

Watch and Help Me Grow

A Facilitator's
Guide for Using
CHILD Profile
Development
Materials



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Introduction

Parents and caregivers play a crucial role in children's lives. Children learn and grow through their relationships with the adults in their world. When they play with children, talk to them, and give them chances to explore with all of their senses, caregivers and parents are encouraging and supporting healthy development.



The “Watch & Help Me Grow” charts cover three different ages, birth to 18 months, 18 months to three years, and 3 – 5 years. The charts divide growth into five areas – physical, social and emotional, learning, thinking, and language. They can be used to help adults who care for young children understand children's developmental needs and how to support their growth.

This guide can help you use the “Watch & Help Me Grow” charts as a teaching tool with caregivers and parents. Each section includes key ideas to support development, as well as examples of activities that can be done at your program or at home. The activity suggestions are offered as guidelines. Because you know the children and the families in your group, you will be able to plan activities that match their needs and interests. Encourage the parents in your group to share the charts, and other information and resources, with their children's caregivers.

All children are born with different strengths and abilities. Development is a range—children grow and learn at different rates. It is important to be aware of how each child's unique family, culture, and experiences influence his or her development.


If you or a family member has questions about a child's development, observe the child to get more information, and talk to the family about their concerns. You can guide them to community resources which can answer questions and concerns they may have about children's development, and to get support (see Resources page 17).

Children Learn from All Caregivers



When parents are at work or school, young children are cared for in different settings: by extended family members and friends, in licensed child care, at preschool. Family, friend and neighbor caregivers - grandparents, aunts and uncles, older siblings, or close friends - care for most children from birth to age three for at least part of their day.

Many children are in more than one form of care. A child may attend a morning preschool program, spend the afternoon in her grandmother's home, and be at home in the evening with her teenage brother. Because children are constantly learning through interactions and play, it is important for all caregivers to understand that children's brains develop rapidly during the first three years of life.

 **Children learn language best when adults name things, describe things, compare things, explain things and give directions.** Caregivers and parents will create a language-rich environment when they talk to babies, toddlers and children about things and activities they do during the day. "Now we're going to put on our shoes and go outside." "Look, the sky is cloudy." "I see birds flying to that tall tree."

When they understand how children learn through daily activities - shopping for groceries, making lunch, doing laundry, or feeding a pet - family, friend and neighbor caregivers can easily create learning opportunities like those described in this guide.

With your guidance, caregivers can make use of the "Watch & Help Me Grow" charts at home. Caregivers who have accurate child development information are better prepared to support children's healthy growth and development. The children in their care will be better equipped to succeed when they begin school.

You can help parents, grandparents, aunts, older siblings, and friends understand they are children's first teachers. They deserve to know that simple things - talking and playing with a young child - really do make all the difference in his life-long ability to learn.

Tips for Facilitators

Here are some ideas for using the “Watch & Help Me Grow” charts as you plan and facilitate your group:



- Include charts in materials for new participants
- Keep charts available on your resource table
- Laminate or mount charts on a display board
- Display charts at each session
- Refer to charts during group discussion and in one-on-one conversations
- During parent/caregiver circle time, choose a section on a chart and talk about simple activities to do at home
- Continue to encourage home activities related to the charts
- Regularly mention how certain activities in your group help children learn, as shown on the charts
- Show how children’s favorite activities -playing with blocks, balls, and dolls - help them grow, as shown on the charts
- Encourage caregivers and parents to keep the chart at home
- Teach them how to track a child’s development using the chart
- Talk with caregivers about changes you notice in the child’s development
- Point out behavior that shows the child has moved from one milestone to the next
- If you notice a child is not developing as she should, tell parents and caregivers where they can go to learn more

Look for good times to explain how children learn many things when playing and talking with caregivers:

- how to talk and listen
- it is fun to try new things
- how to get along with others
- they are loved, cherished, and valued

Toys that Support Growth and Development



Kids learn and grow through play. Give children opportunities to use all of their senses by using a variety of toys, games, and household items in your program or at home. Play with kids, observe what they like to do, and add different things to their play based on their interests. Here are some examples of toys and other materials that support growth and development:

- Washable toys to grasp, look at, and grab
- Containers to fill and dump, such as boxes and cans
- Blocks of different shapes, sizes, and textures, such as wood, cloth, and cardboard
- Balls of different sizes and textures
- Bean bags
- Push & pull toys, such as carts, wagons, large cars, toys with handles
- Puzzles of different levels of difficulty, some with knobs
- Play dough or clay
- Table or containers for sand and water and toys like measuring cups, funnels, buckets, shovels
- Safety scissors
- Riding toys and tricycles
- Paint brushes, non toxic washable paint
- Crayons, markers, pencils, paper
- Glue, string, paper scraps, and other materials for collage
- Scarves or fabric pieces
- Variety of music tapes or CDs
- Stringing beads
- Mirrors
- Clothes, shoes, purses, hats and other clothes for dress up
- Dolls, doll clothes, blankets
- Stuffed animals and puppets
- Nesting cups

Toy Safety

Here are some basic safety considerations when selecting toys for young children. Keep in mind a child's age, abilities, interests, and skills when selecting toys and other items. Most new toys come with age guidelines, but each child has individual needs and may need more adult supervision than suggested.



- Avoid small toys for infants, toddlers, and any kids who still put toys in their mouths. Anything that can fit through the hole of a toilet paper tube is a choking hazard!
- Many toys for older kids have small parts that can break off and be dangerous to young children!
- Plastic wrapping and plastic bags can cause suffocation. Keep away from children!
- Toys with strings, cords, or ropes can result in strangulation. Always supervise around children!
- Look for and use paints, glues, and other art supplies that are labeled non toxic!
- Young children should never be left unsupervised around water. A baby or toddler can drown in less than one inch of water!
- Avoid small magnets for children under 6.

To check to see if a toy has been recalled, contact the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:

- <http://www.cpsc.gov>
- Toll free hotline: 1-800-638-2772

Children grow and learn best when their bodies are healthy and strong!

Physical Health

Physical development includes large muscle skills, like crawling, walking, jumping, and running, as well as small muscle skills, like holding a rattle, working on a puzzle, and using a pencil or crayon. It is important that children of all ages have chances to explore that encourage physical development.

To Support Exploration and Physical Health:

- Provide safe places indoors and outdoors
- Provide time every day for children to explore and be active
- Provide a variety of toys and materials
- Play games and sing songs that children can move to
- Let children try new things but stay near them so they know they are safe

Activity Ideas to Support Physical Health

Birth to 18 Months

Tummy Time

“Tummy Time” helps babies develop strong muscles and prepares them for scooting and crawling. It is also a great chance to bond with baby!

You may use:

- ❖ Safe washable toys of different sizes
- ❖ Safe clean floor space



“Look at the curly line on the blanket.”

Place baby on her stomach on a blanket or on the floor. Place a toy or yourself just out of reach to encourage her to stretch and grab. Put toys around baby in different areas to encourage her to turn, look, and reach. Get down on your tummy to play, or supervise while a young child gets down and plays with baby.

18 Months to 3 Years

Juice Lid Drop

Picking up and dropping small items helps young children develop small muscle skills and hand-eye coordination.

You may use:

- ❖ Container with a lid, such as a coffee can, oatmeal box, or shoe box (If using a metal can, cover sharp edges with masking tape)
- ❖ Lids from frozen juice containers or other containers

Cut a slot in the can or box lid. Show children how to drop the smaller lids inside. Show them how to lift off the top to retrieve the lids. Kids enjoy dropping and looking for the lids over and over! Picking up, holding, and guiding the lids helps kids develop and practice skills they need to do things like hold a pencil, cut with scissors, and tie a shoe when they are older.



★ *"There goes a pink lid into the box!"*

3 Years to 5 Years

Exercise Time

When children run, jump, crawl, bend, and throw, they are exercising large muscles, developing hand-eye coordination, and improving balance.

You may use:

- ❖ Items like empty boxes, chairs, blankets, balls, tape, wooden blocks
- ❖ Open space indoors or outdoors

Help kids make a tunnel out of boxes. Cover chairs with blankets to make a tent. Make a balance beam with blocks or a piece of masking tape on the floor. Kids can climb in and out of the boxes, crawl and roll balls through tunnels, and jump over blankets or boxes. When kids lift, carry, crawl, jump, and throw they are developing the muscles they need to be healthy and strong in life.



Children learn best when people love them, understand their feelings, and help them manage their own feelings

Social and Emotional Health

Caregivers help children learn about their emotions by acknowledging and responding to their needs, comforting them when they are upset, and naming their feelings. When children are secure and trust the adults in their lives, they are able to grow and develop. The social and emotional skills children learn at an early age will help them get along with others later in childhood and into adulthood. To support social and emotional health:

- Respond to kids and stay close when they are upset, whether it is a crying baby, a toddler having a tantrum, or a preschooler having a conflict with a friend
- Talk about feelings with children, and give them words to describe their emotions (“I feel mad right now!”)
- Encourage children to explore but stay close by so they know they are safe
- Provide enough time and open-ended activities so children can explore, pretend, and create
- Help children to negotiate conflicts with friends and siblings—give them the skills and words they need to solve problems on their own
- Read books about feelings, emotions, and friendship
- Provide enough play space and toys so kids can play together successfully

Activities to Support Social and Emotional Health

Birth to 18 Months

Mirror game

When you acknowledge baby's feelings and moods, you tell him that his emotions are important and that you are there for him.



★ *“There’s your nose!
I have a nose too.”*

This game works best with a happy and alert baby and adult! Let baby know that you understand her feelings by mirroring them back to her. For example, when baby smiles, smile back. When baby makes sounds, repeat the sounds back to her. Baby learns about emotions when she sees your facial expressions.

18 Months to 3 Years

Imaginary play

Young children learn by imitating the world around them. When children take on pretend roles, they are developing their creativity and imagination!



You may use:

- ❖ Dress up clothes such as hats, jewelry, shoes
- ❖ Props such as toy or real (non-working) phones, utensils or dishes, small tables and chairs, dolls, etc



"You're wearing such a fancy hat and scarf!"

When kids take care of a sick teddy bear, go to "work" at the office, or "cook" you dinner, they are acting out what they are learning about people, jobs, roles, and independence. When you play with the child and follow his lead, you are showing him that he is important and powerful. As children get older, their imaginary play will become more complex and may extend over a period of time.

3 Years to 5 Years

Playing with friends

Learning social skills is an ongoing process and children need many opportunities to practice!



Make sure you have:

- ❖ Enough toys and equipment for a group of children
- ❖ Enough free time for children to play together and choose their own activities

Children at this age want to play with friends, but are still learning how to take turns, negotiate conflicts, and join in play. Provide time when children can play freely with each other. Supervise their play, but allow them to make choices and work out conflicts. When adult help is needed, try to give each child words to use and direction to solve their problems, and acknowledge and name children's emotions for them.

Children are curious about the world around them!

I Want to Learn

From the first few hours of life, babies are aware of what's around them and want to learn about everything. Children explore to make sense of the world and understand their own experiences. You can encourage young children to learn by talking to them, providing opportunities to explore, and playing with them.

To Support Learning:

- Provide washable safe toys so children can taste, feel, smell, touch and see the toys.
- Provide toys and materials with different textures, shapes, sounds, and smells.
- Give children safe places to play and explore, indoors and outdoors.
- Play with children!
- Ask open-ended questions, like "Tell me about your picture" or "What do you think would happen if....?"
- Notice what children do, answer their questions.

Activities to Support Learning

Birth to 18 Months

Floor Time

Floor time encouraged babies to use all of their senses to explore and make sense of the world around them!

You may use:

- ❖ Clean safe place to play
- ❖ Washable toys with different textures, shapes, and sounds



"The green block is sitting on the yellow block."

Floor time works best with a happy, alert baby and adult. Sit with baby on a blanket or on the floor. Put toys around baby. Play with baby, allowing her to look at, grab, turn, hold, and put toys in her mouth. This is how she learns about each toy. When she grabs or drops a toy, she is learning about cause and effect: "What happens when I do this?" Babies will play the same games with you over and over!

18 Months to 3 Years

Clean-up game

When children put toys away, wipe tables and sweep. They learn how to sort and organize objects, and practice problem-solving skills!

You may use:

- ❖ Toys, or other household items that need to be put away
- ❖ Small broom and dust pan; paper towels or cloth; spray bottle with water



★ "You folded all the white shirts."

Even young children love to help clean the house. As children put toys away, ask them questions like, "Where are the big trucks?" and "I see something blue on the floor. Can you find it?" Young children also love to imitate adults! Let children wipe tables, windows, and the floor. Give them a small broom and dustpan and show them how to sweep and dump. When children imitate the adults in their world, they begin to learn about and make sense of how the world works. When children finish a job, they gain confidence and feel important.

3 Years to 5 Years

Cooking

When young children help you in the kitchen, they learn and practice many important skills, such as measuring, counting, telling time, language, and following directions.

You may use:

- ❖ Your favorite simple recipe
- ❖ Necessary ingredients and utensils



★ "Watch to see when the flour is mixed in."

Let children help with all the steps they can help with safely. Talk about what you are going to cook and have the child help you pick the recipe. Read or talk about the directions and the ingredients. Let the child find and gather the ingredients. Let him help you measure, pour, and stir. Ask questions about the experience and talk about what you are doing.

Children learn from the people and the world around them!

Things I Know

Children learn through their relationships with the adults in their lives. Children explore the world with all of their senses. Provide lots of “hands on” experiences and talk to children about them.

To Enhance What Kids Know:

- Talk to kids about the things that happen in their world.
- Provide new activities and materials and help kids learn how to use them.
- Encourage kids to observe the world around them and ask questions.
- Allow kids to test what they know and try things in their own ways.
- Work concepts like math and counting into everyday experiences.

Activity Ideas to Encourage Learning

Birth to 18 Months

Peek-a-boo

Peek-a-boo begins to teach babies that people and things exist even when they are out of sight. Playing the game over and over helps babies practice and test out their new knowledge!



★ *“Where is grandma?
Where is your friend?”*

This game works best with a happy, alert baby and adult. Hide your face behind your hands or a blanket. Ask, “Where is grandma, auntie, __?” Wait a few seconds, and then uncover your face, smile, and say, “Peek-a-boo!” or “Here I am!” Most babies will laugh, smile, or somehow show you they are excited or happy. As baby gets older, you can play this game with hidden objects, too.

18 Months to 3 Years

Ice Play

When kids touch and play with different shapes of ice, they learn about concepts like “cold”, “slippery”, “big” and “small”.

You may use:

- ❖ Large plastic container or tub
- ❖ Cups, spoons, funnels, other kitchen items
- ❖ Ice cube trays, empty milk cartons
- ❖ Plastic sheet or old shower curtain (optional)



*★ “Watch what happens!
The warm water melts
the ice.”*

Fill ice cube trays and various sized cartons with water and freeze. Place ice cubes in a tub or container. Pour a small amount of water into the tub and put it on a low table or directly on the floor (put a sheet under the tube to keep the floor dry). Kids can pour, fill and dump the water and the ice cubes. Talk to kids about what happens when the ice begins to melt and let kids add warm water to see what happens to the ice. For additional activities, consider placing small plastic animals or other toys in the milk cartons before freezing, and let kids try to get them out!

***Note: Always supervise children around water*

3 Years to 5 Years

Sorting Game

When children sort objects, they learn how to compare, how to classify, and that objects have many features.

You may use:

- ❖ Things to sort—toy animals, rocks, beads, puzzle pieces, blocks, leaves, seashells, buttons, nuts & bolts, etc
- ❖ Place them on trays, paper plates, shoe box, floor, or table



*★ “What number
comes after six?”*

Give a child different items to sort, and talk with her about them. Talk to a younger child about one feature, like “These rocks are pointy and these ones are smooth.” Help her sort items on trays, in boxes, or on the table or floor, asking questions like, “Which rocks are pointy?” Older children may be able to sort by more than one feature, such as “Which ones are big and shiny?” and may not need adult prompting.

Children learn to communicate when adults talk, read, listen, and play with them!

Language and Literacy

Communication is more than just talking. All children communicate, whether it is the babbling, cooing, and gazes of a baby, the pointing, sign language, and words of a toddler, or the phrases and questions of a preschooler. Even crying, yelling, and hitting are ways that children try to tell us what they need. Respond to children's attempts to communicate and build on their skills by asking questions, and talking, reading and listening to them.

To Support Language and literacy:

- Respond to the cries, smiles, gestures, gazes, and words of children and babies
- Talk to children about what is happening throughout the day
- Ask children questions about what they are doing and answer their questions
- Sing songs and play games with children
- Build on and expand children's attempts to communicate
- Read books with children, and let them read to you
- Respect and encourage the home language of children
- Tell stories with children or narrate books with your own stories

Activity Ideas to Encourage Language and Literacy

Birth to 18 Months

Conversation Time

Talking with baby helps him learn about and practice the "rules" of turn-taking in conversation, and shows him that you are interested in what he is telling you!



This activity works best with a happy, alert baby and adult. Have a conversation

 *"Hello little one! I see you."*

with baby. Baby will coo, smile, or gurgle, look at you, and then wait for a response. You coo, smile, talk, and look back at her, and she responds back. Repeat!

18 Months to 3 Years


Using Books

Reading or looking at books with children helps them learn and practice new words and learn about the connection between written and spoken words.



You may use:

- ❖ Board and picture books about familiar objects, routines, or places; photo albums; magazines.

 *"Turn the page so we can see what happens next."*

Children love books about what they know. Many children love to read the same story over and over again! When you look at books with a child, ask questions about what is happening on the pages, and spend time talking about the pictures. Let the child turn the pages. When the child knows a book well, he can help you "read" it by filling in words or phrases, which helps develop his memory skills. You can also narrate a book with your own story. It can be fun to make your own story to go with the pictures. Follow his interest to see how long he wants to read with you.

3 Years to 5 Years

Telling stories

When children tell stories, they are practicing vocabulary, learning to organize their thoughts, and developing language skills.



You may use:

- ❖ Paper; pen, pencil, or crayon; adult help; tape recorder (optional)

 *"Tell me more about your story."*

When a child draws a picture, ask her to tell you about it. Write down the child's words or record the child's story with a tape recorder. When children see their words written down, they start to learn that words are made of letters. When they hear their stories read or played back to them, they learn that their stories and words are important. Once you have recorded a child's story, the child can return and "read" or listen to it again and again.

Resources

If you have questions about a child's development, there are resources available to support the child and family. To learn more about the kinds of services that can help a family, or to ask specific questions about children's development, call:

In King County

- Community Health Access Program (CHAP)
206-284-0331 or 1-800-756-5437
<http://www.whf.org/programs/chap.aspx>

Outside of King County

- Within Reach Family Health Hotline www.withinreachwa.org
1-800-322-2588

Other valuable resources:

Child Development Information Resource Links

These sites provide information for parents and caregivers about brain research, typical development, and early support.

- Center for Disease Control (CDC) - Learn the Signs/Act Early
www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/ActEarly
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning
http://www.casel.org/about_sel/SELintro.php (research, resources for school and home)
- National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) www.naeyc.org/
- National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC) www.nccic.org
- PBS–The Whole Child <http://www.pbs.org/wholechild/providers>
- Talaris www.talaris.org
- Zero to Three www.zerotothree.org

Curriculum and Activity Resources

Local resources in King County can provide caregivers and parents with activities and materials to support growth and development.

- Born Learning www.bornlearning.org
- King County Library System (425) 462-9600
www.kcls.org/pp/caregive.cfm#curric (activity ideas; books and theme kits in multiple languages, story times)
- Seattle Public Library System (206) 386-4636
www.spl.lib.wa.us (books in multiple languages, story times)
- Child Care Resources (206) 329-5333 www.childcare.org
(curriculum kits, activity and curriculum books)

- Play & Learn Groups (206) 329-1011 x202 Lisa Conley at Child Care Resources
- Earlychildhood News <http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/curriculum.aspx> (activity & curriculum ideas)
- Puppetools: Advancing the language of play <http://www.puppetools.com>
- Creating a Language Rich Home www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk

Curriculum and Multicultural Resource Links

- Bananas Inc www.bananasinc.org
(articles and handouts in English, Spanish, Cantonese)
- Bright Horizons e-family news (articles) www.brighthouse.com/Site/pages/e-family.aspx
- Colorín Colorado www.colorincolorado.org (newsletters, tips, activities, and articles in English & Spanish)
- Early Childhood Today www.scholastic.com
(activity ideas, articles)
- Strengthening Families Initiative http://www.cssp.org/doris_duke/index.html

Other Local Agencies that can Provide Information

- Community Resource Line: Dial “211” (information about health and human services)
- AARP <http://www.aarp.org/families/grandparents/childcare/> (for grandparents providing childcare)
- Parent Trust 1-800-932-HOPE; www.parenttrust.org
- Relatives as Parents <http://parenting.wsu.edu/relative>





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