Approaches to Learning refers to the skills and behaviors that children use when they are learning. Skills and behaviors in this area include:

- Managing emotions
- Following rules and routines
- Taking care of materials
- Managing actions, words, and behavior
- Maintaining focus and attention
- Remembering directions and tasks
- Being a flexible thinker
- Being interested and curious
- Taking initiative
- Creatively thinking and communicating
- Using imagination

Adults can help support children’s development in this area by:

- Speaking, reading and singing together
- Encouraging cooperation
- Playing games with rules
- Asking questions
- Offering choices
- Encouraging children to demonstrate skills, behavior, and knowledge in multiple languages
- Using familiar cultural references
- Modeling positive ways to solve problems
- Encouraging children to work together on a shared activity
- Talking about feelings
- Setting up a reliable schedule and routine
Social-emotional development refers to the ability to form relationships and manage emotions. Skills and behaviors in this area include:

- Being part of a group
- Recognizing one’s own feelings
- Recognizing the feelings of others
- Caring for others
- Expressing feelings in a productive way
- Having positive relationships
- Cooperating
- Playing with others
- Solving problems when conflict arises

Adults can help support children’s development in this area by:

- Encouraging friendships
- Talking about feelings
- Discussing personal boundaries
- Modeling good problem-solving
- Noticing acts of kindness
- Encouraging children to work together on a shared activity
- Taking into account and adjusting for a child’s culture and language
- Playing games with rules
- Setting up a reliable schedule and routine
- Providing support and/or accommodations to help children engage with peers
Language and communication refers to the ability to express and understand thoughts and feelings. Skills in this area include:

- Using language or gestures
- Listening to others
- Asking questions
- Communicating thoughts, feelings, and ideas
- Answering questions
- Following directions
- Using new words
- Listening to and responding to others
- Pointing and using nonverbal gestures
- Telling stories as an aspect of family or culture

Adults can help support children’s development in this area by:

- Sharing conversations
- Asking questions
- Using new words
- Creating opportunities to make choices
- Reading books with rhymes
- Encouraging children to communicate with each other
- Playing word games
- Singing songs
- Supporting development of the child’s home language
- Encouraging every child to communicate, whether through spoken language, gestures, or communication devices
Early literacy refers to the knowledge and skills that prepare children for reading and writing. Skills in this area include:

- Understanding language
- Understanding how print is used
- Naming letters
- Producing letter sounds
- Understanding stories
- Asking questions about stories
- Writing for a variety of purposes
- Identifying pictures in stories in the home language
- Labeling book parts and features
- Identifying and counting syllables in spoken words

Adults can help support children’s development in this area by:

- Reading books and telling stories
- Offering fun ways to write or trace letters
- Asking children to make up stories
- Playing games with letters and sounds
- Introducing new words
- Visiting the library
- Making sure that children have books at home
- Offering materials for writing
- Encouraging the development of literacy skills in the child’s home language
- Providing support or accommodations for children to access reading materials and literacy experiences
Early math includes counting, patterning, recognizing shapes, measuring, and sorting. Skills in this area include:

- Saying or signing number words
- Recognizing small quantities of objects
- Counting
- Understanding directional words
- Naming shapes
- Comparing objects
- Creating simple patterns
- Matching like items
- Using tools to measure weight, height, and temperature
- Estimating the number of objects in a group

Adults can help support children’s development in this area by:

- Encouraging counting
- Playing board games that require counting spaces
- Encouraging children to help sort laundry
- Reading stories with numbers
- Singing number songs
- Pointing out numbers in the environment
- Using a growth chart to measure height
- Providing support and/or accommodations for children to access math activities
- Involving children in cooking activities
- Encouraging children to compare sizes and identify shapes of natural objects found outside
- Pointing out the time on the clock for daily routines and activities