

The Importance of Families

You as family members are so important in helping your children grow and develop! Your children need you to help them learn to do things that are just beyond their reach. Because you help them feel safe and secure, they are more confident and will try new things, take risks, and gain new skills. They are becoming the students, workers, and productive adults that they can be!

You are important! Thanks for all you do to support your children.



Download this brochure and related documents at www.newmexicokids.org under the **Caregivers & Educators** tab.

What are the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines?



A Brief Introduction for Families



The *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines* describe what young children know and can do at different ages — from birth to the end of the kindergarten year. They describe how children develop in all areas, including:

- **their ability to communicate,**
- **their ability to move around,**
- **their ability to use the small muscles of their hands,**
- **their ability to get along with others (both adults and children), and**
- **their growing understanding of the world around them.**

The *New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines* were developed to help early childhood educators communicate with you, parents and family members, about how your child is growing and learning. Your child's educators will use the *Early Learning Guidelines* to work together with you to ensure that your child has opportunities to grow, develop, be a successful student and become a contributing citizen of our great state.

How New Mexico educators will use the *Early Learning Guidelines*

Whether your child is in child care, Early Head Start, home visiting, New Mexico PreK, preschool, Head Start, kindergarten, or special education, educators will use the *Early Learning Guidelines* to observe your child to determine strengths as well as areas of growth and development in need of support.

Educators will share with you their observations of your child in action so that you can see what your child does in the program. You will be asked to share your perspectives from home.

What do you see as your child's strengths?

What concerns do you have as you watch him every day at home?

The *Early Learning Guidelines* will be used to provide the best possible early care and education for your child. You and your child's educators will be working in partnership so that your child can develop to his or her full potential.

Development in one area of growth and development influences development in all other areas. It is not uncommon for children at the same age to have strengths in one area and be a little less advanced in another. The *Guidelines* provide age-appropriate times for children's development, but not every child is expected to be developing right at their age level. Instead, your child's educators will ask you to tell them more about your child. For example, they'll ask:

How is your child demonstrating what she knows and can do?

How do you help her to be successful?

Together you can marvel at your child's growth and rejoice in her accomplishments.

