when rules change and persist at problem-solving.”

(5)

Arizona’s Approaches to Learning (initiative and curiosity, attentiveness and persistence, confidence, creativity, inventiveness, reasoning and problem-solving) will prepare children for the ultimate goal of school and life-long success.

When adults provide an engaging environment that allows children to explore and create independently it helps the brain create the patterns needed for critical thinking.
Why does it matter?

It is directly linked to success in school AND life.

Think about it this way:
Approaches to Learning are the tools children need to enable them to become owners of their learning. They are essential keys to helping children develop an awareness of how they learn best in the classroom and beyond.

CONNECTING TO SCHOOL READINESS
Providing a framework...

**ITDG**
- Social and Emotional Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Language Development and Communication
- Cognitive Development
- Physical and Motor Development

**AZELS**
- Social and Emotional Development
- Approaches to Learning
- Language and Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Development, Health and Safety
- Fine Arts

**Approaches to Learning**

**ITDG**
- Persistence
- Initiative and Curiosity
- Creativity and Inventiveness
- Reasoning and Problem Solving

**AZELS**
- Initiative and Curiosity
- Attentiveness
- Confidence
- Creativity
- Reasoning and Problem Solving
Component: Persistence

Indicators
- Begins noticing people, events, things
- Watches what others do, begins to pretend, uses materials in new and different ways
- Pays attention briefly and tries to reproduce interesting and pleasurable effects and events
- Trying new things and taking risks

It May Look Like...
Activity:
• As a group discuss and sort the behaviors according to the age group in which you may see the behavior (Young Infant, Older Infant, Toddler)
• As a group, choose one behavior you think is a good example of persistence
• Be ready to share with large group the behavior and your reasoning

Strategy Reflection

Component: Initiative & Curiosity

Indicators
• Shows awareness of and interest in the environment
• Demonstrates ability to initiate activities
• Shows eagerness and curiosity as a learner
• Engage in and actively explores self, objects, and surroundings
Activity:
• As a group you have already sorted your behaviors by developmental period (Young Infant, Older Infant, Toddler)
• Review behaviors again, and choose one you think is a good example of Initiative and Curiosity
• Be ready to share with large group the behavior and your reasoning

Strategy Reflection

Component: Creativity & Inventiveness

Indicators
• Approaches and explores new experiences in familiar settings
• Notices and shows interest in and excitement with familiar objects, people and events
• Delights in finding new properties and uses for familiar objects and experiences
Activity:

- As a group you have already sorted your behaviors by developmental period (Young Infant, Older Infant, Toddler)
- Review behaviors again, and choose one you think is a good example of Creativity and Inventiveness
- Be ready to share with large group the behavior and your reasoning

Strategy Reflection

Component: Reasoning & Problem Solving

Indicators

- Uses sounds, gestures, and movements to impact the environment and interactions
- Explores object characteristics in many different ways
- Behaves in consistent ways to elicit desired response
- Realizes that people exist even when out of view
Activity:
• As a group you have already sorted your behaviors by developmental period (Young Infant, Older Infant, Toddler).
• Review behaviors again, and choose one you think is a good example of Reasoning and Problem Solving.
• Be ready to share with large group the behavior and your reasoning.

Strategy Reflection

Reflection on Activities

Going through those exercises after each indicator was important for several reasons:
➢ To demonstrate that development is varied; it really depends on each child.
➢ To get used to looking at behavior in a way that may help us be intentional in thoughtful planning for Approaches to Learning.
Your Role

Experiences

One of the important aspects of your role in the lives of infants and toddlers is the effort you put into CREATING ENVIRONMENTS that stimulate children to explore, initiate, and problem solve by extending each child’s curiosity and encouraging further experimentation, questioning, and reflection.

You Set the Stage

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Your Role
Your Role

Face-to-face interaction is extremely critical to the overall development, including social skills, such as facial expressions and turn-taking. Can take place:
- Caregiver’s lap
- Infant seat
- While laying on the floor
Responsive Caregiving

- Contingent
  - The adult’s action depends on or occurs in reaction to the infant’s action (matches the child’s actions)
- Appropriate
  - The adult’s action is conceptually related to the infant’s action and is geared to fulfill the infant’s need (relatable)
- Prompt
  - The adult’s action follows the infant’s action closely in time (make connections so that the child learns to associate the two)

Benefits of Responsive Caregiving

- Advantage in language and play
- Solve problems more efficiently
- Notice changes in environment quicker
- More skillful in sensorimotor tasks
- Greater levels of social interaction
- Vocalize more fluently
- Produce a greater proportion of speech-like sounds
- Higher IQ scores at age 12

Interconnected Approaches To Learning

- Language Development & Communication
- Social & Emotional Development
- Cognitive Development
- Physical & Motor Development
Babies are biologically programmed to emotionally attach to, imitate, and learn from their caregivers. They are completely dependent upon adults for nurturance, support, and security. They need adults not only to help them survive, but to provide them with experiences that build their brains.

--- J. Ronald Lally, For Our Babies
Shared Reflections

- Stand up with your completed Picture It form.
- As the music plays, "mix it up" with the others in the room.
- When the music stops, find a partner to share your visual representations with.
- When the music resumes, find a different person to share with.
- You will do this 3 times.

Summary

Our efforts to help infants and toddlers develop positive approaches to learning is essential to school readiness, as well as success beyond the classroom. We are helping them to develop positive approaches to living successful lives.
Desired Outcome

More than survive; THRIVE

Resources

- Arizona’s Infant Toddler Developmental Guidelines
- Enthusiastic and Engaged Learners: Approaches to Learning in the Early Childhood Classroom, Marilou Hyson
- For Our Babies, J. Ronald Lally
- Mind in the Making, Ellen Galinsky
- Video clips: Harvard’s Center on the Developing Child