

Infant Toddler Developmental Standards Work Group
Friday, May 27, 2011
Meeting Notes

In attendance in Chicago:	Dawn Thomas	Jean Jackson
Jeanna Capito (co-chair)	Sharifa Townsend	Raydeane James
Karen Yarbrough (co-chair)	Casey Winke Amayun	Denise Jordan
Sam Aigner-Treworgy (staffer)	Cass Wolfe	Jamilah Jor'dan
Barbara Abel		Kristie Norwood
Sharonda Brown	In attendance in Springfield:	Sessy Nyman
Claire Dunham	Lauri Morrison-Frichtl	John Roope
Leslie Janes	Linda Delimata	Sheila Stadler
Rebecca Klein		Marcia Townsend
Rhima Mulhotra	Via Phone:	Melissa Veljasevic
Sue Reynolds	Elva DeLuna	Rebecca Waterstone
Jessica Roberts	Mary Jane Forney	
Alan Rosales	Theresa Hawley	

I. Welcome and Introductions:

Karen welcomed the workgroup members and introduced the new webinar process. She also gave an update on the federal Race to the Top- Early Learning Challenge competitive grants, targeting early childhood systems building in states. There is a focus on early childhood guidelines in the information released so far, so we will be monitoring the Early Learning Challenge and how it might relate to this project.

II. Review and Approve Notes

Draft notes were introduced by Jeanna, pointing out the consensus points at the end of the notes to build upon during this meeting. The major points of consensus: **1) organize the document by domains, laying out age brackets within each domain; 2) have overlapping age brackets; 3) design a separate newborn section that would highlight the unique aspects of that stage.**

Motion to approve by Casey Amayun, seconded by Dawn Thomas. Approved unanimously.

III. Key Questions for Development of Document

a. Domains

After coming to consensus on organizing the document domains during the last meeting, the workgroup discussed which domains to include. Without dwelling on the “naming” of the domains, the workgroup discussed the different domains included in other states documents. Aside from the “standard four,” 1) Physical, 2) Language/Literacy/Communication 3) Cognitive 4) Social/Emotional, some states include an “Approaches to Learning” section, and other states have separated out the “Social” and “Emotional” domains. Additionally, some states have included some other domains, including math/science, music/creative expression, social studies, etc. Both the literature and other states interviewed highlighted

the need for alignment both with other infant/toddler systems and with systems for older children.

Conversation revolved around separating out social and emotional domains and whether to include approaches to learning. The point was brought up that practitioners in the field often see the difference between social and emotional development, but that there might be a lot of overlapping content within these two domains if they were separated out. In many professional developmental settings, they are separated and together at various points of time in order to keep them more discrete and easier to digest. The workgroup talked about ways to address both the overlap and the need for separate sections. The workgroup also discussed that this decision is connected to whether there was an “approaches to learning” section. While it may be appropriate to have them separated, resources designed for 3-5 year olds often lump those two together. Thus, something to consider is the alignment to other systems.

While many states do lump these two together, the workgroup pointed out that there was a tendency not to address the sensory-integration and neuro-development component of the social/emotional development in infant and toddlers. In addition, there seems to be the emergence of an “executive function” conversation happening at the policy level that should be considered and figured into the conversation.

In the Approaches to Learning sections from other states, the workgroup pointed out that this often encompasses the path children take to “make meaning,” for understanding (reflection, curiosity, etc.), that you don’t see in other places in the document. The indicators within that section are important. However, there was a discussion about how this section is much more difficult to express. The workgroup pointed out that this is something that has been discussed in the field for years and has been embedded into the conversation, but it has been the area where individuals might struggle with the most. It is so interrelated to the other sections, it might be important to use the call-out boxes to link this to other domains to an “Approaches” domain.

In addition to wanting to make a deliberate decision about this, we want to avoid making an assumption about how they will be used in the field. We want to make this as useful as possible and explain the nuances of infant-toddler development as cleanly as possible.

Consensus seemed to be around separating the Social and Emotional sections and an emerging consensus to include an Approaches to Learning section.

b. Age Groupings

Discussion around the age groupings included examples of the newborn section (to either 3 or 4 months) and states that have overlapping age-brackets. Workgroup pointed out the need, within this section, for a “premature babies.” Reference was made to California’s newborn section and North Carolina’s image showing the overlap of age brackets.

Various approaches to the age groupings exists among the other states. The workgroup pointed to Emde’s bio-behavioral shifts as a possible framework for the age groupings for Illinois’ early learning guidelines. These were discussed as both discrete and flexible enough to be useful in this context. In summary, the bio-behavioral framework points to a shift at 2 months, 7-9 months, 12 months, and 18 months. During these times, physically a child has emerging abilities that coincide with social-emotional development as well. Discussion that

this approach would give a little more depth to the earlier months, particularly useful for home visitors and those working with children before they are ever in a center.

In addition, the workgroup highlighted the different approaches to content within age-brackets, whether indicators are used as “point in time” or “emerging skills.” Discussion of this topic will continue at future meetings. Also, it was pointed out that this area should align with other systems used, as to not confuse or contradict the tools currently relied on by practitioners. The Zero to Three recommendations to states developing early learning guidelines was referenced, in terms of the suggestions on the number of brackets (not too few, not too many) and the need to consider alignment.

Consensus among the workgroup to refer to Emde’s bio-behavioral framework and return to this conversation at the next meeting. Also, consensus was reached on having one age-bracket framework for the entire document.

c. Document Purpose/Complexity of Document

At previous meetings, we had discussed the vision document. It is the core of the work at this point, and it will continue to be distributed at each meeting.

We began the conversation about target audience at the last meeting, recognizing that there may not be a single document that is application across the multiple settings that have been discussed. It may be necessary for us to have a “source document,” broad enough to meet a variety of needs in a variety of settings. From there, we may create the other documents that are more targeted and tied back to the source document. The level of the language complexity in the document is driven by the audience. The workgroup discussed the need for very accessible language in the document to address a variety of those who may use it.

The workgroup discussed the need to focus on training and what might be most relevant for trainers, so this document can be useful in moving the field along. Although, we don’t want to develop this specifically for trainers, other states have talked about the importance to keeping training in mind to facilitate smooth transition into implementation. In addition, how to engage families more deliberately through these guidelines is something the workgroup would like to continue to be deliberate about.

IV. Wrap-Up and Next Steps

During the next meeting, we will further solidifying the framework and organization of this document. Both specific workgroup format and a technical writer are being explored to develop the specific content and will continue to be discussed at the next meeting. In addition, we are at the initial stages of thinking about a statewide summit for the fall as an opportunity to solicit feedback from stakeholder groups.

There seemed to be the following areas of consensus during the meeting:

- ***Separating the Social and Emotional sections and an emerging consensus to include an Approaches to Learning section.***
- ***Refer to Emde’s bio-behavioral framework and return to this conversation at the next meeting.***
- ***Having one age-bracket framework for the entire document.***

