



**Physical Health  
and Growth  
Guidance**

# Introduction

Families, caregivers, and early educators all work together to help children grow and learn. This guidance is intended to be a resource for educators to support and enhance children's learning and development while using the Foundations, Indiana's Early Learning Development Framework. While this is not an exhaustive list, this guidance is meant to serve as a suggestion for practice from birth to age five including the transition into kindergarten. It can be used to support a child's development at different levels of learning and promotes fluid movement between developmental stages. The Foundations are not intended to be a curriculum, but what children should know and be able to do throughout developmental stages. Curricula is content that children should learn and methods to teach the content whereas lesson plans are intended to demonstrate how the content is conveyed to children. This guidance is a resource for educators to use while developing an intentional lesson plan.

## Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

High quality early experiences help a child become ready for kindergarten and beyond. The Foundations show early educators the developmental progression that typically developing young children should experience as they grow toward kindergarten readiness. In 2014, Indiana's Early Learning Advisory Committee approved the following definition of kindergarten readiness: "In Indiana, we work together so that every child can develop to his or her fullest potential socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively, and academically. Through growth in all of these domains, the child will become a healthy, capable, competent, and powerful learner."

## Family Engagement

Indiana's Early Learning Advisory Committee (2016) has approved the following definition for family engagement:

- Families actively supporting their children's learning and development, and sharing the responsibility with early care and education providers who are committed to engaging with families in meaningful, culturally respectful ways;
- Continuous across a child's life, beginning in infancy and extending through college and career preparation programs;
- Occurring across the various early care and learning settings where children play and grow."

Children develop in the context of their environments, which includes family, culture, and community. Family engagement is a strong predictor of children's development, wellness, educational attainment, and success later in school and life. Early educators can use the Family Engagement sections and the Powerful Practices throughout this guidance for strategies that they can encourage family members to use at home. Children and their families also face a number of complex challenges and situations. Communities are strengthened when there are strong partnerships between organizations. Educators and program administrators are encouraged to refer families to agencies that have the most in depth knowledge to meet their needs.

## Special Populations

The Indiana Core Knowledge and Competencies encourage educators to see children as unique individuals within a family and community and to be sensitive to individual developmental needs. This guidance supports special populations including dual language (DLL), exceptional, and high ability learners; however, many of the recommended strategies are appropriate and beneficial to all children. It's encouraged that educators use a flexible approach when designing curriculum and keep the needs of all children in mind. The use of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone (See Appendix B for additional information). Additionally, with family/parental consent, we encourage educators to engage and collaborate with other professionals in closely related sectors supporting the child and family to further inform and align services. This could include professionals from education, health, and social services (e.g. First Steps/Early intervention, public schools, therapists, and physicians).



## PHG Foundation 1: Health and Well-Being

Early learners develop foundational skills that support healthy, safe, and nutritious practices.

### PHG1.1: Demonstrate development of healthy practices

Health and education are closely intertwined. The **development of healthy practices** lay the foundation for independence in personal care and long term success. When children and adults are healthy, they're more engaged in learning and in life. For young children, educators play a significant role in modeling and inspiring a lifelong commitment to health and all dimensions of wellness.

#### Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

In kindergarten, students will begin to identify that healthy behaviors affect personal health (Health 2.1.1) as well as identifying their personal health decisions (Health 2.5.1). Students will also recognize that physical activity is important for health (PE K.5.1.A). Students will also begin to recognize the dimensions of health including emotional, intellectual, physical and social health (Health 2.1.2). Lastly, students will begin to understand ways to prevent communicable diseases (Health 2.1.3).

#### Family Engagement

Encourage families to:

- Promote healthy hygiene routines at home (e.g. "Let's brush our teeth before bed!" or "Let's wash our hands before dinner!").
- Incorporate physical activity into daily routines and schedules (e.g. going for a family walk after dinner).
- Be aware of developmental milestones and what to watch for (e.g. using the CDC's "Learn the Signs. Act Early." app and resources).

#### Special Populations<sup>1</sup>

Educators can:

- Provide opportunities and materials that are accessible to all children (e.g. ensuring the dramatic play center is accessible to children with varying mobility).
- Use visual supports to promote healthy practices (e.g. for DLL, consider labeling the environment in multiple languages).
- Consider learning simple words and phrases in a child's native language or in sign language.
- Collaborate with other service providers when appropriate and with familial consent (e.g. implementing activities recommended by a child's OT/PT/Developmental Therapist)

<sup>1</sup> With familial consent, we encourage early educators to collaborate with other service providers.

# Powerful Practices

Examples of ways adults can support young learners' development of healthy practices:

## PHG1.1: Demonstrate development of healthy practices

Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Limit screen time for young children and follow appropriate guidelines and regulations.<sup>2</sup>
- Provide opportunities and materials for children to participate in healthy practices (e.g. bath tubs and baby dolls in the dramatic play center, etc.).
- Provide opportunities and materials for children to engage in play related to healthy practices (e.g. healthy food options in dramatic play area, baby dolls to change diapers, etc.).
- Prompt and praise handwashing and other hygiene activities, providing supervision and support when needed.
- Actively participate with children in all play opportunities (e.g. run alongside children outside, engage in dramatic play, etc.).
- Ensure children have 3-5 hours daily of opportunities to engage in movement or play<sup>3</sup>.
- Model physical activity and hygiene-related practices (e.g. coughing and sneezing into elbow).
- Use visual supports to promote healthy practices (e.g. visuals for hand washing, coughing, etc.).

Infant	Younger Toddler	Older Toddler	Younger Preschool	Older Preschool
Actively engage with infant during tummy time, increasing duration and frequency with muscular development	Model personal health practices (e.g. wash your hands alongside the children, describing each step in the process )	Use vocabulary to describe symptoms of illness and wellness	Encourage child to identify symptoms of illness and wellness	Foster conversations with children about healthy living and prevention (e.g. hair care, bathing, brushing teeth, etc.)
During routine care, use “play by play” announcing (e.g. “Let’s change your diaper! You pooped!”)	Talk to children about the importance of sleep/rest and provide opportunities for rest and calming areas/activities	Provide materials that encourage imitation of healthy practices (e.g. doctor kits, bandages, vision charts, model of teeth with large toothbrush)	Provide materials for dramatic play that engage children in the roles of medical professionals	Provide materials for dramatic play that engage children in the roles of medical professionals
Model personal health practices (e.g. wash your hands with children, describing each step in the process)	Provide materials for children to model routine care (e.g. bath tub for baby dolls, etc.)	Talk to children about the importance of sleep/rest and provide opportunities for rest and calming areas/activities	Talk to children about the importance of sleep/rest and provide opportunities for rest and calming areas/activities	Talk to children about the importance of sleep/rest and provide opportunities for rest and calming areas/activities
Incorporate oral hygiene activities (e.g. using finger toothbrushes to wipe out mouths)				
Provide materials for children to model routine care (e.g. bath tub for baby dolls, etc.)				

<sup>2</sup> Please refer to any applicable licensing laws, rules, and related policies regulated by the Family and Social Services Administration and the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning. Additional information can be found here: <https://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2734.htm>

<sup>3</sup> Please refer to the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans found here: [https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/pdf/Physical\\_Activity\\_Guidelines\\_2nd\\_edition.pdf](https://health.gov/paguidelines/second-edition/pdf/Physical_Activity_Guidelines_2nd_edition.pdf).



## PHG Foundation 1: Health and Well-Being

Early learners develop foundational skills that support healthy, safe, and nutritious practices.

### PHG1.2: Demonstrate development of safety practices

Keeping young children safe in early learning environments is a top priority. The **development of safety practices** helps to not only prevent accidents and injury, but also helps to create an environment where children feel safe and secure. In safe environments, children feel more comfortable and are more likely to learn, try new skills, and take appropriate risks. Ensuring the development of implementing safety practices is the basis for following guidelines and rules related to school, home, and workplace safety.

#### Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

Throughout kindergarten, students will begin to understand ways to prevent injuries (Health 2.1.4) and consider behaviors to avoid or reduce health and safety risks (Health 2.7.2). Students will also work towards following instructions when prompted (PE K.4.2.A), sharing equipment and space with others (PE K.4.3.A), and recognizing established protocols for class activities (PE K.4.4.A). Lastly, students will follow teacher directions for safe participation and the proper use of equipment (PE K.4.5.A).

#### Family Engagement

Encourage families to:

- Check that children are in the appropriate car seat or booster seat (e.g. seeking out car seat checks in their local community).
- Talk to their children about the importance of safety (e.g. holding hands in the parking lot).
- Create a family emergency exit plan for their home and practice those plans regularly.
- Create a family safety procedure for severe weather and practice those plans regularly.

#### Special Populations<sup>4</sup>

Educators can:

- Consider children with limited mobility during emergency procedures and evacuation plans.
- Collaborate with families and other service providers (with parental/familial consent) to develop safety procedures.
- Use visual supports for emergency procedures.
- Provide social stories for emergency procedures.
- For DLL, learn simple words and phrases related to emergency situations in the child's native language or sign language.

<sup>4</sup> With familial consent, we encourage early educators to collaborate with other service providers.

# Powerful Practices

Examples of ways adults can support young learners’ ability to demonstrate development of safety practices:

## PHG1.2: Demonstrate development of safety practices

Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Set up and continuously monitor the environment to ensure child’s physical safety (safe sleep, storage of hazardous materials, broken toys or materials, etc.).
- Respond calmly and sympathetically to any injuries or accidents that occur and administer first aid as needed.<sup>5</sup>
- Establish reasonable boundaries for risk taking in indoor and outdoor environments based on the age and skill levels of the child (e.g. climbing, jumping, cutting, etc.).
- Respectfully prepare children for changes in the environment including transitions, staff changes, environmental changes, and routine changes by providing visual and verbal cues and including children in the process.
- Talk with children about safety drills and procedures in a non-threatening way.
- Be aware of and practice your program’s safety drills and procedures<sup>6</sup>.
- Provide consistent routines and staffing patterns (when possible) and acknowledge changes (e.g. “Ms. Joy isn’t feeling well today. Ms Abby is going to be with our class today!”).
- Communicate expectations around safety in a positive manner by stating the desired behavior (e.g. “Use your walking feet” instead of “Don’t run!”).
- Engage with community partners to provide resources and supports for families (e.g. car seat checks, local food banks, organizations that provide safe sleep materials, etc.).

Infant	Younger Toddler	Older Toddler	Younger Preschool	Older Preschool
<p>Build an emotional bond with infant to provide security (e.g. holding, rocking, singing, etc.)</p> <p>Use emotional talk to support infants when encountering an unfamiliar person or object (e.g. “You are afraid because Mrs. Clark is new to our classroom.)</p>	<p>Identify and describe dangerous situations</p> <p>Model and practice safety procedures (e.g. cleaning up wet/dry spills and safety drills)</p> <p>Provide guidance about avoiding danger (e.g. “Hold my hand while we walk in the parking lot so I can keep you safe.”)</p>	<p>Acknowledge child’s recognition of danger</p> <p>Plan and facilitate opportunities for child to try new skills (e.g. pouring, jumping off a low platform, and climbing)</p> <p>Provide guidance and ask questions about how to avoid danger (e.g. “We’re headed into the parking lot. What do you think you should do before we enter?”)</p>	<p>Facilitate conversations around real and perceived dangers (e.g. inviting a firefighter or police offer as a guest speaker)</p> <p>Establish safety rules with children</p> <p>Facilitate discussion around the safety rules</p>	<p>Facilitate conversations around real and perceived dangers (e.g. inviting a firefighter or police offer as a guest speaker)</p> <p>Involve children in the development of safety rules and provide leadership opportunities to practice them</p>

<sup>5</sup> Please refer to any applicable licensing laws, rules, and related policies regulated by the Family and Social Services Administration and the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning. Additional information can be found here: <https://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2734.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Please refer to any applicable licensing laws, rules, and related policies regulated by the Family and Social Services Administration and the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning. Additional information can be found here: <https://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2734.htm>



## PHG Foundation 1: Health and Well-Being

Early learners develop foundational skills that support healthy, safe, and nutrition practices

### PHG1.3: Demonstrate development of nutrition awareness

Young children need the appropriate types and amounts of nutrition to fuel their growth and active nature. **Nutrition awareness** is key for not only preventing childhood obesity but nutrition can also significantly impact learning outcomes.

Nutrition awareness is critical for long term health, and early educators have the opportunity to model and empower children to make healthy decisions. Establishing nutrition awareness will help create positive habits and a healthy relationship with food that will last a lifetime.

#### Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

In kindergarten, students will be able to recognize that food provides energy for physical activity (PE K.3.6.A) and be able to identify healthy and unhealthy foods (PE K.3.6.B).

#### Family Engagement

Encourage families to:

- Find nutritional balance that works for their families (e.g. providing healthy and fresh options when possible).
- Create family guidelines for meals and snacks.
- Engage children in meal planning for the family (e.g. creating menus, grocery lists, etc.).
- Provide opportunities for children to be a part of the food experience (e.g. gardening, grocery shopping with the child, serving dinner they helped to create, etc.).

#### Special Populations<sup>7</sup>

Educators can:

- Make it a priority to learn and understand each child's nutritional needs (e.g. food allergies, sensitivities, trouble swallowing, feeding tubes, etc.) and ensure dignity and respect.
- Encourage children to be as independent as possible, empowering children to make decisions, and provide only as much assistance as necessary.
- Include all children at the table with peers to promote interaction.
- Provide children time and additional supports as needed (e.g. utilizing non-slip mat and no spill bowl/cups to support self-feeding, flexible seating, etc.).

<sup>7</sup> With familial consent, we encourage early educators to collaborate with other service providers.

# Powerful Practices

Examples of ways adults can support young learners' development of nutrition awareness:

## PHG1.3 Demonstrate development of nutrition awareness

Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Demonstrate and educate families on healthy nutrition practices for young children.
- Provide materials in the environment that promote nutrition (e.g. nutritious foods and cooking tools in the dramatic play area, books related to nutrition, etc.).
- Not use food and drink as a reward or a punishment.
- Choose nutrient dense foods and source locally (when possible).<sup>8</sup>
- Respect familial nutrition choices, particularly when it comes to infants, and be sensitive to individual needs (e.g. allergies) and cultural expectations.
- Select foods that are safe for children to eat based on developmental stage and ability.<sup>9</sup>
- Make water available at all times and encourage children to drink.
- Assist children in understanding hunger/thirst cues by offering descriptive words.
- Model healthy food choices in the environment and/or follow any relevant program wellness policies.
- Integrate nutrition education as a complement to curriculum and at meal times and snacks (e.g. using vocabulary intentionally).

Infant	Younger Toddler	Older Toddler	Younger Preschool	Older Preschool
<p>Pay attention to, label, and respond to infant's feeding cues (e.g. feed child on-demand instead of on adult-established schedule)</p> <p>Describe new foods before introducing them to infant</p> <p>Provide opportunities for infant to self-feed when appropriate</p> <p>Have a designated place and equipment for breastfeeding</p> <p>Feed infants in appropriate settings (e.g. high chair vs. feeding in a bouncy seat)</p>	<p>Provide new and varied food to child</p> <p>Establish a meal/snack routine (e.g. 1. Clean the tables. 2. Wash your hands. 3. Set the table. 4. Plate the food)</p> <p>Allow child to self-feed, providing utensils necessary for food type and demonstrate their use</p> <p>Model the use of healthy nutrition practices and eat alongside children (i.e. serving family style when possible)</p> <p>Feed toddlers in an appropriate setting (e.g. toddler size table vs. high chair)<sup>10</sup></p>	<p>Acknowledge and respect child's food preferences</p> <p>Describe characteristics of food (e.g. texture or color of food)</p> <p>Allow child to self-feed, providing utensils necessary for food type and demonstrate their use</p> <p>Model the use of healthy nutrition practices and eat alongside children (i.e. serving family style when possible)</p>	<p>Respect child's physical hunger and thirst cues</p> <p>Label and describe the nutritious value of foods</p> <p>Provide reminders as necessary for child to use utensils for independent eating</p> <p>Model the use of healthy nutrition practices and eat alongside children (i.e. serving family style when possible)</p>	<p>Respect child's physical hunger and thirst cues</p> <p>Facilitate conversations around healthy food and beverage selection (e.g. "Milk has calcium and calcium builds strong bones! We're having milk this morning!")</p> <p>Provide reminders as necessary for child to use utensils for independent eating</p> <p>Model the use of healthy nutrition practices and eat alongside children (i.e. serving family style when possible)</p>

<sup>8</sup> Follow Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines if and when applicable. For more information can be found here:

<https://www.doe.in.gov/nutrition/child-and-adult-care-food-program>

<sup>9</sup> Please refer to any applicable licensing laws, rules, and related policies regulated by the Family and Social Services Administration and the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning. Additional information can be found here: <https://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2734.htm>

<sup>10</sup> Please refer to any applicable licensing laws, rules, and related policies regulated by the Family and Social Services Administration and the Office of Early Childhood and Out-of-School Learning. Additional information can be found here: <https://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2734.htm>





## PHG Foundation 2: Senses

Early learners develop foundational skills that support processing information and understanding one's own body in relation to space and objects in space.

### PHG2.1: Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information

Young children use their **senses to process information** and learn. They take in information through their eyes, ears, mouth, nose, and skin. They mentally process the information from these various sources and determine how to respond. As they process sensory information, they learn the properties of objects and begin to use those objects for intended purposes. The development of senses leads to:

- Increased knowledge of objects
- Inventive use of materials
- Problem solving
- Creative thinking
- Critical thinking skills

#### Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

The rich explorations of materials from birth on assists in developing critical skills and understanding key concepts. Kindergarten children are expected to manipulate objects, both physically and mentally, in order to develop important skills.

#### Family Engagement

Encourage families to:

- Think about ways to support sensory development at home (e.g. bath time as an opportunity for exploring water and bubbles or cooking together as a time to explore the smells and textures of different foods).
- Allow discovery time in outdoor areas in all seasons (e.g. going for a family walk and discussing how flowers smell, feel, etc.).

#### Special Populations<sup>11</sup>

Educators can:

- Provide opportunities and sensory materials that are accessible to all children (e.g. ensuring the sand/water table is accessible to children with varying mobility).
- Provide options when a child hesitates to use sensory materials (e.g. when a child does not want to explore mud or wet sand, offer gloves or various tools).

<sup>11</sup>With familial consent, we encourage early educators to collaborate with other service providers.

# Powerful Practices

Examples of ways adults can support young learners' ability to demonstrate how the five senses support processing information:

## PHG2.1 Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information

Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Provide safe sensory materials and manipulatives of different shapes, textures, scents, etc.
- Provide sensory experiences, respecting the child's preferences and boundaries.
- Provide opportunities for and engage with children as they safely explore materials (i.e. get messy alongside children and engage them in clean up efforts).
- Intentionally plan and make available a variety of experiences for young children to use their senses (e.g. When taste testing foods with children - "What does this feel/smell/taste like? What does it sound like when you bite into it?").
- When engaging in materials alongside children, use descriptive language of your actions or the child's action (e.g. "I'm dropping the pebbles onto my hand. You are dropping them into the pail.>").
- Integrate the five senses (i.e. sight, smell, hearing, taste and touch) into daily and activities (e.g. noticing smells outside, etc.).

Infant	Younger Toddler	Older Toddler	Younger Preschool	Older Preschool
<p>Provide a variety of experiences for infant to see, hear, taste, smell, feel</p> <p>Facilitate the use of materials for infant to explore what will happen (e.g. shake the rattle with the infant)</p>	<p>Model and encourage various actions with familiar objects</p> <p>Observe how a child interacts with familiar objects, while noting new and unique actions</p> <p>Provide sensory experiences, respecting the child's preferences and boundaries</p>	<p>Provide a variety of objects for the child to explore (e.g. musical instruments, texture table, etc.)</p> <p>Plan a variety of experiences to engage the child's senses</p> <p>Label sensory experiences</p>	<p>Provide materials the child can take apart and reassemble</p> <p>Encourage and engage child in identifying sensory experiences</p>	<p>Provide open ended materials and simple tools for design, construction, and deconstruction across learning centers (e.g. screwdrivers, hammers, wrenches, tree cookies, rocks, tape, string, etc.)</p> <p>Encourage child to compare and contrast sensory experiences (e.g. modeling the use of vocabulary like different/same)</p>



## PHG Foundation 2: Senses

Early learners develop foundational skills that support processing information and understanding one's own body in relation to space and objects in space.

# PHG2.2: Demonstrate development of body awareness

Young children naturally desire to move. They wiggle, reach, and kick long before they can propel their body through space by crawling, walking, climbing, or running. As they engage in these different types of movements, they **develop body awareness** and begin to understand how their body works.

The development of body awareness leads to:

- Understanding what they can and cannot do with their body with ease
- Learning what is "risky" behavior
- Spatial awareness
- An increased awareness and respect for personal space

## Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

In kindergarten, students will learn to differentiate between movement in personal space and general space at a slow to moderate speed (PE K.2.1.A) and move in personal space to a rhythm (PE K.2.1.B). Students will also begin to travel in three different pathways (such as moving in various patterns: straight, curved) (PE K.2.2.A) and travel in general space with different speeds (such as traveling at various speeds in skill development activities) (PE K.2.3.A).

## Family Engagement

Encourage families to:

- Find ways to actively engage their child in physical activity during routine events (e.g. encourage their child to stand or hop on one foot while waiting in line at the grocery store).
- Find ways to use physical activity as quality time together through various activities (e.g. sports, exploring nature, cleaning the house, etc.).
- Create active environments or visit spaces that encourage movement (e.g. moving furniture to promote play).
- Limit the use of screen time.
- Model physical activity as a self care strategy.

## Special Populations<sup>12</sup>

Educators can:

- Plan and provide opportunities, space, and materials that are accessible to all children including those with varying mobility.
- Respectfully acknowledge the developmental differences and abilities of all children using a strengths-based approach.

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<sup>12</sup>With familial consent, we encourage early educators to collaborate with other service providers.

# Powerful Practices

Examples of ways adults can support young learners’ development of body awareness:

## PHG2.2 Demonstrate development of body awareness

Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Ensure that the environment is reflective and responsive to the interests and abilities of children.
- Provide a variety of props to encourage children to move in a variety of ways (e.g. paper plates, hoops, scarves, etc.).
- Use proper terminology and names for body parts while being respectful of names children and families use.
- Promote individual range of abilities and take time to talk to children about their unique strengths and abilities.
- Respectfully respond to questions about differences in a factual way.
- Respect individual preferences and cultural norms.
- Provide opportunities for children to discover their own strengths and challenges.
- Promote big body play (e.g. tumble play or tag) to encourage understanding of physical limits<sup>13</sup>
- Provide a variety of opportunities and spaces for children to deliberately and freely move.
- Consider using physical movements to teach other concepts (e.g. patterning and movement in music, how the body responds to those changes/patterns, etc.).

Infant	Younger Toddler	Older Toddler	Younger Preschool	Older Preschool
<p>Provide opportunities for infant to move and explore (i.e. limit the use of “baby containers” or equipment that restricts an infant’s movement such as bouncy seats, swings, etc.)</p> <p>Label and describe infant’s movement and discoveries (e.g. “You found your toes!”)</p> <p>Sing songs and fingerplays to encourage movement and body awareness (e.g. Pat-a-Cake, “Where is your nose?”)</p>	<p>Provide play materials for identification and awareness of body parts (e.g. the bear’s foot, the baby doll’s belly)</p> <p>Provide spaces for a child to move through, under, over, behind, and around</p> <p>Provide objects that can be pushed, pulled, thrown, kicked, rolled, stacked, etc.</p>	<p>Describe child’s movement as they move through, under, over, behind, and around</p> <p>Plan indoor and outdoor learning experiences that encourage specific physical movements (e.g. <i>Hokey Pokey</i>, bean bag toss games, dancing, marching, etc.)</p>	<p>Engage in conversation that develops descriptive language for body movement (e.g. throw with my arm, chew with my teeth)</p> <p>Provide experiences that encourage movement relative to peers (e.g. dancing with scarves and ensuring personal space)</p> <p>Provide materials that require more than one child to lift or move</p> <p>Read books about physical health and wellness</p>	<p>Engage in conversation that develops descriptive language for body movement (e.g. throw with my arm, chew with my teeth)</p> <p>Provide experiences that encourage movement relative to peers (e.g. dancing with scarves and ensuring personal space)</p> <p>Provide materials that require more than one child to lift or move</p> <p>Read books about physical health and wellness</p>

<sup>13</sup>See this link for additional information on Big, Body Play: <https://naeyc.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Big-Body-Play.pdf>



## PHG Foundation 3: Motor Skills

Early learners develop foundational skills that support development of fine and gross motor coordination.

### PHG3.1: Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination

The **development of fine and gross motor coordination** helps children to be able to move and manipulate objects. Gross motor skills refer to large muscle groups and body parts (e.g. legs, arms) whereas small motor skills relate to being able to manipulate small objects with precision (e.g. hand, wrist).

The development of fine and gross motor coordination leads to:

- Early writing skills
- Balance and body awareness
- Spatial awareness
- The ability to perform tasks and movements

#### Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

In kindergarten, students will work to continue to develop their manipulative (PE K1.7.A through 1.16.B) and gross motor skills (PE K.1.1A through K1.5.A). Students will also begin to differentiate between movement in personal space and general space at a slow to moderate speed (PE K.2.1.A) and move in personal space to a rhythm (PE K.2.1.B). Lastly, students will recognize that physical activity is important for good health (PE K.5.1.A).

#### Family Engagement

Encourage families to:

- Provide opportunities for fine and gross motor play (e.g. going outside for gross motor or providing crayons, pencils, etc.).
- Allow children multiple tries when moving an object safely before intervening.
- Participate, model, and announce keywords with big body play (e.g. having a dance party and saying, "This is a spin and this is a wiggle.").

#### Special Populations<sup>14</sup>

Educators can:

- Provide opportunities and materials that are accessible to all children (e.g. ensuring tools have different size grasps or adaptations).
- Plan and provide opportunities, space, and materials that are accessible to all children including those with varying mobility.
- Consider the use of visual supports during fine and gross motor activities.

<sup>14</sup>With familial consent, we encourage early educators to collaborate with other service providers.

# Powerful Practices

Examples of ways adults can support young learners' development of fine and gross motor coordination:

## PHG3.1: Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination

Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Create environments and intentionally plan activities that encourage exploration and movement.
- Create and adapt indoor and outdoor environments with open spaces and materials for gross motor activities that reflects the interests and abilities of the children.
- Be respectful of and promote the varying strengths and abilities of all children.
- Model and narrate/naming experiences and movements (e.g. children move their arms like a flying bird).
- Provide opportunities with clear expectations for risk taking with appropriate supervision and guidance.
- Provide a variety of materials to support fine motor development (e.g. thin/thick crayons, thin/thick paint brushes, stamps, sponges, realistic household items, etc.).
- Closely observe and document the potential need for additional supports and services.
- Be respectful of cultural and familial considerations.
- Consider the use of music and creative movement expression to support fine and gross motor development (e.g. provide instruments, finger plays, dance that is culturally reflective of the children, etc.).
- Consider the use of simple signs to support fine motor development and communication skills.
- Provide activities and materials to support early writing (See Early Learning Foundations Guidance for ELA3.1).

Infant	Younger Toddler	Older Toddler	Younger Preschool	Older Preschool
Provide an environment that supports infant's development of rolling over, sitting, reaching, and grasping	Sing songs and fingerplays	Provide smaller objects for child to manipulate, supervising as necessary for child's skill level (e.g. clay or playdough and tools)	Provide tools for children to grasp and manipulate (e.g. writing tools, screwdrivers, pliers, scissors, scoops, shovels, etc.)	Provide tools for child to grasp, manipulate, and practice more refined skills
Allow and encourage child to finger feed self	Provide board books and encourage children to explore pages on their own	Create an environment with open spaces for gross motor activities (e.g. climbing structure, pull toys, bridge and ramps)	Create an environment with open spaces for gross motor activities (i.e. more challenging balance beams, higher climbing structures, etc.)	Utilize the environment to facilitate intentional, complex gross motor activities (e.g. hopping on one foot, galloping, and skipping)
Facilitate the coordinated movements of infant's limbs through songs and play	Allow and encourage child to finger feed self	Facilitate the development of oral motor skills	Consider the use of small and large group activities to promote a sense of body and spatial awareness and cooperation	Consider the use of small and large group activities to promote a sense of body and spatial awareness and cooperation
Provide infant floor time on various surface types	Create an environment with open spaces for gross motor activities, including items for support as needed (e.g. ottoman, push toys)	Provide simple and safe utensils for children to self-feed		
Facilitate the development of oral motor skills	Facilitate the development of oral motor skills			
Provide opportunities for infant to move and explore (i.e. limit the use of "baby containers" or equipment that restricts an infant's movement such as bouncy seats, swings, etc.)	Provide simple and safe utensils for children to self-feed			



## PHG Foundation 3: Motor Skills

Early learners develop foundational skills that support development of fine and gross motor coordination.

### PHG3.2: Demonstrate development of oral motor skills

**Oral motor skills** refer to the coordination of the lips, mouth, tongue, and jaw. Oral motor skills are also closely related to self-feeding and oral hygiene. Early dental caries (i.e. cavities or tooth decay) are the number one chronic illness of early childhood and the most preventable. Early educators can help to identify potential teeth issues.

The development of oral motor skills lead to:

- Communication and language skills
- Ability to chew and swallow
- Increasing independence in self-feeding and oral hygiene

#### Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

While oral motor skills are typically developed in children prior to kindergarten, it is incredibly important and foundational to a number of other kindergarten skills. The ability to communicate clearly and effectively supports the development of English Language Arts skills and the ability to self-feed is important for kindergarten routines and schedules.

#### Family Engagement

Encourage families to:

- Understand and model the importance of dental care and routine check-ups when appropriate.
- Play games and sing songs or fingerplays that incorporate various creative sounds and facial expressions.
- Avoid materials that could be considered choking hazards and provide materials that are sanitizable and safe for children to explore.
- Provide direct supervision during meal times and model safe eating practices.

#### Special Populations <sup>15</sup>

Educators can:

- Provide opportunities and materials that are accessible to all children (e.g. ensuring toothbrushes have different size grasps or adaptations) and consider special positioning needed for brushing teeth.
- Encourage families to seek out dentists who have experience working with children with special needs.

<sup>15</sup>With familial consent, we encourage early educators to collaborate with other service providers.

# Powerful Practices

Examples of ways adults can support young learners’ development of oral motor skills:

## PHG3.2: Demonstrate development of oral motor skills

Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Provide foods of varying textures.<sup>16</sup>
- Avoid materials that could be considered choking hazards and provide materials that are sanitizable and safe for children to explore.
- Provide opportunities for children to make creative sounds and movements with their mouths (e.g. singing, blowing bubbles, whistling, clucking, “raspberries”, etc.).
- Play games, sings songs or fingerplays that incorporate various creative sounds and facial expressions.
- Closely observe and document the potential need for additional speech supports and services.
- Provide direct supervision during meal times and model safe eating practices.
- Model and narrate/name experiences and movements specific to the mouth.
- Have conversations with families about the importance of early dental care and check for potential tooth issues.

Infant	Younger Toddler	Older Toddler	Younger Preschool	Older Preschool
Mimic the sounds and expressions infants make (e.g. educator exaggerates facial expressions when talking to infant)	Allow and encourage child to finger-feed self	Provide simple and safe utensils for children to self-feed	Provide open cups for drinking	Provide open cups for drinking
Sing to model the movement of the mouth and creation of sound	Provide simple and safe utensils for children to self feed	Provide open cups for drinking	Progress diet to raw fruits and vegetables	Progress diet to raw fruits and vegetables
Notice and respond to feeding cues	Provide sippy cups for drinking or adaptations as needed			
Provide a variety of interesting, engaging materials (e.g. shakers, teethers, books that can be mouthed and cleaned, and mirrors)	Provide a variety of interesting, engaging materials (e.g. shakers, teethers, books that can be mouthed and cleaned, and mirrors)			
Provide opportunities for spoon feeding when appropriate and in coordination with infant’s feeding plan				
Encourage child to finger-feed self				

<sup>16</sup> Consider infant feeding plans and potential choking hazards.





## PHG Foundation 4: Personal Care

Early learners develop foundational skills that support the independent care of one's self.

### PHG4.1: Demonstrate increased independence in personal care routines

Young children learn by observing and imitating the adults and the world around them. Learning to take care of their personal needs helps young children gain independence while preparing for the future. Educators can support establishing **personal care routines** that encourage children to begin taking care of themselves while building a positive body image. The development of personal care routines leads to:

- Increasing independence
- Self-confidence
- Basic understanding of health and the dimensions of wellness

#### Looking Ahead to Kindergarten

A significant amount of development occurs prior to kindergarten with the understanding that students will be expected to independently dress and undress themselves, as well as attend to toileting needs. Additionally, throughout kindergarten through second grade, students will begin to identify personal health decisions (Health 2.5.1) and people or places where health information can be obtained (Health 2.5.1).

#### Family Engagement

Encourage families to:

- Talk to their children about their current personal care routines and cultural influences of the household.
- Provide opportunities for young children to do as much as they can while offering encouragement and support (e.g. brushing their hair or teeth when appropriate).

#### Special Populations<sup>17</sup>

Educators can:

- Provide visual supports (e.g. use real life photos to display the steps of proper handwashing).
- Ensure vocabulary is loaded into appropriate communication devices.
- Use a variety of visual supports, and words from a child's home language when possible or use sign language.

<sup>17</sup>With familial consent, we encourage early educators to collaborate with other service providers.

# Powerful Practices

Examples of ways adults can support young learners' increased independence in personal care routines:

## PHG4.1: Demonstrate increased independence in personal care routines

Across all developmental stages, educators can:

- Address personal care with dignity and respect (e.g. engaging in consistent and respectful dialogue with parents about their routines and norms).
- Be respectful of and understand each family's cultural norms and preferences (e.g. engaging with parents to find out additional information about their cultural and familial expectations).
- Provide materials that children can use to practice skills related to dressing and undressing (e.g. clothing in dramatic play, laces, zippers, velcro, etc.).
- Provide books that promote personal care routines.
- Provide choices/options in routines when possible.
- Implement, model, and supervise proper handwashing procedures.
- Promote and provide opportunities to practice hygiene.
- Create an environment and schedules that supports routines.

Infant	Younger Toddler	Older Toddler	Younger Preschool	Older Preschool
<p>Narrate personal care routines (e.g. "Your nose is running. I am going to wipe it with a tissue." or "It is time to change your diaper.")</p> <p>Invite infant to participate in personal care routines as they are able (e.g. "Lift your foot so I can put your shoe on.")</p>	<p>Encourage the child to participate in personal care routines</p> <p>Describe why personal care routines are necessary (e.g. "Your shirt is wet! Let's change it so you are safe and dry.")</p> <p>Verbalize your observations of the child's toileting needs (e.g. while speaking one-on-one with the child, "It looks like your diaper is wet. We need to change it.)</p> <p>Introduce the bathroom and provide opportunities for children to explore it</p>	<p>As child shows interest and ability, encourage them to act independently in personal care routines</p> <p>Provide descriptive feedback about child's actions (e.g. "You did it! You put your jacket on. Now I can zip it.")</p> <p>Ask questions about personal care routines (e.g. "You forgot to wash your hands. Do you want to do it yourself or would you like help?")</p> <p>Recognize and respond to child's verbal and non-verbal cues related to toileting</p>	<p>Support child's independence in personal care routines (e.g. encourage children to change own clothes and provide specific praise)</p> <p>Provide reminders about body care practices as needed (e.g. "It looks like you need a tissue.")</p> <p>Ask questions about personal care routines (e.g. "We are getting ready to go outside. Lilly, do you need to use the bathroom?")</p> <p>Encourage children to dress themselves, providing assistance when needed</p>	<p>Support child's independence in personal care routines (e.g. encourage children to change own clothes)</p> <p>Provide reminders about body care practices as needed (e.g. "It looks like you need a tissue.")</p> <p>Ask questions about personal care routines (e.g. "We are getting ready to go outside. Does anyone need to use the bathroom?")</p> <p>Encourage children to dress themselves, providing assistance when needed</p>

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For additional resources, please see the Early Learning Foundations Guidance Online Tool at [www.doe.in.gov/earlylearning](http://www.doe.in.gov/earlylearning).