



# Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## 10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ **Individualize care and learning activities**
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

## This Month's Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

Individualize Care and Learning Activities

### Defining and Implementing Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Young children usually crawl before they walk, and babble before they talk, but the joy and mystery of being with young children is that we never know when these milestones will be reached – they cannot be predicted. All children are unique and their development, which may follow the same order or trajectory, is often not at the same pace. Since children are growing so rapidly in the first five years in all areas of development (physical, social, language, cognition), it's typical to see one area take a back seat as other areas are strengthened. For example, a one-year old may be walking (physical development) but has not said his first words yet (language development).

It's important to understand children's development because it helps providers set up their environment and plan activities to support what the children are learning. Equally, it's important to remember that even if children are the same age, they may not have the same mastery of skills. For example, some two-year-olds have learned how to use the toilet, are ready to sit and listen to a story, or can feed themselves, but not all can. This is why it is important to understand and implement Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP).

DAP has been addressed by many national organizations, i.e., the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Head Start, and Child Care Aware. In this newsletter, we'll share ideas from these professional organizations, as well as strategies for how to implement DAP in your program.



# Developmentally Appropriate Practice

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) is “designed to promote young children’s optimal learning and development. DAP involves care providers meeting young children where they are, both as individuals and as part of a group; and helping each child meet challenging and achievable learning goals.” There are three core considerations of DAP:

- Understanding how children develop and where each child in your care is at developmentally;
- Knowing what is individually appropriate;
- Knowing what is culturally appropriate.

## Understand and support how children develop (Child Care Aware):

- Create a program that is suitable for the *age* and *stage* of development for each child in your care.
- Consider their individual needs—plan your curriculum to respond to their individual differences.
- Respect the social and cultural context from which they come.
- Support play as the venue for their learning.



## Know what is individually appropriate (Head Start):

“If you put these words together, the term developmentally appropriate practice means individualized, responsive care that is just right for the child’s age, cultural context, and personality.” And we would add “*just right for the child’s individual needs.*” Sometimes in this competitive age, expectations are placed on children to reach milestones before they are developmentally ready, such as toilet learning or reading.

## Knowing what is culturally appropriate (Head Start “News You Can Use”):

Babies’ development happens within the context of the relationships with adults in their lives. Because of this, when we consider the development of babies, we need to know something about their families.

“Appropriate means something that is fitting or just right,” but what’s “just right” for one child in one family won’t be “just right” in another. “If you think about it, you’ll realize that what is thought of as appropriate may have more to do with our cultural upbringing than anything else.” Co-sleeping and self-feeding are examples of cultural differences and beliefs we were brought up to believe are appropriate.



# Implementing DAP in Your Program

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) says DAP requires both meeting children where they are—which means that providers must get to know them well—and enable them to reach goals that are both challenging and achievable. DAP does not mean making things easier for children. Rather, it means ensuring that goals and experiences are suited to their learning and development, and provide them with enough challenge to promote their progress and interest. The following are some strategies to implement DAP in your program:

## Select materials with specific interests and developmental progress in mind.

- Offer rattles to young infants to grab and shake,
- provide clear space for a moving infant to crawl,
- assist older infants who are ready to pull up and try to stand with sturdy furnishings that provide support.



## Learn about children's interests.

- Observe what the children are playing with or asking questions about,
- initiate conversations about what kinds of things they like or what they do with their families,
- use what you learn to plan activities that are engaging to the children in your care.

## Work with families.

- Establish open communication with families and discuss developmental milestones (successes and any concerns),
- see the insert “CDC Milestone Tracker” for an app that allows you and families to track a child’s milestones.

## Use resources that indicate typical behaviors in children within age ranges.

- Learning to Grow Developmental Guidelines for Infants, Toddlers, and Young Preschoolers, and
- Hawaii Early Learning and Development Standards (HELDS)

## Study your observations of individual children and identify their strengths and areas for growth.

Use the resources for planning developmentally appropriate experiences which build on each child’s strengths and support them in areas where needed.



## Citations:

CDC, Know the signs, Act early. (2018) <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html> [available on-line April 6, 2018]

CDC (2018) Milestone Tracker App. Available in the App Store.

Child Care Aware. Developmentally Appropriate Practice. [Available on-line April 4, 2018] <http://childcareaware.org/providers/making-a-difference/developmentally-appropriate-practice/>

Copple, C & Bredekamp, S.eds. (2009). Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8, Third Edition, Key Messages of the Position Statement. [Available on-line April 4, 2018] <https://www.naeyc.org/sites/default/files/globally-shared/downloads/PDFs/resources/position-statements/KeyMessages.pdf>

Head Start News You Can Use: Developmentally Appropriate Practice. [Available on-line April 4, 2018] <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/teaching-practices/article/news-you-can-use-developmentally-appropriate-practice>

## Reflection Sheet, Award Book, and Training Certificates

- Providers who fill out the caregiver's reflection sheet and return it by the posted deadline to the Learning to Grow Program are *guaranteed* a children's book in return. A postage-paid envelop is provided.
- Providers who thoughtfully complete the reflection sheet **question #5** can be awarded a certificate indicating one hour of training completed. Training hours will align with the topic areas required to meet DHS requirements.
- Reflection sheets do not need to be returned by the due date in order to earn the certificate. However, the supply of award books is limited and after the due date, award books will be sent only as available.
- Indicate on Question #8 if you would like to receive free technical assistance or support related to a child care issue.

**REMINDER:** Registered QCC participants can use their participation in the program to fulfill the relicensing requirement of "increased knowledge." Ask your DHS Licensing Social Worker about the requirements today.



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