The standards are organized into what are called “Domains.” Domains are general areas of child development and include the following:

**Physical Health and Motor Development**
Children are naturally active and enjoy learning by exploring their environment. Your child will begin to gain control over their bodies and movements. It is important to practice healthy behaviors, offer your child the ability to explore and provide opportunities for them to develop their small (fingers and toes) and large (legs, arms, trunk) muscles.

**Social and Emotional Development**
Children grow and learn by developing positive relationships with close caregivers. They develop increasing knowledge of their family and community, demonstrate a desire to play with peers and learn to appropriately express a broad range of emotions.

**Language Development**
Language development includes the ability to understand language, express ideas, and increasingly follow social norms. This is a key period for learning words and language and it is important for families to use the child’s home language.

**Literacy**
Literacy is the foundation of later reading and writing skills. This learning area includes knowledge of the alphabet, recognizing print, beginning writing and learning to understand the written meaning of words.

**Cognitive Development**
Young children grow and change in their abilities to pay attention to and think about the world around them. It is important that children have everyday opportunities to solve problems, learn how their actions affect others and make choices about things they find interesting.

**Mathematics**
Mathematics contributes to children’s ability to make sense of the world and to solve problems they encounter in their everyday lives. Your child may begin to identify numbers, amounts, patterns, make measurements, make comparisons, and learn about shapes and the order of things.

**Science**
Children are scientists from the moment they are born, using their senses to observe and gain knowledge about the world around them. Children also learn that simple investigations can help answer questions and you will see them observing, collecting information, using their senses, and learning about their outside world. Your child will attempt to gain understanding by asking questions, looking, listening, touching and tasting.

**Social Studies**
Social studies involves children’s ability to understand how they relate to their family and community, understand social norms and recognize and respect similarities and differences in people. Your child will attempt to gain an understanding of the past, present and future in relation to the world around them.

**Creative Arts**
Your child may begin to explore and participate in dance, drama, music and art. These mediums provide your child the opportunity to express themselves. Through a variety of music and movement, children hear and learn to recognize various sounds of language. This will help them in the beginning stages of reading. Also through art and pretend play, children get an opportunity to develop their imagination and creativity. These skills will be needed later on in problem solving, conflict resolution and leadership.

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The Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS) have been developed to assist families and educators in understanding the typical development of children from birth through 80 months. Standards show what children should know and be able to do and can serve as a guide for doing activities which add to children’s learning and development. The Standards have been developed incorporating the latest research as well as information provided by national experts. The Standards are designed to reflect children’s individual rates of development, their different approaches to learning, and the cultural context in which they live.

**WHY STANDARDS ARE IMPORTANT**

Well-planned early experiences are important to beginning a child’s lifelong journey of learning and success. The Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS) have been developed to assist families and educators in understanding typical development of children as they serve as a child’s first, and lifelong teacher. The Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards can easily be used by parents, grandparents and other family members. If you would like to learn more about how you can use the standards with your child, the Rhode Island Department of Education has created two resources specifically for parents and caregivers of young children. The Standards are child-centered, designed to reflect children’s individual rates of development, their different approaches to learning, and the cultural context in which they live.

**HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD?**

Parents, caregivers, and other family members have a critical role in supporting the growth and development of children as they serve as a child’s first, and lifelong teacher. The Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards can easily be used by parents, grandparents and other family members. If you would like to learn more about how you can use the standards with your child, the Rhode Island Department of Education has created two resources specifically for parents and caregivers of young children. The Standards are designed to reflect children’s individual rates of development, their different approaches to learning, and the cultural context in which they live.

**STANDARDS-BASED EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM**

Standards-based early learning programs have the following common:

- They implement a quality early childhood curriculum guided by the Early Learning and Development Standards. A curriculum is a written plan that describes how the learning of each child will be supported.
- Use an assessment system throughout the year to get information about children’s learning styles, interests, developmental level and progress toward the Standards. Assessment is the collection, review, and use of information undertaken for the purpose of improving learning and development. Well planned assessments inform teaching and contribute to better outcomes for children.
- Standards-based programs use multiple opportunities to engage families in their program and the child’s learning. There should be regular communication about your child’s growth, development and progress. Teachers ensure children have access to play materials and learning environments that are interesting and age-appropriate.
- They provide opportunities for children based on the varying abilities of that individual child. Teachers take into consideration the child’s language, culture and unique learning needs.
- Teachers and Administrative staff have children completed training on the Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards. A curriculum is a written plan that describes how the learning of each child will be supported.