



Missouri Pre-K
Physical
Development,
Health and Safety
Standards

Introduction

The standards are broad descriptions of what most children should know and be able to do by the time they enter kindergarten. They are not a curriculum but a framework for communicating a shared set of expectations for preschool children in the field of physical development.

We realize some children will far exceed these standards; others will not enter kindergarten with the knowledge and experiences suggested in this document. Just as we recognize that different people bring different things to our society, we also recognize that variability in children is normal. The standards are not intended to be used to determine whether a child “is ready” to enter kindergarten. The standards are, however, goals for adults to use in supporting the physical development of preschool children. Available evidence indicates that the standards are appropriate for most children.

The standards were developed by a broad-based group of individuals whose backgrounds are representative of many facets of the early childhood community in Missouri. The standards are intended to be used in a variety of early childhood settings by a variety of people — parents, parent educators, child-care providers, Head Start and public/private school teachers, etc. They are consistent with current research and recommendations from other state and national initiatives.

It is our hope that the ultimate beneficiaries of this work will be our children, resulting in all children entering school ready to succeed.

Missouri Pre-K Guiding Principles

1. All children actively seek to comprehend the world in which they live. Given the opportunity to make choices concerning their activities, they acquire knowledge, skills and the ability to solve problems.
2. Children construct knowledge and values through interactions with peers, parents and other adults and through active exploration of the physical and social environment.
3. Young children’s thinking contains predictable errors.
4. Early learning and areas of development interact and influence each other.
5. Families (parents) are the child’s first and most important teachers.
6. Children exhibit individual differences in their development of competencies.

Missouri Pre-K Standards for Physical Development, Health and Safety

Content Component	Process Standards
Physical development and coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uses gross motor skills with purpose and coordination Uses fine motor skills with purpose and control Responds to sensory input to function in the environment
Health	Practices healthy behaviors
Safety	Practices safe behaviors

Process StandardsCompetencies in the process of physical development, health and safety.

Indicators.....Milestones toward the development of competencies.

Examples.....Observable behaviors children may exhibit in their physical development, health and safety.

Guiding PrinciplesPrinciples of child development that guide Missouri early childhood practices.



Physical development

Uses gross motor skills with purpose and coordination.

Indicator	Examples
1. Moves from one point to another.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> walks, runs, jumps, gallops and hops on one foot.
2. Controls body movements.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> bends, stretches, turns and twists body parts. rolls body in one direction. “stops” or “freezes” then changes directions while playing a game. balances on one foot (on a balance beam or variety of surfaces).
3. Uses large-muscle movements to manipulate objects.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> bats at a ball or balloon with hands or equipment. throws, kicks, bounces and catches a ball. rides a tricycle/bicycle or wheeled toy with pedals.

Physical development

*Uses fine motor skills
with purpose and control.*



Indicator	Examples
1. Performs fine motor tasks.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• squeezes wet sponges, a glue bottle or a catsup bottle.• works with Play-Doh or molds clay.• uses hands and fingers to open clothespins, uses staplers, uses a paper punch, etc.
2. Uses fingers and hands to accomplish fine motor tasks.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• fastens buttons, zips zippers, fastens fasteners or snaps snaps on clothing.• strings beads, macaroni or “O”-shaped cereal.• sorts small shapes in a shape sorter.• builds with small connecting blocks.• laces shoes or lacing cards.• holds paper with one hand and cuts with the other.
3. Uses tools in a functional manner.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses paintbrushes, scissors and eating utensils.• holds writing tools with fingers to draw or write.• uses woodworking tools with supervision (e.g., hammer, saw).
4. Exhibits coordination of facial muscles.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• attempts to wink an eye.• blows bubbles through a bubble wand or blows out candles.• tries to whistle.• imitates or makes silly faces.• speaks clearly.



Physical development

**Responds to sensory input
to function
in the environment.**

Indicator	Examples
<p>1. Exhibits sensory awareness.</p>	<p>The child</p> <p><i>Touch</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies hidden objects in a “feely” bag by touch. participates in messy play activities (e.g., finger painting, working with clay or Play-Doh). <p><i>Hearing</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> follows verbal directions while playing games such as Simon Says. responds to environmental sounds (e.g., attends when name is called, investigates unusual noises such as a siren or breaking glass). <p><i>Sight</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> finds details in illustrations in books (e.g., <i>I Spy</i>, <i>Each Peach Pear Plum</i>, <i>Where’s Waldo?</i>). arranges objects by color, size, texture and/or shape. aims a ball or beanbag at a target. follows a line with a finger or pencil. <p><i>Smell</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> says, “This marker smells like grapes.” says, “I smell the popcorn.” <p><i>Taste</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> licks ice cream on a cone. remarks that a food tastes good.
<p>2. Exhibits body awareness.</p>	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> identifies body parts through finger plays and songs (e.g., <i>Hokey Pokey</i>; <i>Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes</i>; <i>Where is Thumbkin?</i>). creates different shapes with his body (e.g., makes a circle with fingers, makes a bridge with another child). imitates animals with movement of body parts (e.g., uses arms for wings, slithers like a snake).

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Physical development

*Responds to sensory input
to function
in the environment.*



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Indicator	Examples
3. Exhibits spatial awareness.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• moves body forward, backward, sideways, up, down.• plays games involving movement and directions (e.g., Duck, Duck, Goose; Tag; Hide and Seek; Mother, May I?).• moves through a room without bumping into people or furniture.• negotiates an obstacle course.• puts puzzles together or fits blocks into a defined space.
4. Exhibits temporal awareness.	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• moves his body to a rhythm (e.g., clapping, stomping, swaying, marching).• adjusts body movements to the tempo (e.g., fast, slow, start, stop).• kicks a rolling ball.• catches a ball.• follows a sequence or pattern in songs or finger plays (e.g., <i>B-I-N-G-O</i>; <i>The Itsy, Bitsy Spider</i>; <i>Where is Thumbkin?</i>).



Health

Practices healthy behaviors.

Indicator	Examples
<p>1. Shows independence in personal hygiene.</p>	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • manages toileting. • washes and dries hands. • covers nose and mouth when sneezing. • uses a tissue.
<p>2. Chooses to participate in daily physical activity.</p>	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plays on/with outdoor equipment (e.g., slides, balls, wheeled toys). • engages in active play (e.g., running, jumping, chasing, moving to music, playing with pets). • goes on walks with family members. • joins in indoor or outdoor games (e.g., musical games, tag, drop the handkerchief).
<p>3. Exhibits body strength and endurance.</p>	<p>The child</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • climbs a ladder on the slide. • pours liquid from a small pitcher. • maintains her hold while hanging from a bar. • engages in activities such as duck walks, crab walks, frog leaps, bear walks or wheelbarrow walks.

Safety

Practices safe behaviors.



Indicator	Examples
1. Listens to and follows adult directions during emergencies.	The child <ul style="list-style-type: none">• participates in emergency drills (e.g., fire, intruders, natural disasters) at school and home.
2. Follows vehicle, street and public safety.	The child <ul style="list-style-type: none">• uses appropriate car restraints.• stays with an adult when crossing the street, in parking lots and/or in public places.• practices bike safety (e.g., wears a helmet, rides in a safe place).• stays away from machinery (e.g., lawn mower, power tools, farm equipment).
3. Recognizes personal danger.	The child <ul style="list-style-type: none">• knows that objects such as weapons, syringes, matches, etc., can be dangerous and should not be touched.• displays caution around water, fire, unsafe heights and unfamiliar people or animals.• knows not to eat unknown substances such as medicines, poisons, household cleaners, etc.
4. Knows how and when to seek help.	The child <ul style="list-style-type: none">• asks an adult for help when made to feel uncomfortable or unsafe by another person.• calls for help during emergencies (e.g., shouts for an adult, asks an adult for help in an emergency, calls 9-1-1).• recognizes trusted adults (e.g., police officers, firefighters).

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