

## TALKING POINTS - ENGLISH

### AUDIENCE - PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

These messages, as well as the media outreach, will focus on reaching parents and caregivers of young children (0-8). When communicating with parents and caregivers, keep in mind what they care about:

- The health and well-being of the children in their care
- Supportive individuals, programs and resources they can turn to for help
- Opportunities to build their parenting skills and support their child's healthy development
- Accessible and easy-to-understand information that helps them support healthy development

### TOP MESSAGES

- The early years -- from a child's birth to age eight -- are critically important for all areas of learning and development. That includes children's health and physical development, emotional and behavioral development, as well as logic and reasoning.
- As parents and caregivers, our role in supporting children's healthy development starts by simply getting involved - using the tools we already have to build strong, supportive relationships with our children and helping them feel safe and secure to learn and explore the world around them.
- Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines describe a child's learning and development from birth to 8 years old and provide practical tips and fun ideas that anyone can use to support young children's healthy development.
- [EarlyLearningCO.org](http://EarlyLearningCO.org) is the website where parents and caregivers can access the Early Learning and Development Guidelines. The site includes information about child development at each age, including a series of fun and informational videos that deepens parents' understanding of child development and how they can support it.

## MESSAGES TO FRAME THE ISSUE

- The early years -- from a child's birth to age eight -- are critically important for all areas of learning and development. That includes children's health and physical development, emotional and behavioral development, as well as logic and reasoning.
  - In the first few years of life, more than 1 million new neural connections are formed every second. These are the connections that build the brain's architecture and create a foundation that impacts all future learning, behavior, and health.
  - Early experiences and relationships shape how a child's brain gets built. Creating a strong foundation - with secure and loving relationships and positive experiences -- leads to greater health, learning and well-being later on.
  - Early brain development occurs through a process called "serve and return," similar to the back-and-forth play of games like tennis. The back-and-forth interaction between babies and adults - including language, eye contact, and facial expressions -- is essential to children's healthy brain development.
- Stable, healthy relationships and positive experiences provide children with a strong foundation for future academic achievement and lifelong health and well-being.
  - Young children are best able to learn and thrive when they have secure and trusting relationships with their parents and other adult caregivers.
- As parents and caregivers, our role in supporting children's healthy development starts by simply getting involved - using the tools we already have to build strong, supportive relationships with our children and helping them feel safe and secure to learn and explore the world around them.
  - We all have a role to play in preparing Colorado's kids for a healthy and successful future. No matter how we interact with young children -- whether we're first-time parents, grandparents, friends, neighbors or early childhood professionals -- we all can play a role in giving kids a strong start in life.

## MESSAGES ON EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES AND VIDEOS

- Colorado’s Early Learning and Development Guidelines describe a child’s learning and development from birth to 8 years old and provide practical tips and fun ideas that anyone can use to support young children’s healthy development.
  - The Early Learning and Development Guidelines bring together strategies that align with our deep scientific understanding of how best to support children’s healthy development in the early years.
- EarlyLearningCO.org is the website where parents and caregivers can access the Early Learning and Development Guidelines. The site includes information about child development at each age, including a series of fun and informational videos that deepens parents’ understanding of child development and how they can support it.
  - The online video series at EarlyLearningCO.org models how parents and caregivers can get more involved in children’s lives and make the most of the early years.
- Parents are a child’s first and most important teacher. In fact, every interaction we have with children teaches them something about the world. The Early Learning and Development Guidelines, including the videos, can make parents and caregivers feel more confident in their role.
  - Parenting can be challenging, but parents already have all the skills they need to help their children grow up healthy and happy. The Early Learning and Development Guidelines, including the videos, offer practical tips, activities and ideas that families can easily incorporate into their everyday routines.
- All children learn, grow and develop differently. What works for one child may not work for another, and that’s OK! When parents and caregivers follow a child’s lead and support him or her with caring, consistent relationships and positive experiences, both the parent and the child will thrive.
- The Early Learning and Development Guidelines can be adapted to children with different abilities, cultures and languages and are designed for both parents to use at home and for child care providers to use in their program.