

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards

Introduction to the Child Care Profession Course

Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards
2011 Edition Early Literacy Update – Early Literacy Section Only



Wisconsin Department of
Public Instruction



Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families



Wisconsin Department of Health

An overview of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards is included as part of the Introduction to the Child Care Profession Course to introduce you to the document and help you begin the journey to prepare our youngest citizens for a bright future.

Implementation of the Standards is voluntary not mandatory. However, the Standards can be used as a tool to guide parents and programs as they plan activities that will provide a developmentally appropriate environment for children. These Standards can be used as guides for developing/adopting curriculum content, including instructional methods and materials, assessment practices, and for planning professional development opportunities.

Licensed and Certified Child Care Programs: Regulated programs are required to include certain components within the daily activities planned for children and in the program education policy. The Standards can provide a framework for providing these high quality experiences for all children in these settings.

Head Start Programs: Head Start programs are legally required to meet the Head Start Performance Standards, including the Head Start Child Outcomes Framework. While the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards are voluntary, they align closely with Head Start requirements. Implementation of the Head Start Outcomes Framework is consistent with the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards.

Child Care programs that align the curricular framework of their program to the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards are able to receive "optional" points in order to receive additional points for the 2, 3, 4, and 5 Star level in YoungStar. Child care programs with Teaching staff that receive the full training will also be able to receive "optional" points in order to receive an additional point.

PURPOSE

1. Educate and provide guidance for families, educators/caregivers, administrators, and policymakers on developmental expectations for young children from birth to first grade.
2. Inform the development of program standards across early learning environments so that families, teachers and caregivers can demonstrate that they provide the opportunities and experiences children need to meet developmental expectations.

Read/review the purpose of the WMELS.

Wisconsin families, communities, agencies, organizations, and state government will work together to ensure that children grow up healthy, safe, and successful. Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards provide a shared framework for understanding and communicating expectations for young children's development.

Based on research and supported by evidence-based practices, the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards (WMELS) provide a framework for families, professionals, and policy makers to:

- Share a common language and responsibility for the well-being of children from birth to first grade
- Know and understand developmental expectations of young children
- Understand the connection among the foundations of early childhood, K-12 educational experiences, and lifelong learning.

Families, educators, community institutions, and policymakers all share accountability for the optimal development of young children. These standards provide a framework of developmentally appropriate expectations for young children that can guide their work in creating, evaluating, and improving the conditions necessary for children's optimal development. As a result, young children will have more opportunities for positive development and learning.

STATE SUPPORT

- Committed to quality early childhood education and care
- Endorse collaborative work to create a blended system of services
- Believe that the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards are a foundation for successful education, employment and life experiences

These standards reflect the shared values and commitments of the citizens of Wisconsin to prepare young children for success in school. They reflect attention to all the domains of a child's early learning and recognize that these domains are interrelated and interdependent.

Wisconsin has experienced tremendous progress in efforts to best meet the needs of young children and their families and is continuing to strengthen Wisconsin's system of early childhood services, care and education. The Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards serve as a core foundation for our efforts to help children learn and grow up healthy in Wisconsin.

State support has grown through expansion of four-year-old kindergarten, the establishment of the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, expanded access to health care through BadgerCare Plus, the creation of the Governor's Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC), and YoungStar.

ACTIVITY #1

Getting to Know the WMELS Book

Using the WMELS book, complete
Assignment #2:
“Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards
Scavenger Hunt.”

**See Module #6, Assignment #2, in the course materials
for Introduction to the Child Care Profession.**

Use the “WMELS Scavenger Hunt” worksheet.

Guiding Principles

Reflect scientific research, our values, and our commitment to young children and families.

1. All children are capable and competent.
2. Early relationships matter.
3. A child's early learning and development is multidimensional.
4. Expectations for children must be guided by knowledge of child growth and development.
5. Children are individuals who develop at various rates.

Refer to the Guiding Principles of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards on page 10.

Refer to the Guiding Principles that informed the development of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards. Prior to the development of the WMELS, stakeholders across the state of Wisconsin determined Guiding Principles that would inform the work of developing the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards.

Think about whether you personally “value and believe” each of the principles.

“What does this look like in our programs for all children?”

Read the guiding principles and give examples of what this would look like for children and families in our programs.

NEXT SLIDE GUIDING PRINCIPLES CONTINUED

Guiding Principles cont.

6. Children are members of cultural groups that share developmental patterns.
7. Children exhibit a range of skills and competencies within any domain of development.
8. Children learn through play and the active exploration of their environment.
9. Parents are children's primary and most important caregivers and educators.

Read the Guiding Principles of the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards on page 10 of the WMELS book.

ACTIVITY #2

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Complete Assignment #3, Question #1

See Assignment #3, “Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards in the course materials for Introduction to the Child Care Profession.

Complete Question #1 on your own paper.

ACTIVITY #3

Experiential Learning

Complete Assignment #3, Question #2

See Assignment #3 “Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards in the course materials for Introduction to the Child Care Profession.

Complete Question #2 on your own paper.

Development of the WMELS

- Scientific research and practice-based evidence
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)
- National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC)

The developmental expectations and performance standards within each domain are reflective of a survey of the scientific literature and practice-based evidence on child development. National and regional guidelines were also consulted, including those of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) and the National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC). A national survey of early learning standards informed this work.

The standards are being used across the system in Wisconsin in the following programs:

- Child Care
- Birth to 3
- Home Visitor Programs
- Family Resource Centers
- Parent Education Classes
- Public and Private Early Care and Education Programs
- 4K
- 5K

Developmental Domains

- Health and Physical
- Social and Emotional
- Cognition and General Knowledge
- Approaches to Learning
- Language and Communication

I. Health and Physical Development

Health encompasses emerging knowledge and practices related to health, safety, and nutrition that promote physical well being. Physical development encompasses rate of growth and muscle control (motor development). Fine motor control, or small-muscle movement, refers to such abilities as manipulation of materials and tools, hand dominance, and eye-hand coordination. Gross motor control, or large-muscle movement refers to such characteristics as balance, coordination, purposeful control, locomotion, and stability of body movements and functions.

II. Social and Emotional Development

This domain includes children's feelings about themselves and others, their ability to form relationships, interest in and skills needed to maintain positive relationships with adults and children, ability to understand the perspective and feelings of others, and skills needed to succeed in a group setting. Healthy social and emotional competence is developed from infancy, through the toddler and preschool years, and beyond. Children's early relationships are the foundation for social and emotional competence and cognitive development.

III. Language Development and Communication

This domain refers to children's developing ability to convey and interpret meaning. This is reflected in their progress in acquiring language skills in the areas of listening and understanding, speaking and communicating, and early literacy. Language development occurs in the context of relationships, moves children along the continuum of early literacy, and encompasses all forms of communication, both verbal and nonverbal.

IV. Approaches to Learning

This domain, the one most subject to individual variation, recognizes that children approach learning in different ways and emphasizes the development of positive attitudes and dispositions to acquire information. It is inclusive of a child's curiosity about the world and openness to new tasks and challenges; initiative, task persistence, and attentiveness; reflection and interpretation; imagination and invention; and cognitive skills.

V. Cognition and General Knowledge

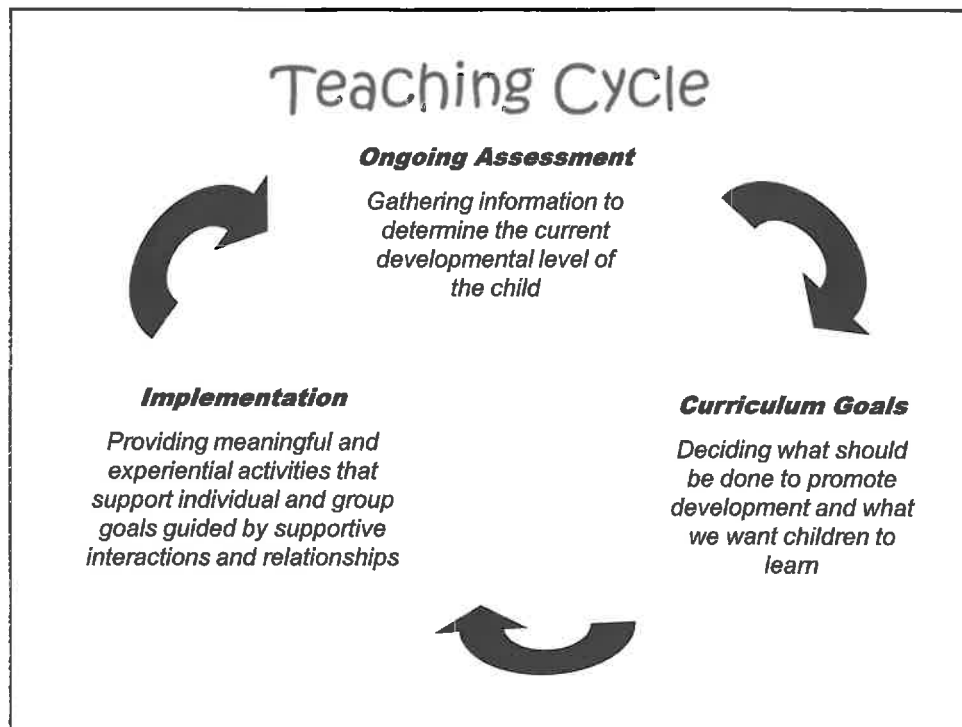
This domain recognizes children's search for meaning as the basis for intellectual development. The components focus on children's curiosity about the world and their developing ability to acquire, organize, and use information in increasingly complex ways to satisfy that curiosity. Children are engaged in and appreciate the arts as an organizing framework for expressing ideas and feelings. Primary components include mathematics and logical thinking, scientific thinking and problem-solving, and understanding social systems.

ACTIVITY #4

Complete Assignment #4

**See Assignment #4 in the course materials for
Introduction to the Child Care Profession.**

Use the “Developmental Domains” worksheet.



Above are the three steps in the WMELS Teaching Cycle. When using this teaching cycle, it is important to always keep the child in the center of our practice.

Ongoing Assessment- In order to make decisions related to a child’s development and set goals that are challenging and achievable, we must first observe what the child’s current level of development is. Observation of what the child currently knows and is able to do is the foundation of the first phase of the Teaching Cycle.

Planning and Curriculum Goals- Gathering developmental information in the assessment phase is important because that information is used to plan appropriate experiences for children. When using the WMELS, it is important to set appropriate expectations. When you have decided what expectations you will have for children and have chosen a curriculum, then you are ready to move to the planning phase of the Teaching Cycle. The link between the Assessment Phase and the Planning Phase is goal setting.

Implementation Phase - We use the goals and activities from the Planning Phase to set up learning environments in which children can learn. The challenge as you plan activities is to focus your attention on “keeping the child at the center of the planning process and to be intentional in the development of experiential activities”.

Going through this thoughtful process in thinking about planning for groups will help you meet the needs of individual children.

Applying the WMELS through the Teaching Cycle

Complete Assignment #5

**See Assignment #5 in the course materials for
Introduction to the Child Care Profession.**

**Use the “Applying WMELS Through the Teaching Cycle”
worksheet.**

Common Uses for WMELS

WMELS “One Tapestry, Many Threads”

Complete Assignment #3, Question #3

Read pages 7 & 8 of in the WMELS book - “One Tapestry, Many Threads”.

See Assignment #3 Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards in the course materials for Introduction to the Child Care Profession.

Complete Question #3 on your own paper.

Use of WMELS in Wisconsin

How are educators throughout the state using the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards?

www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-stories.php

Complete Assignment #3, Question #4

Go to www.workandfamilyconsulting.biz.

Click on “Resources”

Click on “Introduction to the Child Care Profession”

Click on “Wisconsin Collaborating Partners” under Learning Plan 6

See Assignment #3 in the course materials for Introduction to the Child Care Profession.

Complete Question #4 on your own paper.

What's Happening with the WMELS?

- WMELS Trainings
- Child Care Credentials
- Technical Colleges and Universities
- Head Start Outcome Framework
- Common Core State Standards
- IDEA Child Outcomes

- View www.workandfamilyconsulting.biz. Click on "Resources" and "Introduction to the Child Care Profession. Click on Collaborating Partners in Learning Plan 6.
- Current Child Care Credentials that include WMELS content are: Infant Toddler Credential, Preschool Credential, Inclusion Credential
- Technical Colleges are using the WMELS Training Content for entry level Child Care Courses
- Some Wisconsin Universities and Colleges are offering undergraduate and graduate credit for participants who attend WMELS Trainings
- Some Wisconsin Universities are offering Online WMELS Training through Outreach
- The Head Start Outcome Framework is aligned with the WMELS
- The Common Core State Standards are aligned with the WMELS (refer to pages 109-113 of the WMELS)
- The IDEA Child Outcomes are aligned with the WMELS (refer to pages 114-115 of the WMELS)

For More Information...
WMELS

[http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-
about.php](http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/wmels-about.php)

Complete Assignment #3, Question #5

Review the internet site above by going to:

www.workandfamilyconsulting.biz

**Click on “Resources” & “Collaborating Partners” in
Learning Plan 6.**

**See Assignment #3 Wisconsin Model Early Learning
Standards in the course materials for Introduction to
the Child Care Profession.**

Complete Questions #5 & #6 on your own paper.