

Getting Started with

FunShine
Online[®] 

Early Learning Curriculum at Your Fingertips!

Table of Contents

	Page
Guiding Principles, Program Goals, Our Curriculum	3
The FSO Digital Advantage	4
Implementing FSO Digital Curriculum	5
FSO Comprehensive Curriculum Components	6
Working with Infants and Toddlers (birth to 3 years)	7
Preparing the Environment	
Relationships	
Managing Behavior	
Creating a Daily Routine	
Scaffolding	
Monitoring Development	
Developmental Domains for Infant and Toddlers	
Working with Preschoolers (3 to 5 years)	14
Preparing the Environment	
Your Role	
Behavior Management: Guiding Behavior	
Group Activities	
Free Play and Centers	
Scaffolding	
Monitoring Development	
Developmental Domains for Preschoolers	
Inclusion: Serving Children with Disabilities	21
Holiday Celebrations	23
General Materials to Have on Hand	24
Birth to Three Learning Goals and Objectives	25
Three to Five Learning Goals and Objectives	26
Research Base for the FunShine Online® Curriculum	28
Published Research	31

Guiding Principles

Research shows that relationships play a critical role in the brain development of infants and toddlers. Activities for infants and toddlers are planned to help adults build strong relationships by paying attention to children's feelings, interests, and needs. Active learning and choice are encouraged so that children can grow and develop in a loving environment.

As toddlers transition to preschool age, they learn more and more by doing, and they need many opportunities to explore and grow. Preschool activities foster creativity and promote emotional, cognitive, social, language and physical development. Appropriate activities build self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning.

Program Goals

- The curriculum will be based on current research and sound educational theories of early childhood learning and development.
- We will provide a wide range of hands-on activities and material suggestions, allowing children to experiment and explore their surroundings.
- The activity and project suggestions provided in our curriculum are aligned with specific Learning Goals and Objectives.
- The program will encourage involvement of family members in each child's learning.

Our Curriculum

- Emphasizes safety. Providers choose only the activities that are appropriate for the children in their group, and supervision is a requirement.
- Provides consistency and a predictable routine, which is comforting to children. Children are relaxed and ready to learn when they can anticipate what is happening next. As children move through developmental milestones they will need to practice skills at which they are successful. The variety of skill levels will vary greatly with any group of children, even those that are all the same chronological age. Only you know how long to stick with an activity for the benefit of the children in your care. Activities may change or be repeated. You may spend fewer or more minutes on a specific activity; the daily/weekly routine is a guide.
- Includes open-ended activities and suggested materials that build a learning community in your program. When materials can be used in a variety of ways, more children benefit. Activities that allow for multi-ages and multi-skill levels will include more children. Older, or children with advanced skills will be models for younger children or those who have not yet attained the skill. Activities in this curriculum encourage children to work together, share, and be successful at their individual skill level.
- Encourages participation in two and three dimensional art, music, dramatic play, and creative movement. We provide the activities and suggested materials for you to expand learning and experiences around a theme or topic.
- Promotes multi-sensory experiences. Many opportunities are included in our activities that allow children to learn through touch, smell, taste, vision, and hearing. We know that children learn most when information is provided through all the senses.
- Invites exploration and discovery. The activities for fine motor and creative art include open-ended questions to promote thinking and problem solving. Teachers who model curiosity and wonder will help children reach new levels of development and deeper understanding of concepts.



The Funshine Online (FSO) Digital Advantage

Lesson planning gets a whole lot easier when you choose FunShine Online curriculum. Whether you sign up for our Basic or Premium Plan of membership, creating lesson plans has never been easier.

Comprehensive Curriculum

- ☀ Developmentally appropriate activities for ages birth to 5 years
- ☀ Extension, adaptation, and scaffolding suggestions built in
- ☀ Printable resources that support activities are linked within applicable activities
- ☀ Over 2,900 activities and dozens of themes from which to choose
- ☀ Easy-to-follow instructions for every activity
- ☀ Parent communication tools provided
- ☀ Coming soon: link to www.LifeCubby.me

Convenient

- ☀ No elaborate training to get started
- ☀ Ready-to-use calendars of lesson plans provided with every theme
- ☀ Create your own them by using our Special Search feature
- ☀ Use in single or multiage settings
- ☀ Create your lesson plans with the click of a mouse – saves planning time
- ☀ Plan anytime – FSO is available 24-7
- ☀ Plan using your favorite electronic device
- ☀ Digital music and website links embedded in activities

Cost-Effective

- ☀ Pricing is by provider, not by child
- ☀ No shipping fees for curriculum materials
- ☀ Activities use common household and classroom materials

Customizable

- ☀ Create your own themes by searching our database
- ☀ Create lesson plans based on certain skills upon which you want to focus

Implementing FunShine Online Digital Curriculum

1. Getting Started

Congratulations! You have chosen to use FSO to meet your curriculum needs and will soon discover that lesson planning has never been so easy. The next big decision you will need to make is choosing between the Basic and Premium Plans of membership. Check out our Professional Development options to help you get started as well!

2. Lesson Planning

Whether you chose the Basic or Premium level, lesson planning will be stress-free. We provide the themes, activities, and the calendar to organize your lesson plans. Choose one of our themes and populate your calendar with comprehensive lesson plans in a matter of seconds, or create your own theme, using our Special Search feature to help you find activities and plan your lessons.

3. Gathering Materials and Resources

Once you have built your calendar, click the Materials List button to see a list of materials you will need for the week. You can also click each day of the week in your Calendar to view resources you may wish to print. Remember you don't have to print everything!

4. Setting Up Your Environment

Now take some time to consider your environment using the time you saved in lesson planning. Is there a dramatic play area that needs to be set up in this week's lesson plans? Do you need to gather some theme-related books or music? With FSO, you have the time you need to create the best learning environment possible!



Working with Infants and Toddlers (birth to 3 years)

Preparing the Environment

Our birth to three activities promote guided discovery and multisensory hands-on learning in a safe, organized, yet flexible environment. Whether you are using these flexible, developmentally appropriate activities in an infant/toddler classroom or in a family-based program, the following information will help you make the most of the activities included in each theme. Contact us if you are interested in training to help you set up the most developmentally appropriate environment possible.

Basic Considerations

1. Ensure Safety

Environments must be secure. Conduct a quick safety check each day, looking for any hazards, such as small objects that may be a choking hazard, frayed carpets, or broken materials. Cover all electrical outlets. Gate stairs and keep first aid and cleaning supplies out of reach. Choose only activities that are safe and appropriate for the ages and abilities of the children in your group. Supervise children at all times.

2. Create Space to Move Freely

An environment that is designed for individual exploration, discovery, and play-based activities will enhance development. Once children are mobile, they do well if they are able to move and explore freely and widely. The environment should support movement and physical challenges. Abundant floor time is extremely important to infants' development. Limit use of playpens, swings, or walkers, and avoid using car seats inside. (Car seats are intended for use in cars.) Devices like these limit movement, which in turn limits physical development. A safe area must be designated where infants can move freely. Be mindful of traffic patterns for mobile children. Leave substantial space for those beginning walkers, cruisers and crawlers. Remember to use soft barriers to protect infants who are not yet crawling from children who are moving around.

3. Place Manipulatives within Reach

Arrange safe toys on low, open, sturdy shelves. Fewer is better. Don't overcrowd shelves with too many choices. Limit the amount of materials that light up, make noises, or are brightly colored to avoid overstimulation. Rotate materials to keep items interesting and new. Observe how the children use or don't use materials. Provide duplicates of the most popular objects. Sharing is too difficult of a concept at this age!

4. Quiet Spaces

Every environment should include a place where an infant or toddler can be alone, yet still supervised by an adult. Include a cozy, small space for one or two children to sit or lie quietly. They may want to look at books, or just relax on soft, comfortable furniture, mats, or pillows. Plan for this area to be away from the blocks, music or other areas with lots of noise or visual stimulation.



5. Natural Items

Try to include nature in your environment. Perhaps you can include a nontoxic hanging plant or a fish in the room, or set up a bird feeder outside an easily accessible window. Be sure no plant in your environment is poisonous. Contact your local or national poison center for more information. Your county extension agent may be able to suggest safe plants that grow well where you live. When you can't take the children to natural settings, bring nature to the children! Seasonally add pumpkins, snow, leaves, or other interesting natural materials to your sensory tables or a plastic tub on the floor. Infants/toddlers need to experience sights, sounds, textures, smells, and tastes every day.

6. Learning Centers

Children like to practice using materials repeatedly. After you have introduced an activity or new material, you may want to create an area to highlight it or make it available to children for an extended period. You may want to designate one area of your environment for a specific purpose. Some ideas for center areas are: Music, Art, Dramatic Play, Blocks, a Science or Math Station, a Writing Table, and a Book or Quiet Area. If you do not have space for all of these or additional specific theme areas, choose a few. Rotate materials and furniture to accommodate different areas or themes over time.

Relationships

Interpreting Infant and Toddler Cues

Even though infants and toddlers may not yet be communicating with words or may have very limited vocabularies, their behaviors, facial expressions, body language, and sounds tell us plenty. They will let you know when they are hungry, sleepy, overstimulated, or ready for interaction. They will let you know if their diapers need changing or if they are uncomfortable. Remember that each infant has a personal way of communicating. No two are alike!

The challenge is to interpret the signals and respond appropriately. At first, an infant's cues may not be interpreted accurately. For example, a caregiver may try to feed a fussy infant who actually just needs to be held and comforted. Don't get discouraged! Give yourself time! Every response by the caregiver, even if it is not the right one, sends a message to the infant that cues are effective in getting what is needed. At the same time, the infant learns which cues work or do not work.

Research has shown the way caregivers respond to infants and toddlers has a correlation to the amount of stress the children experience. If there is no response to their cues, the infants/toddlers show signs of stress. It is important to respond quickly so children feels secure and supported.



Attachment and Primary Caregiver Relationships

Research tells us that every aspect of development in early childhood is impacted by nurturing and caring relationships. Children need to know that you are a primary source of support when their parents are away. Your interactions with each child and your attention to his or her needs will help each child feel safe and secure. If there is more than one adult per group of children, divide the children and assign a primary caregiver to each group.

Assigning a primary caregiver makes it easier to build a bond and a relationship with each child.



The key to effective caregiving is a good relationship. When you respond to each child's needs consistently, promptly, and lovingly, you gain trust and lay the foundation for a caring relationship. The following tips will help you build strong relationships with the infants and toddlers in your care:

1. Be dependable. Let the children know they can count on you. Keep your promises. Attend to children's needs (diapering, feeding, etc.) in a timely manner. When you respond as quickly as you are able, children will learn that you will not keep them waiting. They will not have to guess if you will be there for them, creating security and trust.
2. Look, listen, and respond. Give a child your full attention. Sometimes children just need to check in with you visually. Smile, wink, or just watch so children knows they are important to you and everything is okay.
3. Use caring words and a gentle tone. Even infants are sensitive to the tone of voices. You must model the volume and type of words you wish children to use. Be mindful of your attitude, disposition, and how you communicate to children. They will follow your lead.
4. Adapt daily routines to meet individual needs. Be respectful. Offer a bottle to an infant who is hungry, even if it is not a scheduled meal or snack time. Allow a toddler time to finish looking at a book before a diaper change. Think to yourself, how would I treat my best friend? Ask children if they are ready before a transition or remind them of what is happening next. Infants set their own schedules for feeding, diapering, and sleeping. Toddlers need a routine with flexibility to ensure they receive enough attention and timely nutrition, sleep, and attention to diapering.
5. Be consistent and responsive. Attending to a child's physical and emotional needs builds their sense of security. For example, respond promptly to a child who is crying. Ask, even the infant, what is the matter? How can I help you? You will learn the meaning of individual infant and toddler cries and needs over time. However, treat every circumstance with respect.
6. Respect individual differences. Accept others who have different abilities, cultures, ethnicity, family structure, socioeconomic resources, and values. If you do not understand a process, practice or tradition, ask the parent/guardian about it. Do not go against a parental wish of diet, toileting, sleeping, or playing preferences. If needed, set aside a conference time to discuss these issues with parents/guardians. Do not assume anything. It is best to ask for clarification and resolve any differences you may have with the parents as soon as possible. It is your responsibility to learn about the family culture and develop a plan, with the family, which will allow the maximum growth and development of their child in a loving, nurturing environment.

Managing Behavior – Caregiver Tips

Behavior is a means of communication. When infants/toddlers exhibit challenging behaviors, they are trying to communicate. They are trying to tell us about an object, a person, or an activity they want or do not want. Our job is to figure out what they are trying to communicate and help them find a better way. Avoid talking with other adults about a child's challenging behavior in front of the child.

Arching back, kicking, waving arms irritable: The infant/toddler may be overstimulated. Place the child on your lap and rub his back to calm him. Focus on sensory input that is occurring in your environment. Consider removing hanging objects of very bright colors or patterns that may be adding too much visual stimulation. Evaluate your noise level, and the smells and textures in your environment. Check the child's temperature. Is he cold? Is he wrapped or dressed too warmly? Does the child appear to be in pain? Do a quick overall check for insect bites, bruises, or other injuries, or allergic reactions.

Biting: Consider the following – Provide clean and safe mouthing objects by rotating and cleaning toys, and keep teething toys in every room; serve small bits of frozen vegetables from the freezer to your teething toddlers; give lots of attention throughout the day; model other ways to get attention; reinforce positive social behavior; reassure the child that he is safe; offer numerous toys of the same kind; try to catch frustration before it rises too high; stay close to chronic biters. When a child bites another child, say to the child "Biting hurts" and allow the child to see you comfort the hurt child. **Never** bite a child to show how it feels to be bitten.

Chewing fingers, rooting/moving mouth, fussy: Infant may be hungry or teething. Make eye contact with him during feeding. Provide teething rings that are cooled and placed within easy reach for you to give children when they are needed.

Climbing on tables: Provide age-appropriate climbing equipment. Model ways for the children to ask for objects that are out of reach. Say "no" sparingly, redirect instead. Save "no" for dangerous situations so it will be more effective. Remind children when necessary that "feet stay on the floor."

Clinging/crying: Give empathy and acknowledge the child's feelings. Use words to name the feeling. For example, "I see you are sad." Offer access to your lap. Reassure the child that he is okay and that you will help him. Interact with the child. Make eye contact, address him by name, sing, smile, coo, and laugh. Include an object you know the child is fond of or brought from home to help in times of crisis or transition. Encourage families to leave photos of themselves with you to display. Visit the photos during stressful times. Allow children to carry the photo if that reassures them.

Kicking toys or other children: Play games that require marching and stomping. Offer balls to kick for outdoor play; and clearly express that it is not acceptable to kick others. Help supply language to children who are kicking for attention or to resolve conflict. Remind children to use their words to get help and model sign language when appropriate. Show children alternative ways to play with toys rather than kicking them.

Pinching: Through observation, try to figure out why the child is pinching. Is it for attention, experimentation, or in defense of themselves? Demonstrate using gentle hands and soft strokes. Even though she will not understand completely, explain that pinching hurts. **Never** pinch a child to show how it feels to be pinched. Offer more fine motor activities that require the pinching grasp.

Pulling hair: Model gentle touching using dolls or stuffed animals. Use words to help the child connect with other children. Say, “That hurts,” when he pulls your hair. **Never** pull hair to show how it feels to for hair to be pulled.

Rubbing eyes/ears, fussy: The infant/toddler may be tired. If he rubs his eyes or ears often, inform the parent or guardian. Watch for other symptoms of illness. Occasionally check if the infant/toddler can hear sounds in your environment.

Running indoors: Designate a safe place to run outdoors. Encourage marching or hopping for indoors instead of running. Plan and use an indoor obstacle course that includes crawling, stepping over, going around, going under, etc. Emphasize the concepts/words as the children complete each task. Remind the children when necessary to “use their walking feet.”

Throwing heavy toys: Offer soft things to throw indoors, into buckets, wastebaskets or other containers. Draw a circle, rectangle, or triangle with tape on a carpet or area rug to use as a target. Use simple, clear language to communicate limits about what can be thrown. Offer a variety of balls for outdoor play. Model appropriate tossing of beanbags, balls, and pillows to the targets. Emphasize how you are holding the item, aiming, and tossing.

Whining: Provide words to communicate in a quiet, calm voice. Repeat what the child is saying and encourage him to say it as you do. Give the child your full attention to figure out what he really needs. Help the child get engaged in an activity that interests him.

Creating a Daily Routine

Infants should eat, sleep, and have diaper changes as needed throughout the day maintaining as regular a routine as possible. Work with parents to plan individual schedules as dictated by the needs and actions of the infant.

Arrival/Breakfast – Language Development

While children are eating, share the vocabulary words or read a story.

Morning Play – Physical, Language, Social-Emotional, and Cognitive Development

As children play, watch for the best times to present songs, games, projects or other activities to a small group or one-on-one. Initially, toddlers may not want to participate in a large group activity. However, with your model of enthusiasm, their interest will build. If a child remains uninterested, allow that child to use other materials in a learning center or another area of your room.

Lunch – Repeat Language and Even a Song During Lunch Routines

Lunch can be a wonderful social situation with rich vocabulary. This can be a time for you to listen and for children to communicate with each other.

Rest/Nap

As children settle down you might talk about the story from the morning, reread it, or read another short storybook. Consider repeating any additional quiet activities in which the children show interest.

Play

Repeat activities from the morning or offer new activities for **physical, cognitive, and creative exploration**. If children did not participate earlier, they may want to try it now. If they enjoyed participating, they will likely want to do it again!

Scaffolding

Scaffolding is a way of supporting children as they learn and can easily be used in an early childhood setting. Opportunities to do this are featured throughout activities for birth to three. Childcare providers can help children explore subject matter through activities and hands-on learning, discovering what children know about a subject and what they would like to learn. Support children's interests, asking open-ended questions and offering new materials to explore that encourage them to think more deeply. Help children build upon prior knowledge as they explore new concepts and ideas. Offer intriguing materials and experiences to help the children extend their knowledge base through play. The key is to offer children just enough help and support to move forward in their learning and then to gradually withdraw your help as it is no longer needed.

Monitoring Development

FunShine Online® provides an Assessment Pack to assist you in monitoring children's skill acquisition on an ongoing basis. Tracking student progress regularly helps you plan activities and strategies to best meet the needs of each child. See the FunShine Assessment Pack for more information and contact us if you would like training in providing authentic assessments.

Learning Goals and Objectives

A comprehensive list of skills for ages birth to 36 months is found at the end of this guide. Domains (developmental areas) specific to infants and toddlers are divided into skill sets and codes that you can use to monitor a child's achievements at several intervals throughout the year. Objectives are listed at the top of each activity with appropriate codes. Learning Goals and Objectives are not intended to be a developmental screening. Developmental screenings determine children's ability to acquire skills, while our Assessment Pack is used to measure the skills they are currently demonstrating.

The Learning Goals and Objectives we have developed are similar to those presented by most states. Please check our website for a correlation chart matching our goals and objectives to those in your state.

Developmental Domains for Infants and Toddlers

Our curriculum for infants and toddlers is designed with the goals of promoting self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning. Each activity included in FSO addresses one or more developmental areas, or domains. Each domain has several sub-domains. The FSO identified domains and sub-domains for infants and toddlers are:

Language Development

- Listening
- Communicating
- Emergent Literacy

Social/Emotional Development

- Trust
- Relationships
- Self-Awareness
- Self-Regulation

Physical Development

- Gross Motor
- Fine Motor
- Wellness

Cognitive Development

- Exploration
- Memory
- Emergent Math
- Dramatic Play
- Art
- Music and Movement

Approaches to Learning

- Curiosity
- Persistence
- Problem Solving



Working with Preschoolers (3-5 years)

Preparing the Environment

Set aside a period of time each week to get organized and prepare for the following week. We provide a print button for the Materials Checklist in the database to help you prepare more quickly

Whether you build your own calendar or download a ready-to-use calendar from FunShine Online®, be sure to have plenty of options to choose from each day. Look through the Calendar you built ahead of time and decide the order in which you complete the activities. Take time to think of individual children and the developmental appropriateness of each activity. Decide which children will complete each activity ahead of time and make plans for children to work on other things.

Many of our customers ask us how much time our program will take each day. You can provide the best situation to promote early learning by offering interesting and challenging opportunities for exploration throughout the day and allowing children to choose what is intriguing to them. Learning should happen all day long. At the same time, we realize that children need a certain amount of routine and structure within each day. Predictable routines give them a sense of security and allow your day to transition smoothly between arrivals, snacks/meals, naps, play activities, and departures.

Your Role

In early childhood, our common goal is to provide opportunities for children to learn and grow. We strive to allow children to become independent thinkers and problem-solvers. It is your job to provide a quality, safe and nurturing setting supplied with developmentally appropriate materials and a relaxed, flexible yet predictable schedule.

On some days, children may have little or no interest in the activities you have planned. If this is the case, allow them to choose alternatives. Be ready to change plans if children seem out of sorts, tired, or need additional large motor play to burn energy. Children must be interested and ready to learn in order for the activity to be of any value to them.

Allow for individuality, especially with art activities. Give children ample time to complete their creations. Each child's project should look unique. There should be no "right" or "wrong" way to use materials. You do not want to do projects and activities for the children. Ask children to tell you about their completed projects. Ask open-ended questions while the children are exploring and creating.

Behavior Management: Guiding Behavior

Behavior is a means of communication. When young children exhibit challenging behaviors, they are trying to communicate something. They are trying to tell you about an object, a person, or an activity they want or do not want. Your job is to figure out what they are trying to communicate and help them find a better way. There are simple common-sense strategies that can be used to effectively guide the behavior of young children.

Establish Expectations

Rules that are fair and consistently enforced, along with familiar routines, help children know what to expect and to understand their limits. Following the same routine each day and telling the children in advance when there will be a change may help reduce anxiety. Experiment with your daily routine until you find one that is easy to follow and meets the needs of your group.

- Consistency counts. Be clear in stating the expectations and consequences of children's behavior. Set guidelines and limits and stick to them.
- Observe children carefully as they are engaging in activities. Anticipate and act upon inappropriate behavior by redirecting the child to another activity or area before her behavior escalates. If there are too many children in one area at once and you anticipate problems arising, consider offering a new activity in a different part of the room to disperse the children and eliminate crowding. Introduce new activities or toys if it appears that children are becoming bored. Offering new toys and activities frequently may help alleviate inappropriate behaviors.
- Keep wait time to a minimum. Expecting young children to wait while having nothing to do can often lead to misbehavior. Consider singing songs, playing games, or giving the children something to do while they are waiting to reduce inappropriate behaviors such as pushing in line, running, and bothering friends. Try to keep transitions short and fun to alleviate wait time.
- When a child is misbehaving, try to ignore the inappropriate behavior if possible and help focus his attention elsewhere. When the inappropriate behavior stops, be sure to give him positive attention right away, telling him what he is doing well.

Be Sure Activities are Age-Appropriate

Provide opportunities for children to engage in age-appropriate activities that are not too difficult. When children are asked to do tasks that are too lengthy or difficult, they can become frustrated, which may lead to inappropriate behaviors. Consider modifying activities for children who may get frustrated easily or have a short attention span.



Reinforce Positive Behavior

Use gentle reminders when explaining your expectations and redirecting children to more appropriate behavior. Teach conflict resolution techniques that guide children to identify problems and attempt to resolve them in a positive manner. Reinforce positive behavior often throughout the day. Praise children for their effort to improve behavior and make good choices.

Structure the Environment for Success

Room arrangement plays a large role in eliminating potential problems such as running, being too crowded, having enough space for activities, and the noise level in the room. If the room arrangement is not working for your group, consider experimenting with the layout until you find an arrangement that works well.

Allow Children to...

- Make acceptable choices. Give children the opportunity to make choices throughout the day to reduce frustration and build independence and self-esteem. Offering choices may- help children feel empowered, leading to less frustration and inappropriate behaviors.
- Experience logical consequences. Remind children of limits and consequences in positive ways. When misbehavior occurs, deal with the behavior quickly in a firm, assertive manner. Be consistent with your reaction to misbehavior from day to day. Use time-out as a last resort to help the child regain control of her behavior.

Group Activities

Start Your Day

In each FunShine Online® ready-to-use calendar, you will notice that we begin each day with a collection of group activities. If you choose to build your own calendar, you may wish to build your daily activities in the same way. We supply a set of activities you may choose from to help you start your day. The **Daily Basics** activities introduce and reinforce language, literacy, and math concepts.

Discuss/Do

In **Discuss/Do** activities, you will find opportunities for children to listen, speak, and expand vocabulary. Plan to do at least a few of these things near the start of each day after basic routines are completed. When using **Things to Talk About**, honor a child's sometimes lengthy sharing of ideas. You may want to write down what children say or questions they have for future discovery or research, ideas for props specific to the theme, or items that will enhance your discussions. Family participation and community involvement ideas are also provided. These activities can be repeated later in your day or reviewed in another group/circle time. Your daily schedule should be fairly consistent, but flexible enough to make the most of "teachable moments."

Music and Movement

In **Songs and Rhymes** activities, we offer a rhyme, finger play, or song. Many times if there is a song or melody referenced in the activity, we have attached a digital copy. You can simply click the link to play the music.

Music can be used in many ways to complement and expand other curriculum components. It assists in language skills, as well as gross and fine motor skill development. Music can also provide opportunities for social interaction, encourage creativity, reinforce math and science, and increase imagination. Much of the music in our curriculum takes the form of familiar tunes with either new or familiar words.

Movers and Shakers

These activities include large or small group games or creative movement suggestions. Preschool children need lots of “wobble time” and exercise to develop their minds and bodies! Large muscle activities also help children develop coordination and build strength.

If you build your own calendar, be sure to include at least some kind of movement in your schedule each day. Try to take children outdoors as much as possible (weather permitting) in order to provide the space needed for active play like running, jumping, or riding toys. Just when you are tiring of an activity, children are learning all the words, actions, and the sequence of the task. Repeat and review games and songs. Ideally, children should go outside once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Free Play and Centers

By organizing your setting into learning centers or specific play areas, you will be able to accommodate exploration, make good use of the activities in FunShine Online®, meet children’s needs, and make your days flow more smoothly. This can be done simply and without a great deal of space or expense.

- Look for ways to organize areas into centers where a certain type of activity can be the focus. For example, you may set aside one area for blocks and manipulatives (puzzles, etc.), another area as a dramatic play center with a play kitchen or dress-up clothing, and another as an art center where children have access to paper, crayons, scissors, and glue. Avoid organizing centers that may have high noise levels (blocks, dramatic play) by quiet centers (language, writing).
- Centers should be large enough to accommodate several children at a time. Look for ways to arrange furniture and toys to provide boundaries. You can do this even with a small play area and limited materials, such as area rugs, low sturdy shelving units, taped lines on carpet, etc. It will help you to maintain order and provide children with a sense of where things belong.
- Centers should have materials rotated in and out of them on a continual basis. Pay close attention to the children’s interest levels. If they are no longer choosing a center to play in, bring in new materials. Try to include materials that are tactile, unusual, nature-based, and relate to the themes or topics at that time.
- Look for new items that might be unfamiliar, but intriguing, to children. When covering a specific theme or topic, ask children and families to bring in items from their yards, home, or travels. A family visiting a beach, for example, might be willing to share seashells, beach sand, or pieces of driftwood when this topic is in your calendar. Seasonally, go on short field trips or walks and collect materials for your science center.



Invite children to bring in leaves, flower blossoms, bugs, and other interesting things they might find. You may create a new center or area based on what the children are finding or are most interested in as you complete activities.

- Children should be allowed to extend play activities through the entire classroom - whether inside or outside. For example, materials and items added to enhance a science area may be carried over to complement play in the dramatic play area. A book about vegetables may be displayed or used in the science area.
- Children will naturally move materials back and forth between centers as their play dictates. For example, if tree bark or cross sections of a tree trunk are included in a science center, children may transfer those same materials into a dramatic play area and haul them in toy trucks. Seashells placed in a science center might be carried to the reading corner that has been supplemented with books about seashells or the ocean. Maintain order by using small trays, photos for labeling where items belong, or clear plastic boxes with photo/word labels. Ask the children to help when setting up centers. They will enjoy and respect the arrangement when they have ownership in its creation.

While the activities in FunShine Online® can be used if you choose not to set up centers or areas, the activities often provide suggestions for center-based activities. If you are unfamiliar with learning centers, this will provide you with a great deal of guidance and support. You may also be interested in one of our FunShine Online training sessions that focuses on planning appropriate activities for your children. Contact us for more information.

Scaffolding

Scaffolding instruction is a tool that can help provide a natural way for children to learn by reflecting on something they have experienced. Scaffolding is supporting the child in learning something new based on what they already can do or know. This tool optimizes young children's learning by providing a supportive environment while facilitating independence.

Scaffolding is easy to use in an early childhood setting. You can begin by exploring subject matter through activities and hands-on learning, discovering what children know about a subject and what they would like to learn. Once you have an idea of their knowledge base and inquisitiveness, you can begin encouraging them to think more deeply. You can guide a child by asking open-ended questions, encouraging him to explore concepts and build upon prior knowledge. Asking open-ended questions causes children to think deeper and formulate answers. You can then offer materials or experiences for children to extend their knowledge base through play. Scaffolding encourages children to think deeper, formulate their own ideas, and learn how to become independent learners. The key is to offer children just enough help and support to move forward in their learning and then gradually withdraw your help as it is no longer needed. We encourage you to look for ways to challenge children by building on their experiences.

Monitoring Development

FunShine Online® provides an Assessment Pack to assist you in monitoring children’s skill acquisition on an ongoing basis. Tracking student progress regularly helps you plan activities and strategies to best meet the needs of each child. See the FunShine Assessment Pack for more information and contact us if you would like training in providing authentic assessments.

Learning Goals and Objectives

A comprehensive list of goals and objectives for ages 3-5 is included near the end of this document. Domains (developmental areas) that are specific to preschool age groups are divided into skill sets and codes that you can use to monitor a child’s achievements at several intervals throughout the year. FunShine Online® provides a list of objective codes at the top of each activity. FunShine’s Learning Goals and Objectives are not intended to be a developmental screening. Developmental screenings determine children’s ability to acquire skills, while our Assessment Pack is used to measure the skills they are currently demonstrating. The Learning Goals and Objectives we have developed are similar to those presented by most states. Please check our website for a correlation chart matching our goals and objectives to those in your state.



Developmental Domains for Preschoolers

Our curriculum for preschoolers is designed with the goal of preparing children to enter and be successful in Kindergarten. Each activity included in FSO addresses one or more developmental areas, or domains. Each domain has several sub-domains. The FSO identified domains and sub-domains are:

Language/Literacy

- Listening
- Conversation
- Vocabulary
- Emergent Reading
- Emergent Writing

Math

- Numbers
- Patterns
- Measurement
- Geometry
- Spatial Relations
- Reasoning

Science

- Observation
- Questioning
- Investigation

Social Studies

- History and Events
- People and the Environment
- Family and Community

Social/Emotional

- Self-Concept
- Relationships
- Emotional Development

Creative Art Expression

- Art
- Music
- Movement and Dance
- Dramatic Play

Physical Development/Health

- Fine Motor
- Gross Motor
- Self-Care

Approaches to Learning

- Imagination
- Curiosity
- Persistence
- Reflection
- Risk-Taking

Inclusion: Serving Children with Disabilities

Thoughtful planning can help you address the needs of children with disabilities so they can be included fully in your program. Think about your environment, your daily schedule, and the obstacles that may keep children from participating and feeling competent. This analysis will help you determine adjustments to make. Here are some ways to help children with disabilities, or any child who is struggling with learning, be more successful in their environment.

Communication

- Use visual and tactile props to accompany stories and songs so children have multisensory ways to help them understand. The props can be used to encourage children to look at the teacher and maintain their attention.
- Use sign language and gestures as needed to help children understand verbal messages. Sign language gives children with limited language another way to communicate their needs.

Daily Schedule and Routine

- Be consistent and keep your schedule and routines the same each day. Follow the same procedure daily during arrival and closing times to facilitate predictability and independence. If changes need to be made during the daily schedule, talk about them with the children as a group at the start of the day or before the change happens.
- Use transition-preparation techniques throughout the day. Object or picture cues that show activities may be helpful for children with learning and language difficulties during transition times. Children with attention or behavior problems might benefit from five-minute, two-minute, or one-minute warnings about upcoming transitions. Children with hearing impairments would benefit from visual cues such as hand gestures or sign language. Most children will benefit from a review of a picture schedule upon arrival and at various points during the day to help them understand what will be happening next.
- Modify activities as needed so all children can participate. It may be necessary to shorten the length, provide different materials, move the activity to a different location, or adapt the materials to ensure that all children have the opportunity to engage in the activity.
- Use peer buddies in interest areas as teaching models. This technique facilitates one-to-one interaction while building peer-mentoring capabilities in children who have strengths in certain areas. Provide toys that are interactive to encourage peer mentoring.

Physical Environment

- Ensure that the physical arrangement of the room allows materials to be accessible by all children. Consider making changes in lighting, noise level, and visual input to meet the needs of the children in your program.
- Label toy and art shelves with pictures to help children understand where materials are to be kept or put away.
- This will help keep things organized and ease the clean-up process while promoting independence and cooperation.
- Use clear visual cues to help children understand where to find their own personal items. Place pictures on coat racks, cubbies, table place mats, and any other places where children may have to find their own belongings.

Assessing Individual Needs

- Assess and identify children's needs for assistive technology with a specialist. Such needs might include large print books for children with visual impairments, auditory trainers for children with hearing deficits, language devices for children with communication difficulties, or adapted equipment for children with orthopedic impairments.
- Be willing to assess the effectiveness of your teaching strategies on a regular basis and make changes accordingly. With your perseverance and the input of parents and professionals, children with disabilities can grow and thrive in your program.

Holiday Celebrations

Holidays are included in our programs for a number of reasons:

- Children, families, and providers love them!
- Holidays are part of a child’s reality, whether at home or in their communities.
- They are a good way to incorporate multicultural education and teach cultural sensitivity.
- A vast majority of our customers want to observe major US holidays in some manner.

Children love holidays and we encourage you to acknowledge them in some way. However, you need to decide what is appropriate within your setting. Find out how important holidays are to the families in your group. Be sensitive to those who do not celebrate “traditional” holidays. Ask if there are holiday activities that they participate in that they may be willing to share. Involve families as much as possible to make sure you are meeting the needs of all children in your group.

As Americans, we live in a country that is culturally diverse. FunShine Online® takes a multicultural educational approach by offering a sample of different cultures and/or religions. This can help you teach children to be tolerant and accepting. We realize some of our customers may want additional material for the children in their group or that some may choose not to participate in such activities. The choice is yours to make. A good way to provide more information is through books, websites, or with supplemental activities in our Holiday Themes. Additionally, many major holidays are faith-based. We choose to include activities for these as well. By offering a broad cultural and theological approach, we hope to foster a worldly knowledge and tolerance that complements all faiths.

You will find cultural and holiday information included in the Holiday Themes under the months in which they occur. You can decide whether to access these activities based on your program’s policies, along with the needs and interests of the children in your group. If your program prefers not to offer certain holiday activities, simply do not include them in your calendar.



General Materials to Have on Hand

Being a childcare professional is a huge job. Both time and money are precious commodities in today's preschool world. Keeping this in mind, FSO has planned activities for your children based on things you might have at home or in storage in your classroom. Many of these items are recyclable and most parents will help you collect them if only you ask. Please see Our Wish List for a sample letter you can send home to enlist the help of parents in collecting some of these materials.

List of Basic Supplies

Paper/Plastic Products

- Multicolored construction paper
- Printer paper
- White cardstock
- Large banner paper
- Paper plates (assorted sizes)
- Paper bags (lunch and grocery sizes)
- Zipper bags (snack, sandwich, quart)
- Disposable cups (small, regular)
- Assorted plastic containers with lids
- Index cards (assorted sizes)
- Tissue paper (assorted colors)
- Streamers (assorted colors)
- Sticky notes (assorted colors and sizes)
- Envelopes (assorted sizes)

Adhesive/Binding Products

- White school glue
- Masking tape
- Scotch tape
- Stapler with staples
- Glue sticks
- Glue dots
- Sticky tack
- Brass fasteners
- Clear contact paper
- Heavy-duty tape

Writing/Painting Supplies

- Crayons
- Washable markers (fine tip and broad)
- Pencils
- Tempera paint
- Small paintbrushes
- Chunky paintbrushes
- Foam paintbrushes
- Sponges
- Finger paint (assorted colors)
- Watercolors (assorted colors)
- Washable ink pads (assorted colors)
- Sidewalk chalk

Recycled Materials

- Cardboard tubes, all sizes
- Egg cartons
- Newspapers
- Clothing for dress up
- Baby food jar lids
- Stackable chip containers with lids
- Empty cardboard boxes, all sizes

Learning Goals and Objectives

For Children Ages 0 – 36 Months

Listed with each activity to help you select and plan for each child's needs.
Some goals and objectives may be observed in daily routines.

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

LISTENING

- L1 Listens and responds with interest to verbal and nonverbal communication of others
- L2 Begins to understand gestures, words, questions, or routines

COMMUNICATING

- L3 Uses sounds, gestures, or actions to express needs and wants
- L4 Imitates sounds, gestures, or words
- L6 Uses consistent sounds, gestures, or words for a variety of purposes
- L8 Participates in simple two-way conversations

EMERGENT LITERACY

- L7 Shows interest in songs, rhymes, and stories
- L8 Shows interest in photos, pictures, and drawings
- L9 Demonstrates interest and involvement with books and other print materials
- L10 Begins to recognize and understand that pictures or symbols can be "read" by others and have meaning
- L11 Understands that people use writing to communicate
- L12 Makes marks with writing tools

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

GROSS MOTOR

- PH1 Moves body, arms, and legs with coordination
- PH2 Demonstrates large muscle balance, stability, control, and coordination
- PH3 Develops increasing ability to change positions and move body from place to place
- PH4 Moves body with purpose to achieve a goal; participates in active games, outdoor play and other forms of physical movement

FINE MOTOR

- PH5 Uses hands or feet to make contact with objects or people
- PH6 Develops small muscle control and coordination
- PH7 Coordinates eye and hand movements
- PH8 Controls small muscles in hands when doing simple tasks
- PH9 Uses different actions on objects (kicks, shakes, pats, swipes)

WELLNESS

- PH10 Shows characteristics of healthy development
- PH11 Becomes more aware of own body
- PH12 Responds well when physical needs are met; tries/consumes a variety of nutritious foods
- PH13 Participates in physical care routines
- PH14 Begins to develop self-help skills
- PH16 Begins to understand safe and unsafe behaviors

APPROACH TO LEARNING

CURIOSITY

- AL1 Exhibits interest, curiosity, and eagerness in exploring the world

PERSISTENCE

- AL2 Stays attentive and engaged for increasing periods of time
- AL3 Finishes self-selected tasks, such as completing a puzzle or listening to a storybook

PROBLEM SOLVING

- AL4 Experiments with different uses for objects
- AL6 Uses a variety of strategies to solve problems

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TRUST

- 8E1 Engages in behaviors that build relationships with familiar adults
- 8E2 Responds differently to familiar and unfamiliar adults
- 8E3 Seeks ways to find comfort in new situations
- 8E4 Shows emotional connection and attachment to others

RELATIONSHIPS

- 8E6 Shows interest in and awareness of other children
- 8E8 Responds to and interacts with other children
- 8E7 Begins to recognize and respond to other children's feelings and emotions
- 8E8 Begins to show concern for others
- 8E9 Learns social skills, and eventually words, for expressing feelings, needs and wants
- 8E10 Uses imitation or pretend play to learn new roles and relationships

SELF-AWARENESS

- 8E11 Expresses feelings and emotions through facial expressions, sounds or gestures
- 8E12 Develops awareness of self as separate from others
- 8E13 Shows confidence in increasing abilities

SELF-REGULATION

- 8E14 Begins to manage own behavior and show self-regulation
- 8E16 Shows ability to cope with stress
- 8E18 Shows increasing independence
- 8E17 Understands simple routines, rules, or limitations

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

EXPLORATION

- C1 Pays attention to people, objects, and sounds
- C2 Uses senses to explore people, objects, and the environment
- C3 Becomes increasingly aware of colors, shapes, patterns, or pictures
- C4 Makes things happen and watches for results or repeats actions

MEMORY

- C6 Shows ability to acquire and process new information
- C8 Recognizes familiar people, places, and things
- C7 Recalls and uses information in new situations
- C8 Searches for missing or hidden objects

EMERGENT MATH

- C9 Shows interest in and awareness of numbers and counting during daily routines and activities.
- C10 Begins to notice differences in size, quantity, and distance (more, all gone, big, little, near, far, long, short, etc.)
- C11 Explores ways objects and people move and fit in space

DRAMATIC PLAY

- C12 Observes and imitates sounds, gestures, or behavior
- C13 Uses objects in new ways or in pretend play
- C14 Uses imitation or pretend play to express creativity and imagination

ART

- C16 Explores and uses a variety of art media

MUSIC AND MOVEMENT

- C18 Shows interest in music and songs
- C17 Explores musical rhythms

Learning Goals and Objectives

For Children Ages 3 – 5 Years

Listed with each activity in to help you select and plan for each child's needs.
Some objectives may be observed during daily routines.

MATH

NUMBERS

- M1 Grows in rote counting and sequencing of numbers
- M2 Recognizes both numerals and number names
- M3 Understands and uses 1-1 correspondence
- M4 Counts and builds sets
- M5 Compares quantities in sets and uses appropriate vocabulary: equal, more, less
- M6 Understands adding and subtracting from a set
- M7 Begins to understand dividing sets into parts up to fourths
- M8 Understands and uses ordinal terms (1st, 2nd, 3rd)

PATTERNS

- M9 Matches or sorts by color, size, shape, texture: classifies by attributes, makes comparisons
- M10 Recognizes patterns: can tell "what comes next?"
- M11 Duplicates simple patterns, then extends and creates patterns
- M12 Identifies pattern groups (red/yellow, kitten/puppy)
- M13 Sorts a group of like objects (small, medium, large, or light, medium, dark)

MEASUREMENT

- M14 Understands, compares, and analyzes quantities of length, height, weight, time, or amount between two or more groups (by pointing to pictures or using words depicting little/big, short/tall, slow/fast, thin/fat, less/more, empty/full, few/many, heavy/light, shallow/deep, narrow/wide)
- M16 Explores and observes ways to use tools to measure objects (e.g., erasers, paper clips, ruler, scale, thermometer, measuring cups, etc.)
- M18 Develops growing abilities to collect, describe, and record information in different ways, such as discussion, maps, charts, or graphs.

GEOMETRY

- M17 Demonstrates age-appropriate knowledge of geometric shapes
- M18 Understands that shapes remain the same when flipped or rotated
- M19 Understands symmetry

SPATIAL RELATIONS

- M20 Understands directions/positional concepts: top/bottom, go/stop, far/near, up/down, over/under, out/in, above/below, in front/behind, inside/outside, etc.
- M21 Describes position from different perspectives: "I am, you are"
- M22 Uses simple directions to move from place to place: obstacle course, directional games, hopscotch

REASONING

- M23 Uses simple strategies to solve mathematical problems
- M24 Experiments with puzzles and blocks to create solutions, build structures, or move through a process to reach a goal

CREATIVE ART EXPRESSION

ART

- A1 Uses a variety of art materials for exploration in the arts and across learning domains
- A2 Creates something unique from other children: creative, imaginative work
- A3 Appreciates artistic creations of others and art events; shares opinions about likes and dislikes

MUSIC

- A4 Knows and sings songs; uses music across learning domains
- A6 Explores with sound, melody, tone, rhythm, beat
- A8 Uses and shows interest in a variety of musical instruments for expression

MOVEMENT AND DANCE

- A7 Participates in creative movement and dance
- A8 Designs original movements and interpretations; uses creative movement and dance across learning domains

DRAMATIC PLAY

- A9 Participates in creative dramatic play and make-believe
- A10 Uses props to enhance play environment

LANGUAGE/LITERACY

LISTENING

- L1 Follows 2 and 3 step directions of increasing complexity
- L2 Gains meaning by listening to stories, informational texts, directions, and conversations
- L3 Understands verbal and nonverbal cues
- L4 Listens and responds to rhymes and rhythms

CONVERSATION

- L5 Expresses needs, wants, thoughts through nonverbal gestures, (exposed to sign language), progressing to verbal cues in English or home language
- L6 Speaks clearly (is understood by both familiar and unfamiliar adults)
- L7 Initiates asking questions and responds in conversation with others
- L8 Shares opinions, experiences, and ideas with others with words
- L9 Uses verbal and nonverbal conversational rules (takes turns, eye contact, loud and soft voice as appropriate, etc.)
- L10 Listens to and repeats words in Spanish language

VOCABULARY

- L11 Demonstrates growing understanding of words and meanings, including language of specific learning domains
- L12 Converses with a rapidly expanding vocabulary
- L13 Connects phrases and sentences to build ideas
- L14 Speaks in sentences using grammar that is age-appropriate

EMERGENT READING

- L16 Shows interest/motivation in reading: following along as a book is read, attempting to read by looking at illustrations or from memory, handling books appropriately, actively chooses books
- L18 Understands text read aloud: recalling part or most of a text or representing it with play or media, asking and answering questions about text read aloud, making predictions based on text read aloud
- L17 Exhibits age-appropriate phonological awareness: combines syllables to make a word, combines words to make compound words, recognizes words that rhyme, associates sounds with letters and words, recognizes alliteration and words that rhyme
- L18 Demonstrates alphabetic knowledge: can recite the alphabet, names or recognizes some letters and sounds – especially own name, recognizes and names most letters
- L19 Understands left to right, top to bottom process of reading
- L20 Understands structure: beginning, middle, end of a story

EMERGENT WRITING

- L21 Shows interest in written expression: scribbling, drawing a person
- L22 Shows awareness of the uses and functions of environmental print, symbols, and other forms of print to convey meaning and recognizes that different text forms are used for different purposes
- L23 Shows awareness that a word is made up of letters
- L24 Begins to copy or write own name
- L26 Demonstrates age-appropriate writing: tracing, copying letters and numbers, copying shapes and symbols

SCIENCE

OBSERVATION

- S1 Explores materials and makes observations, predictions based on information gathered from the senses
- S2 Demonstrates knowledge about self; makes observations about self and life sciences: living vs. nonliving things, nature, environment, weather by physical characteristics
- S3 Makes predictions based on past experiences and observations

QUESTIONING

- S4 Asks why, where, when, how, what, and seeks answers through exploration

INVESTIGATION

- S5 Classifies objects by function
- S8 Uses tools such as scale, magnifier, bug catcher, map, or binoculars for investigation
- S7 Uses "if/then" and "cause/effect" reasoning
- S8 Makes comparisons among objects and groups

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

SELF-CONCEPT

- SE1 Recognizes similarities and differences between self and others: gender, cultural identity, self and family characteristics
- SE2 Develops positive self image: awareness of self as having certain abilities, preferences, characteristics
- SE3 Demonstrates increasing self-direction, independence, and control; increasingly handles transitions appropriately
- SE4 Shows interest and respect for work of self and others; exhibits increasing awareness of positive character traits
- SE5 Chooses new as well as familiar activities
- SE6 Cleans up own work/play space independently

RELATIONSHIPS

- SE7 Uses play to explore and practice social roles and relationships
- SE8 Interacts comfortably with familiar adults
- SE9 Begins to participate as a member of a group: takes turns and shares, sustains interaction by helping, cooperating, expressing interest
- SE10 Interacts with one or more children; develops special friendships
- SE11 Participates in group song, dance, acting/role-play
- SE12 Plays cooperatively with others; resolves some conflicts, uses constructive language
- SE13 Seeks help or information when needed from adults

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- SE14 Recognizes and describes own emotions
- SE15 Manages feelings appropriately
- SE16 Explores emotions through play, art, music, dance
- SE17 Shows empathy and caring to others, respond to others emotions

SOCIAL STUDIES

HISTORY AND EVENTS

- SS1 Shows awareness of concepts of time/sequence of events: past, present, and future and sequence of routines such as bedtime, lunchtime, morning, night, etc.

PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- SS2 Engages in caring for the environment and conservation
- SS3 Describes characteristics of things in the environment and geography of places: home, school, park, community; says name/address/phone number
- SS4 Shows respect for living things

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

- SS5 Understands family roles, relationships, rules, jobs
- SS6 Follows simple rules and routines
- SS7 Shows awareness of diverse backgrounds, cultural/global knowledge
- SS8 Tells functions of some community helpers, parents' jobs, careers
- SS9 Demonstrates growing awareness of community rules, governance, democracy
- SS10 Exhibits awareness of trade to obtain goods and/or services; recognizes that money comes in different forms, such as coins, dollar bills, and credit/debit cards
- SS11 Exhibits some knowledge of technology and media

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT/HEALTH

FINE MOTOR

- PD1 Gains strength and control of small muscles: folding and creasing paper, building with small blocks, manipulating play dough and clay
- PD2 Demonstrates eye-hand coordination: strings beads, completes puzzles, sews through holes in lacing cards, ties knots and loops, tears paper, uses eating utensils, uses a keyboard
- PD3 Uses scissors to cut shapes from paper
- PD4 Begins to control use of writing, drawing, art tools, and art/craft mediums

GROSS MOTOR

- PD5 Demonstrates balance and control of large muscles: walking forward, backward, heel-to-toe, on tiptoe and on a straight line, walking on a balance board, hopping on one foot, jumping with two feet
- PD6 Coordinates movement when walking up and down stairs, running smoothly, kicking a ball, throwing a ball, bouncing and catching a ball, skipping, clapping
- PD7 Develops strength, flexibility, and stamina through vigorous play and by using equipment

SELF-CARE

- PD8 Undresses or dresses self independently, other than help with difficult fasteners
- PD9 Exhibits increasing knowledge of healthy eating, good nutrition: tries new foods, willing to eat well-balanced diet, interested in various tastes, colors, and textures of food
- PD10 Washes hands and face without assistance
- PD11 Brushes teeth independently
- PD12 Uses tissue for nose, napkin for hand/face appropriately, independently
- PD13 Cares for toileting needs independently
- PD14 Participates in a variety of physical activities; exhibits increasing awareness of the importance of exercise
- PD15 Follows basic safety and health rules
- PD16 Demonstrates visual and auditory ability and general good health and sleep habits to enable learning

APPROACHES TO LEARNING

IMAGINATION

- AL1 Shows creativity, flexibility, and inventiveness in play experiences
- AL2 Takes on various roles in make-believe play
- AL3 Uses new strategies to solve problems

CURIOSITY

- AL4 Shows a willingness to participate, is eager to join play events
- AL5 Demonstrates inquisitiveness about subjects and objects

PERSISTENCE

- AL6 Is not easily discouraged, seeks help to overcome problems
- AL7 Works at a task despite distractions or interruptions
- AL8 Usually completes reasonable tasks or stays engaged

REFLECTION

- AL9 Observes or contemplates and applies knowledge to a new situation
- AL10 Generates ideas, suggestions
- AL11 Makes a plan before beginning a task and follows through

RISK-TAKING

- AL12 Welcomes new experiences, situations, play events, materials, friends

Research Base for the FunShine Online® Curriculum

The FunShine Online® digital curriculum is flexible and designed to be used with children from birth to five years of age. The curriculum works particularly well in multi-age settings, but can also be adapted for use in settings that work with a narrower age range. Scaffolding is built into the activities so that teachers can support children of different ages and developmental levels. Children at the same age may be at different developmental stages. Many activities offer suggestions for adjusting the level of difficulty to meet children at their individual levels of development. In addition, periods of free play provide opportunities for children to explore learning centers and practice newly introduced concepts. Activities may be repeated or be added to the environment to allow children to be successful and transfer new skills or ideas into everyday practice.

Theoretical Basis

Members of the Curriculum Design and Development Team at FunShine® work together to create curriculum materials that align with classic child development and learning theories that are widely accepted in the field of early childhood.

Before Learning Is Possible—Maslow

The work of Abraham Maslow describes specific needs of all people. He organized these needs into a hierarchy, usually depicted as a pyramid, showing how our needs are layered and build upon each other. He pointed out that children must have their basic needs met before growth and learning are possible. Children need to have adequate food, clothing, shelter, sleep, feel safe, and be connected to another human being in order to learn.

With this in mind, teachers are encouraged to make sure the necessary physical needs are met. Specific suggestions are included in our activities to help teachers support children's physical and emotional development, including recipes for nutritious food, activities to build relationships with adults and peers, active physical play, and more.

Piaget and Cognitive Development

Jean Piaget identified four stages of cognitive development. Children in FunShine programs begin the Sensorimotor stage and move into the Preoperational Thought stage of development. Children in these two stages of development are still receiving a great deal of information through their senses and by physical movement around their environment. As they move into Preoperational Thought, they can remember things and activities they have seen and done. However, they do not always have the speech and language to express their ideas and may not be able to express their thoughts with the correct sounds, words or word tenses. They need to manipulate objects. They first learn through actions on or about themselves, and then in abstract two-dimensional (paper) examples. This is a rich, foundational time period for learning basic concepts, vocabulary, becoming independent in some self-help skills, and communicating in general. FunShine Online® provides opportunities for children to connect with materials and ideas. The activities allow the teacher to help children understand, practice, and enjoy learning through new experiences.

An important principle of Piaget's findings is that children need hands-on experience with their environment in order to form concepts of the world and how it works. Teachers are encouraged to acknowledge children's ideas and support them nonjudgmentally, so as not to stifle the natural way in which children learn and think.

FunShine Online® includes opportunities to explore the environment, develop motor skills, develop and expand vocabulary, present concepts in playful games and activities, and encourage the individuality and creativity of each child. Through many experiences that are related to themes, the activities build and expand on the skill level of the children in your care. FunShine Online® provides a searchable database that includes sensory, motor, and language development activities, games of memory, classification, physical, natural and

earth science, measurement, one-to-one correspondence, and problem solving. Visual-spatial skills, estimation, observing, comparing and predicting are all processes that are promoted. Teachers are encouraged to extend activities, repeat them, and help children transfer these skills from your programs to home.

Vygotsky and Learning Potential

Lev Vygotsky taught the early childhood community that children's potential for learning is maximized through interacting with peers and adults. That is, they can learn more by interacting with others than they can alone. FunShine Online® activities offer open-ended questions and suggested dialogue to encourage children's thinking and social interaction. The activities provide many opportunities for children to think about why? How? What if? And, what might come next? The teacher is a model to children for prediction and problem solving. The schedule, activities, and materials included allow the teacher to help children learn to make the connections from experiences to understanding concepts. There are activities that are teacher-directed/led, activities which encourage children to work with peers, and opportunities for child-initiated activities and extended play. The teacher is encouraged to be a leader, an observer, and a participant in activities with children.

Vygotsky encouraged adults to understand that children have a Zone of Proximal Development—a range of development that is an ever changing target. With each new skill or concept there is a progression from not understanding, to being made aware of, followed by practice, and finally accomplishment. The adult must allow for all these levels of learning, often with multiple children of multiple age ranges. The curriculum offers many open-ended activities and materials that can help bring about the greatest variety of opportunities for children. Activities are designed to allow the teacher to be intentional about what connection is being made (i.e. the concept, vocabulary, or process). The adult guides the child through a process that will help the child be successful and learn what he/she could not have understood on his/her own.

Erikson's Stages of Development

Erik Erikson developed an approach to psychosocial development that divided the area into eight stages that span from infancy to adulthood. He identified an important event that must be conquered in each stage before progression to the next stage could occur.

From birth to about age one, children are in the stage of Trust vs. Mistrust, which is the foundation for all other life stages. Infants are completely dependent on their caregivers for all of their needs, so the development of trust is affected by the quality of the caregivers. Children must develop a sense of trust before they can move to the next stage of development. To help children build trust with their caregivers, FunShine Online® provides opportunities for caregivers to spend one-on-one quality time as the caregiver sings while changing a diaper, shares a book while snuggled together in a soft chair, and even activities to develop strength and flexibility such as baby yoga. As their sense of trust is developed, children will move toward the next stage.

Two- to four-year-olds are typically in the stage of Autonomy vs. Shame or Doubt. In this stage, independence begins though physical movement around the environment and exploring continues through the senses. Children want to be able to do things for themselves, but often lack the necessary skills to complete the task. Familiar examples are dressing, toileting, pouring, and other self-help skills. If children fail to gain confidence, they doubt their abilities. To address these needs, FunShine Online® offers opportunities for practicing skills with gentle guidance. As children feel they have some self-control they will move forward to the next stage.

Older four-year-olds and children who have turned five typically enter the stage of Initiative vs. Guilt. In this stage, children construct their own ideas, and want to make decisions. They want to please the adults in their environments at home, childcare, and community situations. Consequently, the activities in FunShine Online® enable adults to encourage children's creativity and problem solving. The activities help teachers constantly supply vocabulary, opportunities for reasoning, practice of skills, and gently accept and guide children's efforts.

Research Basis: Standards

State Standards

The curriculum is based on two sets of Learning Goals and Objectives that have been designed to support standards developed by state agencies serving children from ages birth to five. The standards were originally developed in 2008 and based on Head Start early learning guidelines, as well as goals for early learning from Minnesota, Florida, Pennsylvania, and NAEYC. The Goals and Objectives are fluid documents that are continually updated in response to the growing numbers of state standards, and to conform to the latest research in early childhood education. One recent trend we have seen is the affect the Common Core State Standards have had on state early learning goals across the country. Many states, including Maryland, have updated their early learning guidelines by creating a continuum that extends and aligns the Early Learning Guidelines for preschool with the Kindergarten Common Core State Standards. We have updated our Goals and Objectives to reflect these changes.

Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework

Our objectives have been updated to better mesh with the new Head Start standards finalized in September 2011. For example, we now include a domain for Social Studies at the preschool level.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

The activities in FunShine Online® adhere to the principles of developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) as defined in latest position of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) published in 2009.

Accreditation Standards

Since many quality programs seek to achieve accreditation from national organizations, the activities in FunShine Online® are designed to meet the National Association for the Education of Young Children Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria and Guidance for Assessment, and the National Association for Family Child Care Accreditation Standards.

Environmental Rating Scales

The curriculum developers plan activities and make recommendations that align with nationally accepted Environmental Rating Scales, including *the Family Child Care Environmental Rating Scale (Revised Edition)* and the *Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (Revised Edition)*.

Ongoing Review

Curriculum developers maintain memberships in professional organizations to stay abreast of the latest developments and research in early childhood education. Team members regularly attend conferences and read books, journals, state policies, and other relevant information in order to assure that the curriculum is in line with current best practice. We also solicit and consider input from curriculum users.

Published Research

Bredekamp, S., & C. Copple, eds. 2009. *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs*. Third Edition. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

“Children and Families”. 1999-2010. National Head Start Association. www.headstartinfo.org.

Copley, Juanita V. 2000. *The Young Child and Mathematics*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Copple, Carol, and Sue Bredekamp. 2006. *Basics of Developmentally Appropriate Practice: An Introduction for Teachers of Children 3 to 6*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Copple, C. (Ed.). “A World of Difference: Readings on Teaching Young Children”. 2003. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Derks, Fran. Hardin, Belinda J., Lohr, Laura G., and Wesley, Pat. 1998. *The Infant-Toddler Planning Guide*. Kaplan Press.

“Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota’s Early Learning Standards”. 2005. Minnesota Department of Human Services. Roseville: MN Department of Education.

“Exchange”. 2000-2010. *The Early Childhood Leader’s Magazine*. www.childcareexchange.com

“From Neurons to Neighborhoods”, by Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000.

Gould, Patti, and Joyce Sullivan. 2004. *The Inclusive Early Childhood Classroom: Easy Ways to Adapt Learning Centers for All Children*. Beltsville: Gryphon House.

Greenman, Jim, and Stonehouse, Anne. 1996. *Prime Times*. Redleaf Press.

Gronlund, Gaye. 2006. “Make Early Learning Standards Come Alive. Connecting Your Practice and Curriculum to State Guidelines. Redleaf Press.

“Head Start Performance Standards”. 2004. Head Start Bureau. Washington, DC: Department of Health and Human Services. www.headstartinfo.org.

“Inside Pre-K”. 2009-2010. www.preknow.org.

Jalongo, Mary Renck. 2008. *Learning to Listen, Listening to Learn*. NAEYC.

Jensen, E. (2005) “Teaching with the Brain in Mind”, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum.

Kilinker, Joan, Ramminger, Ann, Riley, Dave, and San Juan, Robert R. *Social & Emotional Development*.

Kovach, Beverly, and Da Ros-Voseles, Denise. 2008. *Being with Babies*. Gryphon House.

Marion, Marian. 2010. 8th Edition. *Guidance of Young Children*. Upper Saddle: Merrill.

Meisels, Samuel J., and Sally Atkins-Burnett. 2005. *Developmental Screening in Early Childhood, A Guide*. Fifth Edition. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Morrison, George S. 2008. 11th *Early Childhood Education Today*. Upper Saddle: Merrill.

Neuman, Susan B., Carol Copple, and Sue Bredekamp. 2000. *Learning To Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Owocki, Gretchen. 1999. *Literacy Through Play*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.

Sanders, Stephen W. 2002. *Active for Life: Developmentally Appropriate Movement Programs for Young Children*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Schickedanz, Judith A. 1999. *Much More Than ABCs: The Early Stages of Reading and Writing*. Washington, DC: NAEYC.

Schickedanz, Judith A., and Renee M. Casbergue. 2004. *Writing In Preschool: Learning to Orchestrate Meaning and Marks*. Newark: International Reading Association. Schiller, Pam. 2005. *The Complete Resource Book for Infants*. Gryphon House. Smith, Miriam W., Brady, Joanne P., and Anastasopoulos, Louisa. *User's Guide to the Early Language & Literacy Classroom Observation*. Baltimore, Maryland. 2008.

Taylor, Barbara J. 1999. *A Child Goes Forth: A Curriculum Guide for Preschool Children*. Ninth Edition. Columbus: Merrill.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2003. *The Head Start Path to Positive Child Outcomes: The Head Start Child Outcomes Framework*. Alexandria: Head Start Information and Publication Center.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2001. *Head Start Program Performance Standards and Other Regulations*. Alexandria: Head Start Information and Publication Center. Nilsen, Barbara Ann. 2010. 5th Edition. "Week by Week". Wadsworth.

"Young Children". 2009-2010. *Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children*. www.naeyc.org/yc.

"Zero to Three". 2009-2010. National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families. www.zerotothree.org.