



Viewers Guide | Episode 1

THE KIDS ARE IN CHARGE: CHILDREN GUIDE THE CURRICULUM

SUMMARY

Dr. Alex Figueras-Daniel joined us to talk about the importance of creating classrooms that are culturally and linguistically responsive by building the curriculum and instructional decision-making around the prior knowledge and interests of children and families. We discussed ways to introduce curriculum topics and design instructional activities that reflect the ages, developmental and linguistic abilities, and interests of children.

- How to use children's interests to inform curriculum planning and make your classroom responsive.
- How to introduce curriculum topics while considering the ages and interests of the children in your care. We provided strategies for using children's interests and abilities to inform curriculum planning and instruction.
- Highlighted reasons why it is essential to create learning environments and opportunities that are reflective of the children in the classroom.

Key Points:

- By providing materials and learning opportunities for children that reflect their interests and abilities, they are more likely to really get engaged and persist at creating something new or solving a problem.
- Responding to children's interests is essential when supporting their language and literacy development, because each child has unique experiences and backgrounds, and the key to engaging children in language and literacy experiences is tapping into and using what they already know and understand.
- It is important to take the time to observe and document children's knowledge, skills, and interests, in order to offer materials and create learning opportunities that will engage them and support their growth and development

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY WITH LINDA ESPINOSA

Dr. Linda Espinosa joined us to help us to think about ways we can use what children already know and are able to do as well as what they are interested in, to support their continued growth and development in this area. She gave tips to help us first understand children's knowledge and skills and then support them in the classroom:

- Engage in conversations with parents to find out language and literacy practices, preferences, and interests of families
- Observe children across settings in the classroom and on the playground to document language and literacy levels in English and child's home language if different from English
- If needed, administer language screeners for any children you have questions about
- Provide all children with frequent opportunities to use new language skills in formal and informal contexts
- Provide books, materials, displays, and artifacts that authentically reflect all the languages, cultures, families, and communities of the children

TRY IT OUT!

During the episode we shared the story of a teacher who followed her children's lead in building an igloo. She provided materials and learning opportunities around this area of interest for the children, and supported their growth and development across domains, including language and literacy, mathematics, science, and social and emotional development. We asked teachers to take some time to observe their children in order to better understand what excites and interests them and to document their current levels of knowledge and skills. Watch them as they play in the block area or dramatic play area. Listen to the stories they tell on Monday mornings when they've just come back from a weekend at home. What is really interesting to them right now? What unique skills and abilities do they have that can be supported through materials, learning opportunities, and daily conversations?

ELOF MINUTE WITH PETER PIZZOLONGO

The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) is a framework that represents the continuum of learning for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It is grounded in a comprehensive body of research regarding what children should know and be able to do during their formative years—from birth through age five. As you know, the first five years of life is a time of wondrous and rapid development and learning. ELOF outlines and describes the skills, behaviors, and concepts that programs must foster in all children—including children who are dual language learners and children with

disabilities.

ELOF is organized in a way that can help teachers and families understand child development and guide the ways in which we help children learn. The framework includes:

- Domains—broad areas of early learning and development. The ELOF domains are:
 - Approaches to Learning,
 - Social and Emotional Development,
 - Language and Literacy,
 - Cognition, and

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- Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
- Sub-domains—categories of development within each domain, such as “relationships with other children” as a sub-domain within “social and emotional development.”
- Goals—general statements of expectations for children’s learning and development.
- Developmental progressions—the skills, behaviors, and concepts that children will demonstrate as they progress toward a goal. AND
- Indicators—the specific, observable skills, behaviors, and concepts that children should know and be able to do at the end of Early Head Start (by 36 months) or at the end of Head Start (by 60 months).

Looking at the ELOF—in the Approaches to Learning Domain, one of the goals is “Child persists in tasks.” Your program’s School Readiness Goals could include a goal that is similar to this goal from the ELOF, such as “Children will demonstrate persistence

when working with materials, activities, and information.” We watched a video of a preschooler showing persistence and referenced the ELOF to understand his current level of skill and what skills are likely to develop next. At the 36-48 month indicator: “Persists on preferred tasks when presented with small challenges with or without adult support, such as continuing to try to build a tall tower with blocks, even when some pieces fall.” And at 48 to 60 months: “Frequently persists on preferred tasks. Sometimes persists on less preferred activities with or without adult support, such as working to clean up an activity area.” Have you seen children demonstrating these skills among the 3- and 4-year-olds you’ve worked with?

You can learn more about ELOF by going to the ELOF pages on the ECLKC Website—the Office of Head Start’s Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center.

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/hs/sr/approach/elof>

BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT MINUTE | NEAL HORAN

Neal Horan outlined three key strategies for supporting children who struggle to engage with curriculum. These strategies include: Teachers: being detectives, fostering peer relationships, and building emotional vocabulary.

RESILIENCY AND WELLNESS | REFLECT ON YOURSELF TO IMPROVE TEACHING PRACTICES

Neal described what it means to pursue “wellness,” which is not limited to just physical health. Wellness also includes emotional health, social health, financial or occupational health, spiritual health and intellectual wellness. The definition of wellness depends on how we prioritize each of these areas and the various components of each area of wellness. facets of each area themselves. Thus, So, someone canmay be considered “well” in one area but not in another. There are ways in which to assess this and to then develop a plan to address areas of need. Neal addressed the importance of being preventative, by taking advantage of programs available to support adult wellness. Some strategies Neal provided include,

- Developing a program-wide wellness plan
- Developing a wellness team
- Supporting participation in programs such as walking/exercise or weight loss
- Being proactive by providing and participating in activities that are preventative

RESOURCES:

15-Minute In-service Suite: Materials to Support Learning

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/engage/iss/support-learning.html>

15-Minute In-service Suite: Making Learning Meaningful

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/engage/iss/meaningful-learning.html>

Planning and Organizing Thematic Instruction (inclusive of children who are dual language learners and supports the idea of planning based on children's "big ideas")

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/planned-language-approach/docs/dll-ts-planning-organizing-thematic-instruction.pdf>

15-Minute In-Service Suite: Using Data to Inform Teaching

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/teaching/practice/assessment/iss/inform-teaching.html>

Strategies for Supporting All Dual Language Learners (B-5)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/fcp/docs/dll-strategies.pdf>

Including Children's Home Languages and Cultures

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/planned-language-approach/docs/dll-ts-childrens-home-languages.pdf>

Creating Environments That Include Children's Home Languages and Cultures

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic/planned-language-approach/docs/dll-ts-creating-environments.pdf>

HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Information in this episode reflect the following Head Start Program Performance Standards Subpart C—Education and Child Development Program Services

§1302.32 Curricula

(1) Center-based and family child care programs must implement developmentally appropriate research-based early childhood curricula...

§1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment

For dual language learners, a program must recognize bilingualism and biliteracy as strengths and implement research-based teaching practices that support their development.

Subpart F—Additional Services for Children with Disabilities

§1302.60 Full participation in program services and activities

A program must ensure enrolled children with disabilities...receive all applicable program services... and that they fully participate in all program activities.



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