

Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development describes how children use their senses, bodies, and movement to explore the world, participate in daily routines, care for themselves, and stay safe. From birth through age five, children are learning to:

- Notice and respond to sensory information
- Understand how their bodies move through space
- Build strength, balance, coordination, and control
- Use their hands and fingers with increasing skill
- Participate in health, safety, nutrition, and self-care routines

These skills grow through responsive caregiving, active play, movement, sensory exploration, daily routines, and safe opportunities to practice using the body in meaningful ways.

Children develop perceptual, motor, and physical skills at different rates and in different ways. Children may show growth through:

- Looking
- Listening
- Reaching
- Grasping
- Moving
- Climbing
- Balancing
- Feeding
- Dressing
- Using tools
- Exploring textures
- Responding to routines
- Active play
- Using adapted materials and supports

Inside This Learning and Development Area

This area includes four strands and 12 learning goals. The table below highlights what children are learning in this area and how adults can support that learning through warm relationships, responsive interactions, everyday routines, play, movement, and meaningful experiences.

Strand	Children are learning to...	Adults support learning by...
Sensory and Perception Organization	Notice, respond to, and make sense of sensory information, body position, movement, people, materials, and the environment.	Offering sensory-rich experiences, observing children's cues, adapting materials and environments, and helping children feel safe, regulated, and ready to participate.
Gross Motor	Move their bodies with increasing strength, balance, coordination, body control, and confidence during play, exploration, and routines.	Providing safe spaces, varied surfaces, outdoor play, movement games, and repeated opportunities to crawl, walk, run, climb, jump, balance, dance, and try safe physical challenges.
Fine Motor	Use hands, fingers, eyes, and tools with increasing coordination and control to explore, play, communicate, create, and participate in routines.	Offering materials such as blocks, utensils, writing tools, art materials, fasteners, loose parts, sensory materials, and adapted tools that support grasp, coordination, and control.
Health, Safety, and Nutrition	Participate in health, safety, nutrition, self-care, and personal safety routines with growing responsibility and support as needed.	Modeling and practicing routines such as handwashing, dressing, feeding, rest, safe movement, asking for help, and caring for the body with calm, consistent support.

Play Across Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

The play continuum shows how children build perceptual, motor, and physical skills through a balance of child-directed, shared, and adult-supported play experiences. Across the continuum, children have opportunities to move, climb, balance, carry, build, dig, dance, use tools, explore textures, practice self-care, try safe challenges, and build confidence using their senses and bodies.



In Focus: Outdoor Play Supports Physical Development

Outdoor play gives children important opportunities to move their bodies, practice motor skills, and build healthy movement habits. When children walk, run, climb, balance, jump, dig, carry, throw, and explore open spaces, they use large muscles, coordinate movement, and practice body control in meaningful ways.

Outdoor play can support physical activity, reduce time spent sitting still, and provide repeated opportunities for balance, coordination, fine motor control, sensory exploration, and confidence. Adults support physical development outdoors by providing regular opportunities for active play, offering safe and varied spaces to move, and adapting materials and environments so all children can participate.

Outdoor spaces can include open areas for running, stable and varied surfaces for balancing, loose parts for carrying and building, and natural materials such as sticks, leaves, rocks, sand, mud, or snow for hands-on exploration. These experiences help children practice gross motor skills, fine motor skills, body awareness, sensory processing, and safe participation in real and meaningful ways.

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 1. Sensory and Perception Organization**

Goal 1. Child uses sensory information to understand the body, interact with the environment, and adjust actions with increasing coordination and support as needed.

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Uses sensory information, such as sight, sound, touch, and movement, to respond to people and objects with adult support.	Uses sensory experiences to explore and interact with people, objects, and the environment with adult support.	Uses sensory information to guide movement and explore materials and environments with increasing coordination.	Uses information from multiple senses to adjust movements and actions during play and daily activities, with occasional adult support.	Integrates sensory information across senses to plan, adjust, and carry out movements and actions in a variety of environments, with supports or adaptations as needed.
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Looks toward lights, faces, moving objects, or other visual information. • Responds to sounds, voices, touch, movement, or routines by turning, quieting, moving, or changing body position. • Explores objects, materials, or body movements using hands, mouth, eyes, body, or other senses.	• Explores objects or materials by touching, shaking, banging, mouthing, looking, listening, or moving them. • Responds to sensory cues during routines, transitions, play, or caregiving. • Moves toward, away from, or adjusts actions in response to sensory input such as sound, texture, movement, or visual information.	• Uses sensory feedback to guide actions, such as adjusting grip, force, movement, or body position. • Explores materials in different ways, such as squeezing, pouring, stacking, climbing, pushing, pulling, or carrying. • Shows awareness of body in space during active play, movement, routines, or exploration.	• Adjusts movements based on sensory feedback, such as walking carefully on uneven surfaces or changing pressure when using materials. • Uses information from multiple senses to complete tasks, participate in play, or move through routines. • Participates in activities that require balance, coordination, body awareness, and adjustment of actions.	• Uses sensory information across senses to plan, adjust, and carry out movements in varied environments with supports or adaptations as needed. • Uses sensory feedback to refine actions, such as changing speed, pressure, force, balance, or direction. • Coordinates body position, movement, and senses during complex play, routines, problem-solving, or physical activities.
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide safe sensory experiences with varied textures, sounds, sights, movement, positions, and materials. • Use consistent sensory cues, such as voice, touch, gestures, songs, visuals, objects, and routines, to support participation and transitions. • Position materials and arrange spaces so children can reach, notice, explore, move toward, move away, and try different actions with support as needed. • Narrate sensory experiences with simple language, such as what children see, hear, touch, feel, move, or notice. • Offer hands-on, active, multi-sensory play with materials that invite repeated exploration, varied force, coordination, and different ways of interacting.			• Provide varied environments, surfaces, materials, and movement opportunities that invite balance, coordination, planning, and adjustment. • Offer activities that require children to coordinate information across senses, such as building, obstacle courses, art, music, outdoor play, and movement games. • Support children in adjusting actions when challenges arise by modeling, prompting, adapting materials, or offering choices. • Provide movement and problem-solving experiences that support persistence, body awareness, and safe participation with supports or adaptations as needed.	

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 1. Sensory and Perception Organization****Goal 2. Child uses sensory information and body awareness to understand how the body relates to the environment.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Responds to sounds and sights by turning or moving the body to take in information.	Shows awareness of new challenges or dangers in the environment while moving.	Shows awareness of body size and how the body fits through openings and spaces.	Children continue to build sensory awareness and body awareness as they grow. They begin by noticing how their bodies fit in familiar spaces. Over time, they adjust their movement, position, and actions in different spaces and situations. These skills support spatial awareness, coordination, and safe movement across activities and settings.	
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Turns head, eyes, or body toward a voice, sound, movement, person, object, or visual event. • Repositions the body to better see, hear, or respond to people, objects, or what is happening nearby. • Shows alertness to changes in the environment through looking, pausing, shifting attention, or moving toward familiar sensory cues.	• Pauses, slows down, changes direction, or looks to an adult when approaching a drop-off, obstacle, unfamiliar surface, or new space. • Tests a surface, pathway, or challenge with body position, balance, or movement before continuing. • Moves carefully around challenges in the environment with support as needed.	• Moves through openings, around furniture, or into spaces with growing awareness of body size. • Adjusts body position by turning, bending, ducking, squeezing, climbing, crawling, or moving around spaces. • Uses trial and adjustment to figure out how the body fits in play spaces, openings, and around objects.		
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide calm, responsive interactions and meaningful sensory cues that invite children to notice, turn, reorient, and adjust their bodies. • Position interesting people, objects, and materials within view and reach, and allow time for children to notice, respond, and move before changing the activity. • Offer safe opportunities to explore varied surfaces, ramps, pathways, openings, tunnels, boxes, and movement spaces with close supervision. • Use simple spatial and movement words during play and routines, such as “stop,” “careful,” “edge,” “up,” “down,” “around,” “fit,” “through,” “under,” “between,” “too big,” and “too small.” • Stay nearby during movement exploration, observe safety, and offer calm guidance, modeling, support, or adaptations as needed.				

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 1. Sensory and Perception Organization****Goal 3. Child uses perceptual information to direct actions, experiences, and interactions with objects and people.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Adjusts balance and movement as the body grows and moves with increasing intention and purpose.	Uses perceptual information to plan movement, avoid obstacles, and move with increasing intention and purpose.	Coordinates information and motor actions to take part in play and daily routines.	Shows emerging awareness of body, space, and objects and may need adult support to coordinate movements and interactions.	Shows increasing awareness of body, space, and objects to support more coordinated movement and interaction.
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Adjusts body position to reach, roll, sit, or move toward people, objects, or interesting materials. • Shifts weight, balance, or movement as body control increases. • Moves with growing purpose toward a desired toy, person, place, sound, or visual cue.	• Pauses, looks, changes direction, or adjusts path to move around objects, people, furniture, or changes in level. • Adjusts speed, balance, or movement when moving across different spaces, surfaces, or simple obstacles. • Uses vision and body control together when climbing, walking, crawling, reaching, or moving toward a desired object or place.	• Joins songs, finger plays, movement games, or action routines with movements that match words, rhythm, or familiar cues. • Uses vision, touch, and movement together during self-care routines, play, and simple tasks. • Adjusts body and hand movements to carry, place, pour, climb, fit, use, or move objects during activities.	• Moves with growing awareness of personal space during play, routines, and group activities. • Adjusts body position to avoid bumping into people, furniture, or materials with reminders or support as needed. • Participates in games or tasks that require moving in relation to objects, tools, peers, or shared space.	• Moves with greater control and awareness around people, objects, materials, boundaries, and shared spaces. • Adjusts body movements to fit the space, activity, group setting, or changing environment. • Coordinates actions with others during games, movement activities, routines, and shared tasks.
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide safe, open spaces with varied positions, surfaces, pathways, and simple obstacles for movement, reaching, rolling, crawling, climbing, and balance practice. • Place interesting objects and materials nearby to encourage purposeful movement, balance adjustments, and coordination. • Allow children time to look, plan, move, repeat, and adjust actions without rushing them. • Use songs, movement games, action routines, and self-care tasks that combine looking, listening, touching, and moving. • Stay nearby to support safe exploration while helping children notice options, make movement choices, and use support or adaptations as needed.			• Use clear language, gestures, visual cues, and demonstrations about body position, direction, distance, space, and movement during routines and play. • Provide games, group activities, movement experiences, and daily routines that support awareness of self, others, objects, and shared space. • Arrange environments to reduce crowding and allow children to move, carry, place, build, dance, climb, and use materials with greater success. • Model how to move safely and respectfully around people, materials, tools, and shared spaces. • Support children in problem-solving where to move, how to fit, and how to coordinate actions in space with guidance, modeling, or adaptations as needed.	

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 1. Sensory and Perception Organization****Goal 4. Child uses perceptual information to understand objects, experiences, and interactions.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Uses perceptual information to understand objects and recognize differences in texture and how things feel.	Uses perceptual information to match and associate objects by their properties during play.	Uses perceptual information to observe actions and outcomes to understand cause-and-effect relationships in daily routines.	Children continue to use perceptual information to explore and make sense of objects and experiences as they grow. They begin by noticing properties, relationships, and cause and effect in familiar routines. Over time, they use this understanding to make sense of new situations, predict what might happen, and connect ideas across experiences. These skills build the foundation for reasoning, problem-solving, and learning across domains.	
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Looks at, touches, mouths, holds, turns, pats, squeezes, or rubs objects to learn what they are like. • Responds differently to objects with different textures, shapes, sizes, weights, sounds, or visual qualities. • Uses sight, touch, mouth, movement, or repeated exploration to gather information about familiar objects and materials.	• Matches, pairs, selects, or uses objects that go together during play or routines. • Uses objects in ways that show awareness of their properties or familiar purpose, such as feeding a doll with a bottle. • Groups or associates materials by look, feel, shape, size, sound, weight, function, or how they are used together.	• Watches what others do and connects actions with what happens next. • Anticipates familiar outcomes in routines, such as getting shoes before going outside or bringing a dish before snack time. • Repeats or changes actions based on what happened before and notices the result.		
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide safe objects and materials with varied textures, shapes, sizes, weights, sounds, visual qualities, and familiar uses. • Give children repeated opportunities to look at, touch, hold, mouth, move, compare, sort, match, pair, and use objects safely. • Narrate sensory qualities, relationships, actions, and outcomes using simple words, such as “soft,” “rough,” “smooth,” “light,” “bumpy,” “same,” “different,” “together,” “next,” and “again.” • Provide predictable routines and meaningful object sets, such as cups and spoons, dolls and bottles, lids and containers, or shoes and coats, so children can notice the relationships between them and anticipate what comes next. • Join children’s play by modeling simple associations, making cause-and-effect visible, and encouraging children to repeat actions, test ideas, and notice what happened.				

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 2. Gross Motor****Goal 1. Child shows effective and efficient use of large muscles to explore the environment.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Uses each new posture to explore the environment in new ways.	Uses body position, balance, and movement to explore and examine materials, activities, and spaces.	Uses a variety of increasingly complex movements, body positions, and postures in indoor and outdoor play.	Children continue to use body position, balance, and movement to explore their environment as they grow. They begin by using different movements in familiar play. Over time, they choose, combine, and adjust movements to fit different activities, spaces, and challenges. These skills build the foundation for coordinated movement and participation in more complex physical, play, and daily experiences.	
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Uses new positions, such as lifting head, rolling, sitting, or reaching, to see, explore, and interact with people, objects, and space. • Changes body position to get a better view of materials, people, or activity nearby. • Repeats movements in new positions to learn what the body can do and to explore the environment in new ways.	• Moves through spaces to get closer to people, materials, or activities of interest. • Uses body position, balance, and movement, such as walking, crawling, squatting, kneeling, climbing, or reaching, to explore materials and surroundings. • Adjusts movement to examine objects, equipment, natural features, or play spaces from different angles indoors and outdoors.	• Uses running, climbing, squatting, kneeling, stretching, sitting, pushing, pulling, carrying, dancing, or floor play during indoor and outdoor activities. • Changes body position and movement to take part in active play, quiet play, routines, pretend play, and exploration. • Chooses body positions and movements that help complete a task, use materials, or join an activity.		
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide safe floor time, open spaces, varied surfaces, and supervised opportunities for children to explore different positions and movements. • Place interesting objects and materials nearby, at different heights, and in different locations so children are motivated to look, reach, roll, sit, crawl, climb, walk, and explore. • Allow time for children to practice new postures and movements without over-positioning, rushing, or taking over. • Stay nearby to support safe exploration and risk-taking while children make movement choices and use support or adaptations as needed. • Offer daily indoor and outdoor experiences that encourage climbing, carrying, pushing, pulling, building, dancing, floor play, quiet play, and active movement in ways that support accessible participation.				

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 2. Gross Motor****Goal 2. Child shows control, strength, and coordination in the use of large muscles for movement and position.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Explores new body positions and movements, including rolling, sitting, crawling, and kicking or hitting objects to reach goals.	Moves from crawling to cruising to walking and develops new coordination to manage changing surfaces.	Gains control of different postures and movements, including stooping, standing, running, and jumping.	Balances for short periods with adult support and performs some jumping, hopping, and other physical skills.	Balances for longer periods while still or moving and shows coordinated movement in more complex physical activities.
Examples of Children's Observable Behaviors				
• Rolls, scoots, sits, reaches, kicks, swipes, bats, or moves into new positions during play and routines. • Uses growing control of head, trunk, arms, and legs to explore people, space, objects, and materials. • Repeats movements to reach a goal, such as getting closer to an object or making a toy move.	• Crawls, cruises, stands, or walks with growing control and support as needed. • Moves across different surfaces, such as rugs, grass, mats, low steps, or outdoor areas, with supervision and support as needed. • Changes speed, body position, balance, or movement when practicing new mobility skills.	• Moves between positions such as sitting, standing, squatting, stooping, climbing, or stepping over objects. • Runs, climbs, kicks, jumps, pushes, pulls, or carries objects with growing control. • Participates in active play that builds strength, balance, coordination, and movement variety.	• Balances briefly while standing still or moving with support as needed. • Jumps, hops, climbs, pedals, or participates in other movement activities with emerging coordination. • Uses increasing body control during games, movement activities, outdoor play, and short periods of active play.	• Balances for longer periods while standing still, moving, or crossing a line, beam, uneven surface, or pathway. • Shows growing coordination in running, hopping, jumping, climbing, pedaling, and moving between actions. • Participates in more complex and sustained movement activities with strength, stamina, coordination, and support or adaptations as needed.
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide safe floor time, open spaces, varied surfaces, and supervised opportunities for children to roll, reach, sit, pivot, crawl, cruise, stand, walk, climb, jump, and balance. • Place interesting people, toys, and materials nearby to encourage purposeful movement and repeated practice. • Offer sturdy furniture, push toys, stable surfaces, paths, ramps, steps, and open areas that support emerging mobility and movement variety. • Stay close, encourage effort, and offer support while allowing children time and space to practice emerging movement skills without over-positioning or rushing. • Build movement into daily routines, songs, games, obstacle courses, indoor play, and outdoor play so children can practice strength, balance, and coordination often.			• Provide regular opportunities for children to practice balancing, jumping, hopping, climbing, pedaling, running, and coordinated movement in safe ways. • Offer varied indoor and outdoor environments with equipment, lines, beams, stepping stones, open spaces, and movement games that support gross motor challenges. • Encourage children to try new physical challenges while allowing for uneven or developing performance. • Model and reinforce safe body control, awareness of space, persistence, and care for others during physical play. • Adapt activities so children can build coordination, confidence, strength, and stamina at their own pace.	

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 3. Fine Motor****Goal 1. Child adjusts reach and grasp to use tools.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Uses increasingly refined grasps that match the task.	Uses simple tools to pull distant objects closer.	Adjusts grasp to use different tools for different purposes.	Children continue to build on early grasp and hand-control skills as they grow. They begin by using tools with emerging control. Over time, they choose, adjust, and coordinate tools for different purposes and tasks. These skills support precision, efficiency, and participation in writing, creating, building, and self-care.	
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Picks up, holds, releases, stacks, places, or explores objects with growing control. • Uses a whole-hand grasp, finger grasp, or different hand movements depending on the material, object, or task. • Adjusts grasp when exploring toys, food, materials, or simple objects during play and routines.	• Uses a stick, string, scoop, branch, or other simple tool to move, reach, pull, or retrieve an object. • Tries different hand movements to make a tool work during play, sensory exploration, outdoor play, or problem-solving. • Chooses or uses a simple tool to solve a problem with support as needed.	• Holds and uses tools such as spoons, markers, paintbrushes, scissors, tongs, scoops, or self-care tools in ways that fit the task. • Adjusts hand position, grip, force, or movement when switching between tools and materials. • Chooses and uses tools during play, art, meals, building, sensory play, or routines with growing control and purpose.		
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide safe materials of different sizes, shapes, textures, weights, and purposes to encourage varied grasps and hand movements. • Offer daily opportunities to pick up, hold, release, stack, place, scoop, pull, carry, and use objects during play and routines. • Provide simple tools such as scoops, pull toys, sticks, rakes, tongs, strings, spoons, markers, paintbrushes, and self-care tools. • Model how tools can be held and used to reach, pull, move, retrieve, create, eat, build, or care for self. • Give children time to experiment with tools while staying nearby to offer modeling, safety support, encouragement, or adaptations as needed.				

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 3. Fine Motor****Goal 2. Child uses hands for exploration, play, and daily routines.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Uses single actions to explore the shape, size, texture, or weight of objects.	Explores properties of objects and materials using different hand actions.	Plans how to use hands for different activities and self-care routines.	Children continue to build on early hand-use skills as they grow. They begin by exploring objects and materials through actions such as reaching, grasping, releasing, turning, stacking, or pulling. Over time, they plan, coordinate, and refine hand movements across activities and routines. These skills build the foundation for participation, problem-solving, building, creating, and self-care.	
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Turns, pats, shakes, drops, pushes, mouths, or handles objects to explore what they are like. • Looks at, feels, holds, or moves objects of different shapes, sizes, textures, or weights. • Repeats hand actions with objects to notice how they move, feel, sound, or change.	• Pulls, pokes, twists, turns, lifts, opens, presses, or moves objects to find out what they do. • Uses more than one hand action to examine, compare, or change materials. • Gestures to, shows, turns pages, moves parts, or explores simple objects using hands and eyes together.	• Chooses hand actions that fit a task, such as stacking, connecting, scooping, drawing, opening, buttoning, or feeding. • Uses hands purposefully during building, art, sensory play, meals, self-care routines, and everyday tasks. • Tries a sequence of hand actions to carry out a plan, such as building something, using materials, or getting dressed.		
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide safe objects and materials that vary in shape, size, texture, weight, movement, and purpose for children to explore with their hands. • Place objects within reach and allow time for children to repeat actions such as turning, dropping, patting, shaking, pulling, pressing, opening, and twisting. • Offer books, containers, knobs, sensory materials, blocks, puzzles, crayons, brushes, spoons, dressing items, and everyday objects that invite varied hand use. • Name actions and properties as children explore, such as “open,” “twist,” “soft,” “heavy,” “round,” “rough,” “smooth,” and “bumpy.” • Break routines and activities into manageable steps, model hand actions when helpful, and give children time to try with support or adaptations as needed.				

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 3. Fine Motor****Goal 3. Child coordinates hand and eye movements with increasing control, strength, and coordination of small muscles.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Coordinates hands and eyes when reaching for and holding stable or moving objects.	Uses hand-eye coordination for more complex actions such as releasing, stacking, and picking up small objects.	Uses hand-eye coordination during routines, play, and activities.	Performs simple hand-eye tasks such as drawing shapes and cutting paper and is still developing precision in more complex tasks.	Performs more complex hand-eye tasks with growing precision and control.
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Reaches toward a nearby toy, face, object, or moving material with increasing accuracy. • Tracks an object with eyes and reaches, swipes, pats, or bats toward it during play. • Grasps, holds, or brings hands or objects toward the mouth while visually attending to them.	• Releases objects into a container, onto a surface, or into a space with purpose. • Stacks blocks, cups, rings, or other objects with growing control. • Uses hands and eyes together to pick up, place, fill, dump, match, or move materials.	• Uses hands-eye coordination during self-help routines such as dressing, feeding, washing, or cleanup. • Completes simple puzzles, places pieces, matches shapes, or uses tools with growing accuracy. • Paints, scribbles, stacks, pours, scoops, moves, or uses materials to complete familiar play and routine tasks.	• Draws simple shapes, lines, marks, or pictures with growing control. • Uses scissors, beads, puzzles, construction materials, or classroom tools with support as needed. • Shows growing control in tasks that require aiming, placing, cutting, tracing, aligning, or coordinating materials.	• Cuts along lines or around simple shapes with growing accuracy, or uses adapted tools or materials to participate in cutting or similar fine-motor tasks. • Draws letter-like forms, detailed pictures, shapes, or designs with increasing control. • Adjusts hand movements to improve accuracy during writing, drawing, building, cutting, tool use, or careful placement tasks.
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide safe objects and materials of different sizes, textures, shapes, weights, and purposes within easy reach. • Position toys and materials so children can see, track, reach, grasp, hold, release, place, stack, fill, dump, and match with growing success. • Offer daily opportunities to use hand-eye coordination during play, routines, meals, self-help tasks, and sensory exploration. • Model simple actions such as putting in, taking out, stacking, matching, scooping, pouring, scribbling, and using tools or materials. • Break tasks into manageable parts and support children’s repeated practice without taking over, adapting materials as needed.			• Provide regular opportunities for drawing, cutting, building, tracing, lacing, puzzles, tool use, and careful placement across routines and activities. • Offer materials that support increasing precision, such as crayons, markers, scissors, beads, puzzles, manipulatives, varied drawing tools, and adapted tools. • Model how to hold, position, and use materials safely and effectively, then allow time for practice. • Encourage children to slow down, adjust movements, try again, and notice what helps when accuracy matters. • Support developing control through meaningful tasks, projects, play, self-care, and classroom routines rather than isolated drills.	

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 4. Health, Safety, and Nutrition****Goal 1. Child shows healthy behaviors, personal hygiene, and self-care skills with growing responsibility and support as needed.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Responds to familiar caregiving routines such as feeding, diapering, washing, and dressing with growing awareness and adult support.	Participates in healthy care routines with adult guidance, familiar cues, and support as needed.	Participates in healthy care routines with growing responsibility and support that matches the child, routine, and setting.	Shows awareness of personal hygiene and self-care routines and needs adult guidance to do them regularly.	Takes increasing responsibility for personal hygiene and self-care skills in familiar routines with support, reminders, or adult guidance as needed.
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Responds to familiar caregiving routines such as diapering, feeding, washing, dressing, or comforting with growing awareness. • Anticipates parts of daily care routines through body movements, attention, expressions, or repeated responses. • Participates in simple ways during caregiving, such as lifting arms, opening mouth, calming, looking toward materials, or responding to adult support.	• Shows awareness that a self-care routine is about to happen and begins to participate with adult support. • Cooperates during handwashing, wiping, brushing teeth, dressing, eating, or drinking with familiar cues and help as needed. • Holds or uses self-care items, such as a toothbrush, washcloth, spoon, cup, clothing, or towel, with support.	• Participates in routines such as handwashing, drinking from a cup, brushing teeth, wiping face, toileting, dressing, cleanup, or getting ready to go outside with adult guidance and support as needed. • Uses familiar self-care tools with increasing control during routines, pretend play, transitions, and daily care. • Follows parts of familiar care routines with support that matches the child, routine, family expectations, and setting.	• Tells about, shows, or participates in routines that support health and hygiene, such as washing hands before eating, after toileting, or after outdoor play. • Uses familiar self-care tools and routines with adult reminders, guidance, supervision, or support as needed. • Begins to notice when self-care is needed, such as wiping nose, washing hands, adjusting clothing, or getting ready for outdoor exploration.	• Completes some hygiene and self-care tasks in familiar routines with support that matches the child, family expectations, and setting. • Recognizes when self-care is needed and takes action or seeks help. • Participates more consistently in routines such as handwashing, toileting, dressing, using utensils, brushing teeth, or wiping nose with support as needed.
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Use warm, predictable caregiving routines that support trust, comfort, participation, and connection. • Narrate daily care routines with simple words, gestures, songs, visuals, home-language cues, or familiar objects so children can anticipate what happens next. • Watch for and respond to children’s cues during feeding, diapering, washing, dressing, toileting, and other care routines. • Invite children to participate in simple ways, such as reaching, lifting arms, holding materials, washing, wiping, drinking, using utensils, or helping with a step.			• Talk about why self-care and hygiene routines are important, using everyday language and honoring family practices. • Use visual schedules, reminders, songs, home-language cues, accessible materials, and consistent expectations to support regular participation. • Encourage children to notice self-care needs, take next steps, seek help, and build healthy habits.	

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 4. Health, Safety, and Nutrition****Goal 2. Child shows increasing interest in and develops healthy eating habits and nutritious food choices.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Responds to feeding routines with growing awareness, comfort, and engagement with adult support.	Explores familiar and new foods during responsive feeding routines with adult support.	Explores familiar and new foods during responsive feeding routines with adult support, family input, and respect food practices.	Shows basic understanding that food supports healthy growth and makes healthy eating choices with adult support.	Shows increasing understanding of how food and water help the body grow, move, and stay healthy and makes nutritious choices with adult support, modeling, familiar routines, and opportunities for participation.
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Responds to feeding routines with growing awareness, comfort, and engagement. • Shows interest in feeding by looking toward food, bottle, breast, spoon, cup, or caregiver during meals. • Opens mouth, reaches, leans, shifts attention, or shows preferences during familiar feeding interactions.	• Looks at, touches, smells, tastes, reaches for, or accepts a new food when it is offered. • Watches others eat familiar or new foods and shows curiosity about them. • Tries small amounts of a new food or returns to a food after first exploring or refusing it.	• Explores familiar and new nutritious foods through looking, touching, smelling, tasting, or eating during responsive mealtime routines. • Tries nutritious foods when offered more than once and eats a greater variety of foods over time. • Participates in simple mealtime choices, such as choosing between available nutritious foods, with adult guidance and family input.	• Talks about food and water as helping the body grow, stay strong, move, or have energy. • Identifies or chooses some nutritious foods during meals, snacks, pretend play, or other food experiences with adult support. • Participates in conversations, routines, or choices about why the body needs food and water.	• Explains in simple ways how food and water help the body grow, move, and stay healthy. • Makes nutritious food choices in familiar routines with adult support, modeling, family input, and opportunities to choose among available options. • Talks about eating different kinds of foods, including familiar family foods, during meals, snacks, gardening, pretend cooking, or food-related experiences.
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Use calm, responsive feeding routines that support trust, comfort, engagement, and participation. • Watch for and respond to children’s hunger, fullness, interest, refusal, sensory responses, and feeding cues. • Offer new nutritious foods alongside familiar foods in relaxed, predictable mealtime routines without pressure, forcing, or bribing. • Encourage food exploration through looking, touching, smelling, tasting, and repeated exposure while respecting children’s cues. • Coordinate with families around feeding practices, preferences, routines, foods, and messages about eating.			• Talk about how food and water help the body grow, move, have energy, and stay healthy using simple, everyday language. • Offer nutritious choices during meals and snacks and guide children’s choices without labeling foods as “good” or “bad.” • Involve children in food-related routines such as choosing, serving, noticing, talking about, growing, preparing, or pretend cooking with foods. • Partner with families to support responsive nutrition messages, familiar foods and food practices, and accessible participation in food routines.	

Learning and Development Area. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development (PMP)**Strand 4. Health, Safety, and Nutrition****Goal 3. Child uses safe behaviors and shows knowledge of personal safety practices and routines with growing responsibility and support as needed.**

Birth to 9 months	8 to 18 months	16 to 36 months	3–4 years	4–5 years
Responds to adult actions, routines, and environments that provide safety, comfort, and protection.	Begins to respond to familiar safety words, gestures, routines, and adult redirection in simple situations.	Accepts adult guidance in unsafe situations and shows growing awareness of safe and unsafe behaviors.	Shows awareness of growing personal safety practices and routines and looks to adults for support in following them.	Follows familiar personal safety practices with growing consistency and seeks or accepts adult guidance for more complex, unfamiliar, or higher-risk situations.
Examples of Children’s Observable Behaviors				
• Responds to adult actions that provide safety, comfort, and protection during routines and play. • Calms, pauses, or shifts attention when a familiar adult picks up, redirects, holds securely, or moves them away from danger. • Shows growing awareness of familiar safety routines, such as being buckled, held securely, moved carefully, or comforted in unfamiliar situations.	• Pauses, looks toward, or moves closer to an adult when hearing a warning word, tone, gesture, or familiar safety cue. • Accepts redirection away from unsafe objects, places, or actions with adult support. • Participates in simple safety routines, such as holding a hand, waiting, staying near an adult, or using gentle touch.	• Stops, pauses, or changes behavior when an adult gives a safety reminder. • Accepts adult help in situations that may be unsafe, unfamiliar, or uncomfortable. • Shows awareness of simple safety practices, such as keeping small objects out of the mouth, staying near adults, using materials carefully, or choosing a safer action when redirected.	• Talks about, recognizes, or follows some personal safety rules and routines in classroom, outdoor, community, and nature-based settings with adult support. • Uses reminders to follow safety expectations during play, routines, transitions, group activities, and outdoor exploration. • Notices when a situation may require caution or adult assistance and looks to adults for help.	• Follows familiar personal safety practices in many situations using reminders, routines, or adult support as needed. • Adjusts behavior to match safety expectations in different settings, including group play, community spaces, transitions, outdoor exploration, and nature-based experiences. • Identifies when adult help is needed for more complex, unfamiliar, or higher-risk situations.
Examples of Supportive Strategies				
• Provide close supervision, safe spaces, consistent protection, and warm, responsive caregiving during routines, play, movement, and exploration. • Use simple, consistent safety words, gestures, signs, visuals, and routines, such as “stop,” “wait,” “gentle,” “hot,” “help,” or “stay close.” • Narrate safety actions briefly, such as “I’m moving this to keep you safe” or “Feet stay on the floor.” • Redirect children to safe alternatives while staying calm, nearby, and ready to offer support as needed. • Build simple safety routines into transitions, outdoor time, movement play, care routines, and exploration, and acknowledge children’s responses to safety guidance.			• Discuss and practice safety expectations during real routines such as lining up, cleanup, playground use, walks, water play, outdoor exploration, and community experiences. • Use visuals, modeling, gestures, role play, books, conversations, and reminders to support children in understanding and following safety practices. • Encourage children to ask for help or seek an adult when they are unsure what is safe. • Adapt safety routines, materials, expectations, and supports so all children can participate safely across settings.	