



## Early Learning Standards 101 and The Importance of Play

Last month we summarized all of the PA Early Learning Standards. This month we feature one standard: Approaches to Learning. This standard deals with differences in the ways children learn. All children need to feel comfortable as they learn and become successful. It's important to know that not all children learn in the same way. Teachers can help children to feel successful by being supportive of the differences in the ways children learn. Children are encouraged to try new things and to be persistent in finishing projects.

Some goals within this area include

- Choosing to participate in a variety of experiences
- Making independent choices
- Showing persistence in completing tasks
- Finding more than one solution to a problem
- Asking for help when encountering a problem

Just like children learn in a variety of different ways, they enjoy playing in different ways. Make sure to offer different types of play to your child.

Here are just a few suggestions:

- Puzzles or blocks at a small table
- Cars and trucks on playmats on the floor
- Art projects like painting or drawing using an easel
- Pretend play using a kitchen, tool, or dress-up set
- Sensory play involving sand and water



Some other ideas you can try to involve your child in different types of play:

- Make sure to provide new materials and experiences for your child - this could be a new toy or a trip to the museum or science center.
- Ask open-ended questions (questions which can't be answered with yes/no) to help your child extend his play.
- Provide time for your child to play - not every moment of the day needs to be scheduled.

Make sure to check out next month's issue of the DART Board to read about the featured Early Learning Standard.

Sources: "Parents Corner" created by Sue Vandervort, DART Preschool Service Coordinator. "Focus on Health and Safety" created by Cindy Callaghan, DART Service Coordinator for Physical Health with information from [http://www.medpagetoday.com/EmergencyMedicine/EmergencyMedicine/153892?userid=163963&impressionId=1249535718238&utm\\_source=mSpoke&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=DailyHeadlines&utm\\_content=Group](http://www.medpagetoday.com/EmergencyMedicine/EmergencyMedicine/153892?userid=163963&impressionId=1249535718238&utm_source=mSpoke&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=DailyHeadlines&utm_content=Group)  
"Early Learning Standards and The Importance of Play" information provided by PDE and DPW "Halloween Safety Tips" information from <http://www.sosnet.com/safety/halloween.tip.html>. "Involve your preschooler in service to others" and "Are you helping to develop your child's creativity?" articles reprinted from the October 2005 issue of *Parents make the difference! E. Childhood Edition newsletter*.

## Halloween Safety Tips

Halloween is just around the corner. If you plan to have your child trick-or-treat, here are some important safety tips:

*For Trick-or-Treaters*

- Carry a flashlight
- Walk, don't run
- Only go to houses that are lit
- Stay away from and don't pet animals that you don't know



*For Parents*

- Stay with your young child at all times
- Look for a costume made of flame-retardant material
- Carefully inspect candy before letting your child eat any of it

## Involve Your Preschooler in Service to Others

Preschoolers are ready to begin doing nice things for other people. At this age, they may think of doing nice things for others only so they can get something in return. Helping out still provides practice and prepares your child for a future stage of development.

Encourage your child to:

- Draw pictures for a family member or neighbor. Put these in an envelope and address them. Let your child put the stamp on the envelope and mail it.
- Look for gently used toys she doesn't play with anymore. Put them in a bag and take them to a donation point together.
- Help make cookies for a new neighbor or favorite teacher. Deliver them together.



## Are You Helping to Develop Your Child's Creativity?

Creative children explore new ways of thinking and solving problems. Take this quiz to see if you're unleashing your child's creativity. Answer yes or no.



- \_\_\_ 1. I allow plenty of down time so my child can invent games and choose his own activities.
- \_\_\_ 2. I keep art books and supplies on hand. We look at the pictures he creates together.
- \_\_\_ 3. I choose toys that do more than one thing, such as building blocks with letters.
- \_\_\_ 4. I notice and nurture what my child naturally leans toward. If he bangs on the family piano, for example, I take him to an outdoor concert.
- \_\_\_ 5. I don't interrupt my child's daydreaming.

**How well are you doing?** Each yes answer means you are helping your child to become more creative. If you answered no, try that idea from the quiz.