



Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines

GETTING COLORADO'S CHILDREN OFF TO A STRONG START

What children experience and learn from birth through third grade lays the foundation for their success. No matter the role we have in kids' lives – whether as first-time parents, teachers, childcare providers, or involved relatives, friends or neighbors – we all play an important part in their development.

The **Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines** offer practical tips that everyone can use to help our children get off to a happy and healthy start. Colorado's early childhood advocates and experts spent countless hours creating these Guidelines, which reflect the latest national research and broadly accepted strategies currently used statewide.

USING THE GUIDELINES IS SIMPLE:

1. Reference the Guidelines to learn about child development.
2. Try out the easy, age-appropriate tips and suggestions to help children learn.
3. Check back with the Guidelines as children grow so you can continue to support their development.

AS CHILDREN DEVELOP, PAY ATTENTION TO THEIR:

- Physical health
- Feelings and behaviors
- Problem-solving and learning

KEEP IN MIND:

The Guidelines describe how a typical child develops but it is important to understand that each child learns and grows at his or her own pace. Since all children are different, caregivers should talk with a health care provider or other trusted professional about any questions or concerns. For more information, please visit EarlyLearningCO.org/contact.



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During the first four months of life, babies change and grow quickly. Newborns learn by seeing, listening and touching the things that surround them. They begin to communicate what they need, and they develop a sense of attachment and security with their caregivers.

KIDS THIS AGE MAY:	HOW YOU CAN HELP THEM DEVELOP:
Be sensitive to loud sounds, bright lights, or activity, and they may suddenly throw their arms out to the sides when startled.	These are normal responses. Move them to a quiet atmosphere to protect them from too much noise or activity.
Learn to adjust their posture for comfort and snuggle into a caregiver's body when being held or fed. <i>*NOTE: Babies who are born early may move differently or use body positions that are different from those of typical babies.</i>	Offer a variety of positions for them when they are awake, such as in your arms, on your shoulder, or on the baby's back, sides, or stomach, to promote body movement and to acquaint babies with different postures.
Begin to follow their parents' and caregivers' faces with their eyes, later moving their head. Copy facial expressions in response to parents' or caregivers' voices or smiles.	Build skills and trust simply by looking at them warmly and quietly when they are awake. Match the baby's level of interest and ability to take in sounds and actions.
Develop a sense of trust and security with parents and caregivers and feel secure with their parents and caregivers.	Provide consistent routines that help them know what to expect. This may mean doing some things, such as feeding and changing, the same way each time.

