



# The Hawai'i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS)

## Supplemental Guides for Preschoolers

### Social Negotiation: Negotiators 48 months to Kindergarten Entry

This Guide was developed by the University of Hawai'i at Manoa Children's Center with support from the State of Hawai'i Executive Office on Early Learning and Hawai'i P-20 Partnerships for Education.



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### Social Negotiators: Negotiators 48 Months to Kindergarten Entry

The Hawai'i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) describes what young children, ages birth through five, typically should know and/or be able to do at different periods in their developmental progression. During this period the architecture of a child's brain and nervous system is under construction and this development becomes the foundation for learning in the school years. By understanding the HELDS benchmarks and how learning established in an earlier period is the basis for future learning, parents and caregivers can provide children with a strong foundation to become lifelong learners.

#### HELDS Supplemental Guides for Preschoolers

The HELDS Supplemental Guides for Preschoolers is a multi-part series that looks at three distinct periods of development roughly associated with age level. These periods are identified by a hallmark developmental purpose:

**Challenging Limits** (24 to 36 months), **Initiating Independence** (36 to 48 months), **Social Negotiation** (48 months to Kindergarten Entry). While these are not the only major aspects of development children address in a given period, they do serve to help illustrate the rapid growth and unique developmental needs of children during a particular period.

*The guides provide information on:*

- Typical preschooler behaviors within each of the HELDS domains, listed in approximate sequences of development;
- Specific ways in which caregivers can support development and learning; and
- Key preschooler outcomes that result from these supports.

Development is progressive, but children do not step through it in a constant, linear fashion. The age groupings noted here are for convenience in discussion and not intended to be hard definitions of developmental phases. Children move from one developmental phase to the next in their own time and in their own way. A 3½-year-old **Initiator** may still be demonstrating behaviors relating to the **Challenger** group and taking on behaviors relating to the **Negotiator** group.

Experienced caregivers understand this and tailor their practices according to individual needs. These guides provide a starting place for caregivers to reflect on the extent to which their current strategies, interactions, environments, and care plans support optimal individual development. While the examples listed are not exhaustive, they provide an overall picture of healthy development and quality caregiving. The domains noted are loosely defined. Skills and activities noted under a given domain could easily be applied to one or more other domains. They are provided only to give a framework for understanding and discussion.

#### Social Negotiation: Negotiators 48 Months to Kindergarten Entry

In recent years this age group has received the most focus as education reforms look at kindergarten readiness. In many respects, this age group is up for the challenge. Social negotiation requires a great deal of environmental awareness and understanding patterns of human behavior. Negotiators begin to understand and work with social hierarchy in groups that become more stable and consistent. Agreements need to be made, conflict needs to be managed, and a sense of social place and belonging needs to be developed on the child's own terms. Attempts to gain social leverage sometimes get expressed by phrases like, "If you don't let me, then you can't come to my birthday," or "You're not my friend anymore." Focus at this level shifts from interest in a particular activity to interest in who is working on the activity with you, paving the way for future collaboration.

There are no walls defining subjects, so the child is free to apply knowledge and experiences from social areas to traditional subjects like math, science and language arts. Everything is available. Negotiators are beginning to see how parts interact with each other to make up a whole. This entrance into concepts of cycles and systems is important to nurture. Negotiators are also thinking more critically and more symbolically. With appropriate supports, Negotiators can work meaningfully with models and mind maps. They can also use reflection to not only recall a project, process or investigation, but also think about how it could be done better next time or how the work could be extended or applied to something new.







