

# Week 1 Reading Assignment

## *Active Learning and the Key Developmental Indicators: A Summary*



# Active Learning and the Key Developmental Indicators: A Summary

## Five Ingredients of Active Learning

**Materials:** There are abundant, age-appropriate materials the child can use in a variety of ways. Learning grows directly out of the child's direct actions with the materials.

- \_\_\_ Children explore and play with materials rich in sensory appeal:
  - \_\_\_ Everyday household objects
  - \_\_\_ Natural and found materials
  - \_\_\_ Soft, cuddly materials
  - \_\_\_ Easy-to-handle materials
  - \_\_\_ Squishy, messy materials
  - \_\_\_ Materials children can set in motion
  - \_\_\_ Materials children can pull themselves up on
  - \_\_\_ Materials children can make noise with
- \_\_\_ Children have access to people.
- \_\_\_ Children have a safe place to explore and play with materials.
- \_\_\_ Children have time to explore and play with materials.
- \_\_\_ Children have access to materials throughout the day.
- \_\_\_ Children have access to materials over long periods of time.

## Active Learning and the Key Developmental Indicators: A Summary (continued)

**Manipulation: Children have opportunities to explore (with all their senses), manipulate, combine, and transform the chosen materials.**

- Children explore materials with all of their senses (eyes, hands, feet, mouths, ears).
- Children experiment with materials to find out what they do, return to favorite materials and people, and repeat satisfying actions.
- Children use their whole bodies to reach, grasp, roll, sit, crawl, walk, climb, carry from place to place, and so forth.
- Children use materials to imitate actions.

**Choice: Children choose what to do. Since learning results from children's attempts to pursue personal interests and goals, the opportunity to choose activities and materials is essential.**

- Children make choices and decisions all day long.
- Children express preferences for people, materials, and experiences.
- Children follow their own intentions and initiatives.
- Children decide how to explore and what to do with materials.
- Child use materials to do things for themselves.

## Active Learning and the Key Developmental Indicators: A Summary (continued)

**Child communication, language and thought: Children communicate their needs, feelings, discoveries, and ideas through motions, gestures, facial expressions, sounds, sign language, and words. Adults value, attend to, and encourage children’s communication and language in a give-and-take manner.**

- Children communicate their needs, feelings, discoveries, and ideas in their own individual ways and at their own pace.
- Children initiate contact with caregivers.
- Children express feelings and communicate about discoveries to receptive and responsive caregivers.
- Children string together sounds, gestures, and words in a fashion that makes sense to them.
- Children communicate through sign language.



## Active Learning and the Key Developmental Indicators: A Summary (continued)

**Adult scaffolding: Adults establish and maintain trusting relationships with each child in their care. Adults recognize and encourage each child's intentions, actions, interactions, communications, explorations, problem solving, and creativity.**

- Caregivers take interest in children's play.
- Caregivers enjoy children's actions and explorations.
- Caregivers communicate warmth and respect.
- Caregivers acknowledge children's feelings, from delight to frustration.
- Caregivers provide positive physical contact including cuddling, hugging, holding, stroking, and lap-holding.
- Caregivers give each child their full attention and respond readily to the child's signals, and approaches, communication, and talk.
- Caregivers talk with children, tell children what will happen next, encourage children's problem solving, and read to children.

## Active Learning and the Key Developmental Indicators: A Summary (continued)

### Key developmental indicators: The content infants and toddlers learn

- Caregivers are familiar with the key developmental indicators (KDIs) in these areas:
  - Approaches to learning — Children show initiative in solving problems, doing things for themselves, and learning about their world.
  - Social and emotional development — Children express their feelings, differentiate themselves from others, and form relationships with adults and peers.
  - Physical development and health — Children explore the movements their bodies are capable of making and use their bodies to learn about the world.
- Communication, language, and literacy — Children communicate with gestures, sounds, and words to establish human connections and explore printed materials.
- Cognitive development — Children develop early ideas about quantity and number, navigate their environment, discover the attributes of objects, and develop ideas about time from the sequence of their daily activities.
- Creative arts — Children exercise curiosity and creativity by exploring art materials, pretending, and engaging with the sounds of music.

## Active Learning and the Key Developmental Indicators: A Summary (continued)

### How caregivers use the key developmental indicators

- Caregivers observe children and interpret their actions in light of the KDIs.
- Caregivers use the KDIs to guide their interactions with children, to plan for activities that scaffold (support and extend) children's learning, and to guide their selection of materials for children.
- Caregivers use the KDIs to track children's growth and development and to share and interpret children's actions to parents.



Source: Post, Jacalyn, & Hohmann, M., & Epstein, A. (2011). *Tender care and early learning: Supporting infants and toddlers in child care settings* (2nd ed). (Chapter 1). Ypsilanti, MI: HighScope Press.