

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

## Supplemental Guides for Infants and Toddlers

### Building Security: Infants Birth – 8 Months



This Guide was developed by the University of Hawai'i Center on the Family, with support from the Hawai'i P20 Partnerships for Education. © 2013





# HELDS DOMAIN

## Physical Well-Being, Health and Motor Development

*This domain encompasses physical growth and maturation, including the ability to move and use the body. The infant rapidly builds large muscles, strength.*

### Examples of typical infant behaviors:



- Turns and/or lifts head
- Pushes, knocks or kicks objects
- Turns and rolls body to get into new position
- Grasps or reaches for objects or people
- Sits without support
- Rocks on hands and knees
- Scoots, creeps or crawls
- Attempts to feed self



### Examples of caregiver practices that support development:



- Provides ample tummy and floor time on different clean surfaces
- Places a variety of safe objects near the infant to encourage grasping and reaching
- Provides finger foods to encourage self-feeding once the infant is able to sit up without support
- Recognizes and responds to the infant's signals of physical needs

### These types of caregiver supports help infants to:



- Use body with intention
- Use and strengthen large muscles, e.g., neck, arms, and legs
- Use and strengthen small muscles, e.g., facial muscles, fingers, hands, and toes
- Develop eye-hand coordination





## Social and Emotional Development

*This domain includes the ability to regulate behaviors and emotions and to form healthy relationships. The infant uses relationships to develop a sense of self, security, and trust of others.*

- Is comforted by the caregiver's touch, smile, or voice
- Comforts self by sucking hand and fingers or by changing body position
- Uses different cries, expressions and body movements to communicate needs and emotions
- Is reassured by the presence of familiar people
- Participates in interactions with others, e.g., mimics others' facial expressions
- Responds to own name or image in a mirror
- May cry or cling to a caregiver in the presence of unfamiliar people or stress

- Provides consistent, predictable routines throughout the day.
- Uses physical affection, eye contact, a positive tone of voice, and smiles throughout the day to communicate security, warmth and affection
- Recognizes and responds quickly to the infant's different cues in order to address emotional needs
- Takes time daily to give each infant full uninterrupted attention
- Uses the infant's name and talks about the infant's family throughout the day
- Remains calm and uses a quiet voice when responding to challenging behaviors
- Uses words or familiar phrases from the infant's home language

- Feel secure
- Begin to self-soothe
- Build a sense of trust with important people
- Begin to recognize self as separate from others
- Build relationship with others

## Approaches to Learning

*This domain encompasses the processes that underlie learning. The infant develops and uses attention, memory, persistence, curiosity, and problem solving skills.*

- Uses the senses—sight, smell, touch, taste, and hearing—to observe and explore objects, people and places
- Remembers familiar smells, sounds, and sights
- Seeks out objects of interest
- Initiates interactions with people

- Provides ample space, time and materials for the infant to explore
- Stays near the infant, commenting on what infant may be thinking, wondering, or discovering
- Allows the infant time to stay with a simple task or try to solve a problem
- Provides related materials or activities to build on the infant's interests
- Provides consistent and predictable routines to help the infant anticipate what comes next
- Responds with delight and enthusiasm when the infant make new discoveries

- Expand on own curiosity to learn about the world
- Develop a deeper level of attentiveness towards objects of interest
- Build memory capacity
- Build persistence in trying to figure out how things work



## Cognition and General Knowledge

*This domain includes thinking, reasoning, and using information to acquire knowledge and understanding of one's world. The infant learns about the characteristics, functions, and usefulness of people and objects.*

- Follows moving objects with eyes and/or turns head toward sounds
- Shows preferences for human faces
- Shows surprise when something unexpected happens
- Uses adult help to explore the environment, e.g., climbs higher on an adult's body to reach for a toy on a shelf
- Associates certain people and objects with specific places, experiences, and routines
- Looks at, mouths, bangs, shakes, drops, and grabs objects
- Repeats actions over and over to see what happens

- Provides the infant with a variety of safe objects with varying characteristics, e.g. soft, hard, large, small, smooth, and rough
- Exposes the infant to different places, sights and sounds
- Plays peek-a-boo and similar games with the infant
- Describes what the infant is doing and experiencing
- Recognizes and responds to the infant's exploration attempts
- Names objects and describes their characteristics, e.g., soft pillow or warm water

- Understand basic concepts about the physical world, e.g., gravity and distance
- Begin to recognize that objects and people have attributes
- Begin to recognize that objects exist even when they are not seen
- Develop understanding of the concept of cause and effect

## English Language Arts and Literacy

*This domain encompasses response to and use of communication. The infant learns to listen to speech and other sounds, to express self verbally and non-verbally, and to participate in back and forth exchanges with others.*

- Uses different cries, sounds, facial expressions, and body movements to communicate needs or emotions
- Listens and responds verbally and non-verbally to the caregiver's speech
- Listens as the caregiver talks, reads books, sings songs, and recites nursery rhymes
- Initiates conversations by babbling, "ba, ba, ba" or "da, da, da"
- Starts to handle and explore cloth, board, and sensory/tactile books

- Recognizes and responds promptly to the infant's attempts to communicate
- Speaks clearly, simply and slowly while interacting with the infant
- Repeats and encourages the infant's verbal attempts and gestures in a back and forth conversation
- Reads, sings songs, and shares stories or nursery rhymes with the infant
- Labels and describes the infant's and other people's actions throughout the day

- Develop early communication skills
- Connect words and sounds with experiences and actions
- Develop an interest in books and enjoyment of being read to



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

## Supplemental Guides for Infants and Toddlers

### Building Security: Infants Birth – 8 Months

The Hawai'i Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS) describe 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 standards 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 Infants and Toddlers

The HELDS Supplemental Guides for Infants and Toddlers is a multi-part series that looks at three distinct phases of development within the first two years of life: *Building Security* (birth–8 months), *Moving and Exploring* (8–18 months), and *Discovering Identity* (18–24 months). Each guide illustrates the rapid growth and unique developmental needs of children during a particular period.

*The guides provide information on:*

- typical infant or toddler behaviors within each of the HELDS domains, listed in approximate sequence of development;
- specific ways in which caregivers can support development and learning; and
- key infant and toddler outcomes that result from these supports.

The capabilities, interests, and needs of a younger infant (e.g., a 6-month-old) differ greatly from those of an older, more mobile infant (e.g., a 9-month-old) and those of a toddler (e.g., a 19-month-old). Within any phase there are also normal variations in development from child to child. Effective caregivers understand these differences and tailor their practices accordingly. The guides provide a starting place for caregivers to reflect on the extent to which their current strategies, interactions, environments, and care plans support optimal development. While the examples listed are not exhaustive, they provide an overall picture of healthy development and quality caregiving.

#### Building Security: Infants Birth–8 Months

Very young infants require emotional security in order to thrive. They develop a sense of security when they have responsive, positive interactions with adults in safe, healthy and interesting environments. This sense of security gives infants the freedom to explore and learn. Through responsive caregiving practices, interactive play, and back-and-forth communication, adults foster infants' natural instincts to engage with and understand the world. The early growth that occurs during infancy creates strong foundations and pathways for subsequent development and learning. By being intentional in practice and providing the highest quality of care, adults help young infants develop optimally within and across the HELDS domains and acquire the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for future success.

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