

## **DEVELOPMENTAL LEVELS OF CHILD GROWTH**

**PURPOSE:** Umatilla Morrow Head Start, Inc. uses a strength-based approach in working with children and families. When working with parents around their child's goal development, it is our practice to share the child's strengths, as observed in the classroom and at home, as well as review and discuss the parent's observation of their child's strengths. In order to ensure that strengths are reviewed across the domains, below are examples for consideration in writing children's strengths.

1. **MOTOR:** Beginning level to competency for age range.
  - a. **Fine Motor**
    - i. uses whole hand to grasp and pick up small objects
    - ii. seeks opportunities to use fine motor skills i.e. paint, draw, puzzles, cutting, building block tower
    - iii. uses appropriate finger and hand motions to manipulate environment, i.e. three fingers to pick up crayons
    - iv. enjoys using manipulative toys appropriately, i.e. puts puzzle together, uses pegboards repeatedly
    - v. enjoys and is competent manipulating small objects i.e. stringing beads
    - vi. seeks opportunities and shows competency opposing hand movements i.e. zipping, buttoning
    - vii. manipulates writing utensils, such as, pencil, pen or marker, forming representations of letters of their own name or the names of others
  - b. **Gross Motor:**
    - i. is aware of coordinating body movement (does not trip over feet, moves to music, bumping into shelves)
    - ii. seeks out opportunities to experience coordinated movement i.e. climbing steps, running, throwing ball, moving to music beat
    - iii. shows competency in alternating steps, can catch and tosses ball or bean bag, following simple beat with body movement
    - iv. shows coordinated body movement and manipulates environment i.e. rolls tire, ball across floor with feet, moves, walks to beat of music
    - v. initiates and is competent at complex body movements i.e. skipping, sings and dances to beat
2. **COMMUNICATION:** Beginning level to competency for age range.
  - a. **Receptive**
    - i. is responding to words spoken to him/her
    - ii. listens to and follows single activity directions i.e. put on coat, pour juice, willingly
    - iii. initiates response when spoken to in direct sentences i.e. smiles, says okay
    - iv. enjoys participating in conversation and can follow multi-step directions
  - b. **Expressive**
    - i. speaks using one or two word phrases, i.e. "want drink," "don't"
    - ii. uses simple expressive statements, i.e. "Me like peaches," or "Took my truck"

- iii. uses proper pronouns appropriately (I, me, he, she)
- iv. joins ideas together in one sentence i.e. "We went to McDonalds and the park"
- v. uses descriptive words in sentences that include more than one idea i.e. "Pretend you're a mom and I'm a baby and I'm crying"
- vi. tells complex stories or makes up songs

c. Literacy

- vii. shows interest in books, reading or writing activities
- viii. is interested in stories being read and seeks opportunities to practice beginning writing skills i.e. uses squiggles to write name
- ix. shows interest in exploring books and tells story from pictures
- x. asks others to read stories or other words they see
- xi. recognizes own name on drawings and makes 'signs' for play areas, perhaps including some identifiable characters
- xii. may read some key words in familiar books and/or write name

3. SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

a. Expression

- i. verbally expresses feelings or needs during interactions with others (may use physical means to express or not react at all)
- ii. sometimes expresses feelings; sometimes in physical ways i.e. hitting, crying, retaliation
- iii. exhibits empathy and awareness toward feelings of others
- iv. uses words to express feelings most of the time
- v. makes positive statements about themselves

b. Trust

- i. makes eye contact with peers and adults (check cultural differences)
- ii. interacts with adults in classroom
- iii. exhibits trust and responds to familiar adults (check cultural differences)
- iv. initiates and sustains interactions with familiar adults (plays games, talks)
- v. requests help from and assists familiar adults when appropriate

c. Relationships

- i. plays beside other children
- ii. shows interest and responds verbally or nonverbally when other children initiate contact
- iii. shows interest in initiating interactions with other children and identifies them by name
- iv. interacts with children and reciprocates, loyalty and friendship to those identified as 'friends'
- v. shares space and objects with accepted peers and adults
- vi. is interested in and accepts differences among peers

- d. Power
  - i. does not use force or give up when confronted with a conflict
  - ii. uses acceptable ways to draw attention to problems
  - iii. engages adult assistance in problem solving
  - iv. attempts to solve problems independently using negotiation, etc
  - v. seeks and accepts ideas from peers in problem-solving

#### 4. SELF-HELP

- a. Choices
  - i. uses choices or is aware of choices or options in meeting his/her needs
  - ii. is aware of process, but looks to adults to direct his/her actions
  - iii. discriminates differences between familiar and unfamiliar adults
  - iv. identifies opinions or choices by pointing to or using one/two word descriptions
  - v. expresses choices with a short sentence
  - vi. describes what he/she will do when engaged in chosen activity
  - vii. maintains own possessions
- b. Problem Solving
  - i. is aware of problems
  - ii. tries one method to solve the problem
  - iii. tries more than one method to solve problem, doesn't give up if it doesn't work
  - iv. persists in trying several techniques to solve problems
- c. Routines
  - i. shows interest in following program routine
  - ii. sometimes follows program routine
  - iii. follows program routine when directed by an adult
  - iv. follows program routine independently and willingly, (e.g. washes hands, gets on coat, etc.)
- d. Transitions
  - i. is able to be comforted in the absence of their parent
  - ii. watches for adult to return when absent
  - iii. is able to follow adult gestures, such as beckoning to come, pointing to an area or person
  - iv. follows verbal requests
  - v. demonstrate knowledge of daily schedule
  - vi. expresses what happens next to peers and adults

#### 5. COGNITIVE

- a. Representations
  - i. is interested in making things and building with materials or painting/drawing
  - ii. explores making and building and art materials
  - iii. creates something with materials
  - iv. is able to show or say what creation is

- v. is able to create or build projects with representations of parts (e.g. drawing with body parts, block house with rooms)
- b. **Sorting/Ordering**
- i. readily discriminates between objects
  - ii. groups identical objects together
  - iii. sorts or arranges items in graduated order using only one characteristic
  - iv. can describe what he/she has sorted and why
  - v. groups items together based on two or more characteristics and can describe process
  - vi. places new objects in an accurate, graduated order set
- c. **Comparing**
- i. shows understanding or interest in comparing quantities of time in two groups
  - ii. can compare quantities using words "more" or "less"
  - iii. can compare between more than two groups quantities of objects
- d. **Sequencing**
- i. shows interest or understanding of time or routine sequence of events
  - ii. knows what come next
  - iii. can describe a sequenced series of actions
  - iv. can compare difference between time periods and uses correct words for conventional time periods
- e. **Space**
- i. is aware of positions of items in space when they are described (over, under, etc.) or direction of movement (forward, up, down)
  - ii. understands words but is not able to use them correctly
  - iii. appropriately uses words that describe movement and place in space
  - iv. can use words that describe distance (close, far)
- f. **Quantity**
- i. uses gestures to represent quantity, such as holding up a finger to signal 1
  - ii. responds to questions about some, all and numbers, verbally or through gestures (Want some? How many do you want?)
  - iii. uses some quantity words, sometimes incorrectly (numbers, some, all)
  - iv. correctly uses words describing quantity (numbers, some, not, all)
  - v. accurately uses 'not' and 'some' to exclude or distinguish things in categorizing (not animals, some animals)