



Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines

GETTING COLORADO'S CHILDREN OFF TO A STRONG START

What children experience and learn from birth through third grade lays the foundation for their success. No matter the role we have in kids' lives – whether as first-time parents, teachers, childcare providers, or involved relatives, friends or neighbors – we all play an important part in their development.

The **Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines** offer practical tips that everyone can use to help our children get off to a happy and healthy start. Colorado's early childhood advocates and experts spent countless hours creating these Guidelines, which reflect the latest national research and broadly accepted strategies currently used statewide.

USING THE GUIDELINES IS SIMPLE:

1. Reference the Guidelines to learn about child development.
2. Try out the easy, age-appropriate tips and suggestions to help children learn.
3. Check back with the Guidelines as children grow so you can continue to support their development.

AS CHILDREN DEVELOP, PAY ATTENTION TO THEIR:

- Physical health
- Feelings and behaviors
- Problem-solving and learning

KEEP IN MIND:

The Guidelines describe how a typical child develops but it is important to understand that each child learns and grows at his or her own pace. Since all children are different, caregivers should talk with a health care provider or other trusted professional about any questions or concerns. For more information, please visit EarlyLearningCO.org/contact.





YEARS

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Between ages three and five, kids build skills that prepare them for elementary school and beyond. Their bodies, brains and feelings are continuing to develop. They continue to explore their world and their learning focuses on different subjects, like math and science.

KIDS THIS AGE MAY:	HOW YOU CAN HELP THEM DEVELOP:
Begin to handle their impulses and feelings better. Follow simple rules, routines and directions.	Establish, explain, and model simple rules, like a bedtime routine, in simple ways they can understand.
Begin to pretend to read and write in scribbles or symbols. Recognize words that rhyme and the letters in their own name.	Keep reading to kids. Point out signs and words on items at home, in the classroom, neighborhood or stores. Encourage them to write letters.
Build math skills and get better at counting and sorting objects by color and size.	Take advantage of every opportunity to count, group and order objects and materials.
Think through problems and apply strategies for solving them.	Ask kids questions that apply to real problems and talk with them about different approaches to solving problems.
Observe nature and make predictions about natural events. For example they may explain how seeds grow, or how you should care for animals.	Encourage children to ask questions and seek answers by exploring and thinking about what they learn.
Use their imaginations and creativity, and express ideas in many ways. Start moving to music they like or drawing stories.	Provide children with examples of diverse music at home or other places in their community.
Start to speak and understand a lot more in English if it is not their first language. Answer "yes" or "no" to certain questions or repeat simple words in songs if English if it is not their first language.	Describe things you see and use actions and real objects to help children understand what is being read, said or sung in English.

