Organization of the Document

Connecticut's Early Learning and Development Standards are statements of what children should know and be able to do from birth to age 5. These guidelines are intended to inform families, teachers, caregivers and other professionals about common developmental and learning progressions, so that they can work together to better support children's early learning and growth. These standards are intended to serve as a guide for considering the steps in children's development and to plan ways to support children in continued growth.

Domain Action Pages: What Can I Do to Support Early Learning and Development

For each area of development (domain) there is a general information page that includes a brief description of the domain and strategies to support infants and toddlers as well as preschoolers.

The Standards

The CT ELDS are organized by domain. There are eight domains in the document: Social and Emotional Development, Physical Health and Development, Language and Literacy, Creative Arts, Mathematics, Science, Cognition and Social Studies.

Domain: A general area of growth and development

Strand: Sub-categories within each domain

Learning Progressions: A series of skills and abilities that build upon each other as children grow and learn

Indicators: Examples of what children should know or be able to do at the end of each of the age ranges along the learning progression

Numbering: Each strand is assigned a letter designation within a domain. The indicators are numbered, using an abbreviation for the domain name, the number corresponding to the age in months at the end of the age range and the number of the indicators in sequence for that age range. For example, L.24.3 refers to 3rd indicator for the 18-24-month range in the Language and Literacy Domain.

Age Ranges

The CT ELDS are grouped into age ranges, with the examples representing skills, dispositions or knowledge typical for the end of the age range for each domain. However, children develop at varying rates and may not demonstrate every example included in the CT ELDS or may demonstrate them with some variation in timing. While a pattern of skills that is not consistent with a child's age may raise some questions, the CT ELDS is not a screening or assessment tool. Concerns about a child's development may suggest a referral for further assessment or possible support services; however, this document is not designed as a tool for identifying children for referrals, services, or to make decisions about appropriate programs or placements. Instead, this tool is designed to support caregivers and professionals as they consider precursors and next steps, and to determine the environmental supports, activities and adult strategies that will help children to grow and learn.

Domain Name

Age Range

Learning Progression

Learning Progression

Strand

Creative Arts				
Learning Progression	0-6 months	6-12 months	12-18 Months	18-24 Months
	Indicators *This is evident, for example, when children:*	Indicators *This is evident, for example, when children:*	Indicators *This is evident, for example, when children:*	Indicators *This is evident, for example, when children:*
Strand: Early learning experiences will support children to engage in and enjoy the arts.				
Music	CA.6.1 React to music by turning to a sound source, cooing in response, wiggling or moving, soothing one's self, etc.	CA.12.1 Show interest in singing, moving, and dancing, using their body	CA.18.1 Use instruments to explore rhythm and melody	CA.24.1 React to changes in music by joining in with more extended segments of familiar music, using voice, physical gestures and/or instruments

Indicator

Integrated Learning

The domains and strands within the CT ELDS reflect common areas of research and evidence-based practices. Although you may see other documents or resources that break down what children should know and be able to do into categories different from the CT ELDS, the structure and content of these standards are consistent with what is known about child development.

Children do not learn skills in these domains, strands or learning progressions in isolation, but it is helpful to think about growth across these areas to make sure that support is provided for the wide variety of skills children are learning. When planning early learning experiences, families and early care and education professionals should consider what is meaningful and engaging for young children and how skills from a variety of areas can be integrated into children's play.

Supplemental Dual Language Development Framework

In addition to the information for each domain, this document includes a Supplemental Dual Language Development Framework for use in supporting children who are learning multiple languages. This supplement is not applicable to all children, but rather is designed to raise awareness of the typical stages of acquiring a second language.

Intentionally Supporting Growth and Development

The CT ELDS provide the basis for planning learning environments, supporting individual children and communicating around common goals. They do not exist in isolation and must be used in conjunction with guidance on effective strategies and/or appropriate assessment tools. A cycle of intentional teaching is composed of planning experiences to support children's development, gathering information about how they are progressing and adjusting what is being done to support them based upon this information.

The Cycle of Intentional Teaching
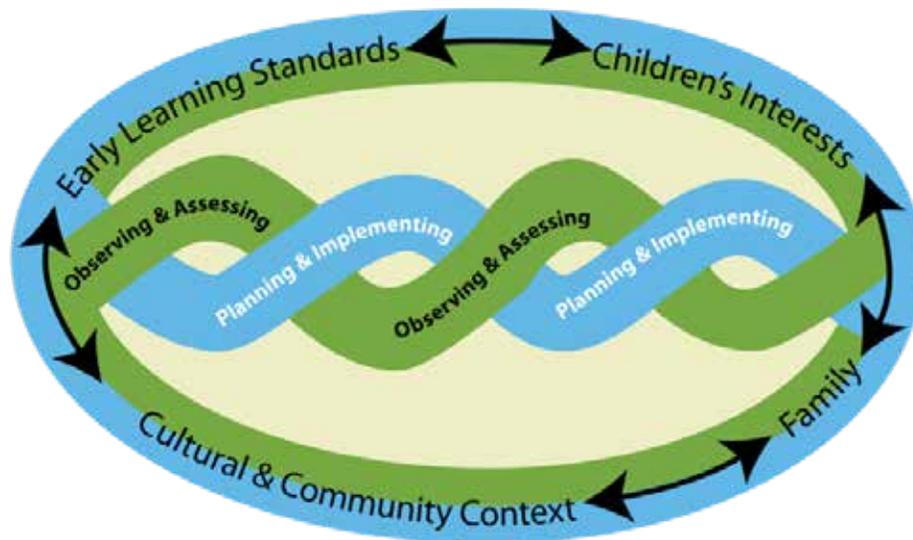
All adults who support young children are "teachers," although their planning, observation and assessment may involve differing levels of detail. Teachers in a classroom environment might develop detailed learning experience plans and use formal assessment tools. A family is also engaging in a cycle of intentional teaching when they take their child to the playground to develop gross-motor skills, observe that she cannot yet climb the stairs to the slide and then help her learn this skill. By being intentional, adults can make sure that they are supporting children in meaningful ways.

Assessment

An assessment tool aligned to the CT ELDS should be used to determine how children are progressing across these domains of development. Two types of tools, with different purposes, are appropriate for use in conjunction with the CT ELDS:

> **Developmental Screenings** are tools designed to be brief surveys of children's abilities and are used to determine if further assessment is necessary. (Note: The Ages and Stages Child Monitoring Program offers a developmental screening process that can be accessed by calling the Child Development Infoline at 1-800-505-7000.)

> **Formative Assessments** are tools designed to determine how children are progressing in the development of certain abilities, so that further support can be planned (e.g., curriculum, instruction, family activities and adult support).

The CT ELDS are not a screening or assessment tool.

Communication

Communication between all of the adults supporting children is critical. The CT ELDS provide a common language to communicate about children's skills and progress and to plan supports. The Action Guides include general information about each area of development and evidence-based strategies to support infants and toddlers and preschoolers. The more detailed strands and learning progressions for each domain will support more in-depth discussion and planning.

By using these CT ELDS as part of a thoughtful process, families and early care and education professionals can work together to ensure that children are eager and ready to learn and grow.