

Child Development



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Child development

Selection of short videos



Short video:
The essentials:
The five areas of global
development

Child Development
Question from the network

The importance of using the child's zone of proximal development to plan interventions to meet the child's needs is emphasized. How can we effectively target the zone of proximal development of a child we are concerned about?

Votre gouvernement Québec

Short video:
A question from the network

Objectives of this presentation



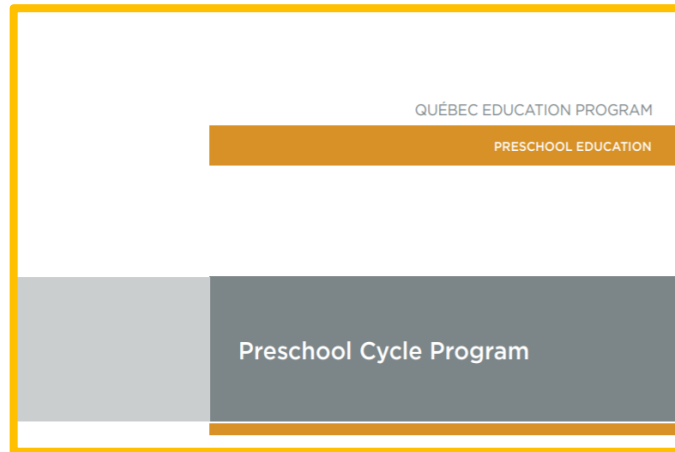
- In light of the mandate of the Preschool Cycle Program, establish a common definition of global child development.
- Reflect on the needs of children aged between 4 and 6 years of age and interventions that support their global development.
 - Characteristics, needs, interventions.
- Look at one's own practice in response to the needs of developing children.

Definition of global development



<https://pixabay.com/fr/videos/search/kaleidoscope/>

Preschool Cycle Program



Fostering the global development of all children refers to allowing them to grow in every area: physical, motor, emotional, social, language and cognitive development. It is vital that all areas of development be accorded equal importance and be dealt with in synergy. In the educational contexts presented to children, the various areas of development influence and reinforce one another.

Preschool Cycle Program, p. 4

With the intention of promoting school success, the mandate of preschool education is as follows:

➤ ***To foster the global development of all children:***

- *Provide a reassuring, welcoming and inclusive environment*
- *Cultivate enjoyment through exploration, discovery and learning*
- *Lay the foundations for future schooling*

➤ ***To take preventive action:***

- *Provide universal prevention activities*
- *Provide targeted prevention activities*

Preschool Cycle Program, p. 3

Provide a reassuring, welcoming and inclusive environment

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➤ To take preventive action:

- Provide universal prevention activities
- Provide targeted prevention activities

... focusing on the well-being, safety and health of each child

... being attentive to the children's needs

... all children and their families will feel accepted and respected

... not being judgemental

...believing in them and in their ability to learn

... recognizing the diversity of the children and their families



Preschool Cycle Program, p. 4

Cultivate enjoyment through exploration, discovery and learning

... involves encouraging the children to be active, express their natural curiosity, make choices and be creative in a safe and stimulating environment

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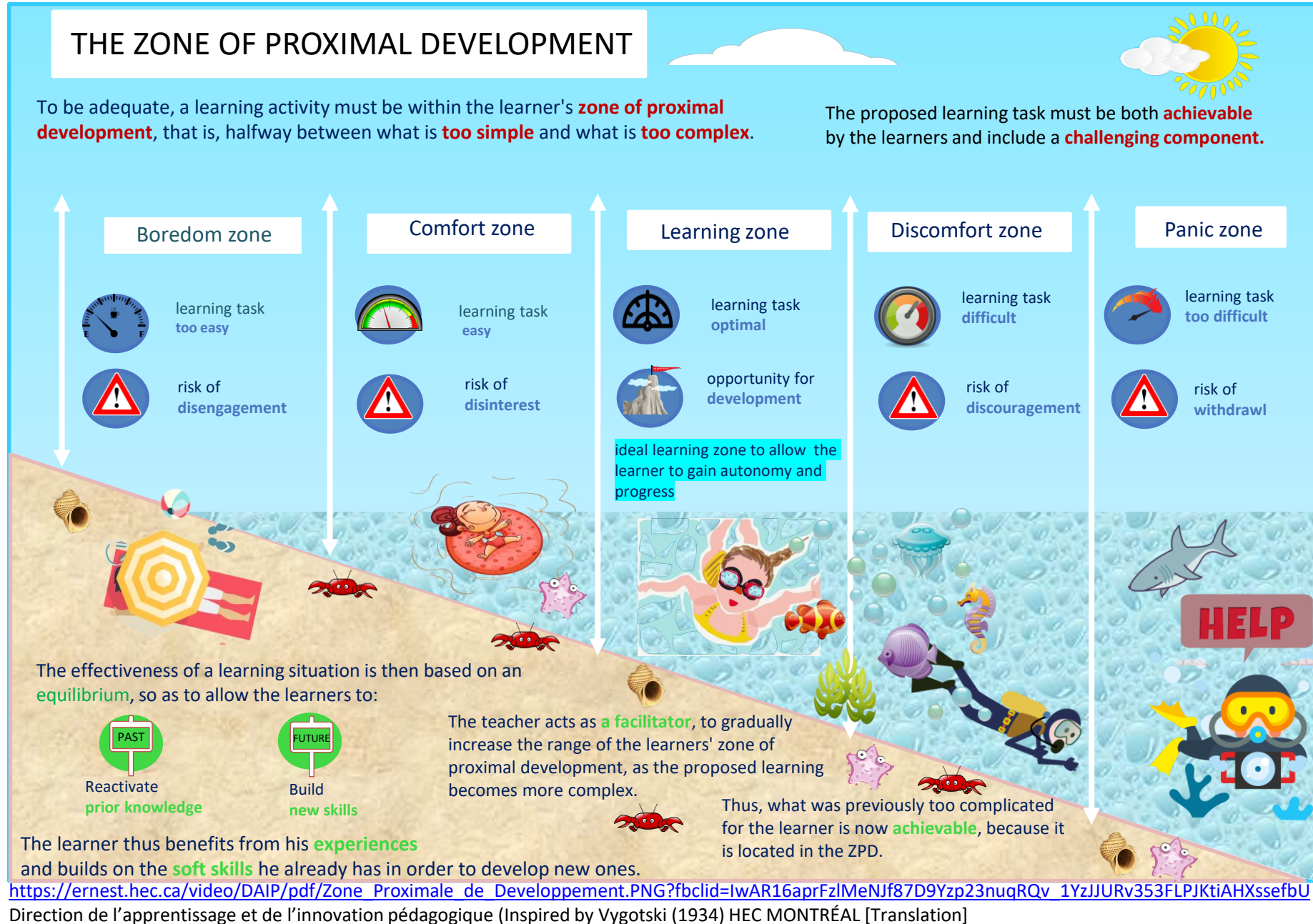
Children need to be heard, to feel that others are interested in what they are doing...

Children enjoy being active and playing alone or with others.

They need time to imagine, to learn and to feel appreciated, proud, capable and confident in their growing abilities.



The zone of proximal development



Cultivate enjoyment through exploration, discovery and learning



Lay the foundations for future schooling

With the intention of promoting school success, the mandate of preschool education is as follows:

➤ To foster the global development of all children:

- Provide a reassuring, welcoming and inclusive environment
- Cultivate enjoyment through exploration, discovery and learning
- Lay the foundations for future schooling

➤ To take preventive action:

- Provide universal prevention activities
- Provide targeted prevention activities

Laying the foundations for future schooling means providing contexts and activities that foster the development of attitudes and behaviours (soft skills) as well as processes and strategies that will allow the children to learn, to acquire knowledge and to succeed throughout their schooling. In other words, it means providing them with the tools for lifelong learning.



Preschool Cycle Program, p.4

Executive functions

Executive functions are a set of cognitive skills:

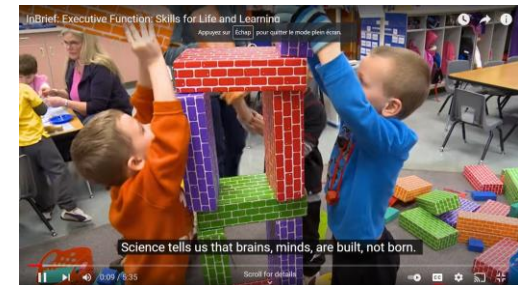
- that support children in their learning
- that allow children to regulate themselves
- that promote school success

Executive functions are developed over time

Adult support promotes the development of executive functions in children



<https://youtu.be/WDTskwt8STk>

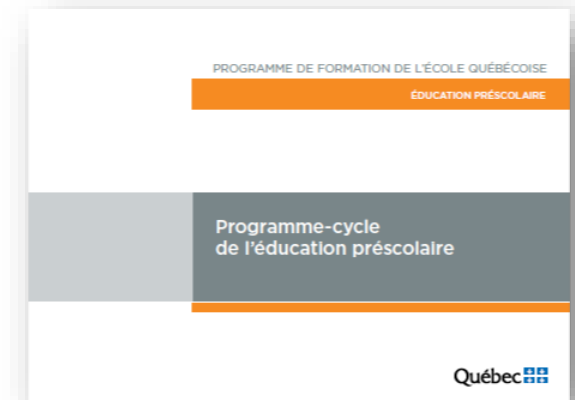


https://youtu.be/efCq_vHUMqs

Connections with the orientations of the Preschool Cycle Program: Three orientations are pursued

Program orientations

Three orientations** are being used to pursue the two main objectives of the mandate for the Preschool Cycle Program, which are to foster the global development of all children and to take preventive action to meet their needs. **These three orientations are: play, observation of the child's progress and classroom organization.



Preschool Cycle Program, p. 9

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The essentials: The five areas of global development



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Physical and motor development Refers to motor skills and healthy lifestyles

- Is essential to every aspect of child development
- Is influenced by a child's personal characteristics such as growth, maturity, physical health and living environment
- Takes place in all contexts
- Risk-taking allows children to develop self-protective behaviours

Description of the area of development

This area includes the development of motor skills and healthy lifestyle habits. Physical and motor development is essential to every aspect of child development, but especially to gross motor skills. It refers to the development of physical abilities or motor and perceptual skills, and is influenced by a child's personal characteristics such as growth, maturity, physical health and living environment. When exposed to different opportunities to be active, children gradually become aware of the positive effects of movement and the influence of lifestyle on health. Healthy lifestyle habits include openness to, curiosity about and willingness to try different foods, as well as awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and aspects of prevention and safety.

Context for learning

Physical and motor development takes place in all contexts. In everyday life, children have opportunities to climb, jump, slide, and so on. Outdoor environments (e.g. park, schoolyard), natural environments (e.g. wooded areas, snowbanks) and use of a variety of equipment (e.g. balls, hoops, scooter boards) can also provide high-intensity motor experiences. In addition, and where the environment is conducive to risk-taking, children develop the self-protective behaviours they need to maintain their own health and safety. Everyday activities also foster the development of healthy lifestyle habits (e.g. snacks and outings).

Connections with other areas of development

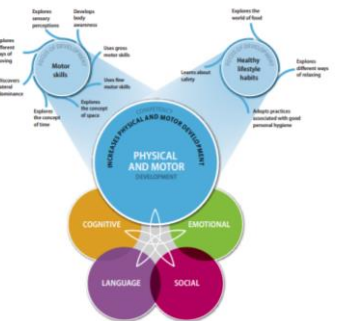
The more children can be active, the more they become aware of and learn about their body and develop basic motor skills. In doing so, they gain self-assurance and confidence and learn to situate themselves spatially, to perceive reality, to self-regulate, to interact with others, to use the correct terms when referring to their bodies and their movements, to solve problems and to take increasingly responsible and autonomous actions.

Connections with the executive functions

Sensitive interactions between adults and children will help the children to control certain spontaneous reactions (e.g. refrain from pushing another child in order to sit on the same bench), use their working memory (e.g. remember the steps to follow to dress for winter), be flexible in their thinking (e.g. stop playing to go to the bathroom, and then return to play) and plan (e.g. gather the materials they need to create a painting). A context conducive to the development of executive functions can be created by offering children different opportunities to test their physical and motor limits (e.g. obstacle courses or games that encourage complex movements). Motor games involving signals that require the children to stop moving, slow down, exaggerate their movements or move more quickly will also encourage the development of executive functions, as will situations in which the children are invited to wind down and concentrate.

End-of-preschool outcomes

The children demonstrate ease of movement and, with maturity and experience, they are also able to increasingly refine their movements. They become more aware of their physical and motor potential and skills. They adapt their actions to their physical and social environment and can apply health and safety rules.



CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN

In general, 4- to 6-year-olds:

- › experience rapid physical changes (related to growth), with significant differences from one child to another because children grow at different rates
- › show a strong interest in motor activities that involve manipulation, exploration and discovery
- › explore the things their bodies can or may be able to do
- › develop enough coordination, dissociation, control and balance to synchronize their movements
- › are naturally drawn to short, high-intensity activities
- › can distinguish movements associated with different parts of the body
- › show increasing dexterity needed to grasp and manipulate small objects (e.g. knead modelling clay, build castles out of blocks)
- › can learn different spatial concepts (e.g. near and far) and can compare two objects to determine which is bigger
- › develop their tastes and food preferences as they discover new foods
- › discover different ways to relax
- › become aware of their abilities and limitations by taking risks and accepting challenges

In preschool education, 4- to 6-year-olds need to:

- › be encouraged to take care of some of their own needs
- › be active
- › have a variety of sensory and motor experiences daily
- › strengthen their muscle tone and adopt good posture
- › use different motor skills (e.g. catching, throwing, kicking, striking)
- › overcome their fears and gain confidence when performing challenging movements
- › handle materials of different weights, textures or sizes, and use a variety of tools
- › engage in moderate- to high-intensity activities
- › learn how to relax and to take part in relaxation activities
- › find reference points so that they can orient themselves in space; refocus on gross motor skills activities if they are experiencing difficulties



The physical and motor area of development

Emotional development

Refers to self-knowledge and self-confidence

- Allows children to build a sense of self or self-image and to see themselves as unique
- Refers to the desire for autonomy and a sense of competence
- Allows children to feel safe enough to move around, to ask for help if necessary, to collaborate, to participate in group activities and to communicate
- Takes place in all contexts

Description of the area of development

Emotional development refers to self-knowledge and self-confidence. Self-knowledge allows children to build a sense of self, or self-image, and to see themselves as unique and different from others. This allows them to know themselves and to understand and express their feelings. Self-confidence refers to the desire for autonomy and a sense of competence. Self-confidence develops through attachment, when a child's need for security is met, and through warm interactions with adults and other children. Self-confidence continues to develop as children learn to meet their own needs and live positive experiences and successes. Emotional development is also based on individual temperament, which leads them to understand their environment and past experiences in their own way.

Context for learning

Emotional development takes place in all contexts, but mainly through the children's everyday experiences and contacts with others during play, creative activities and projects. Children gradually develop their ability to express, understand and regulate their emotions. Children aged 4 to 6 need to discover and learn to complete tasks on their own under the watchful gaze of the adults around them.

Connections with other areas of development

As children develop emotionally, they begin to feel safe enough to move around, explore and take risks, especially during active play. They also learn to ask for help when necessary, to collaborate with others, to participate in group activities and to communicate. They discover different points of view and can persevere to find solutions to the problems they encounter while playing, experimenting and experiencing everyday life.

Connections with the executive functions

Children's ability to understand and acknowledge emotions, and then adjust to them, requires skills connected to the executive functions. Inhibition helps to regulate emotions, for example, when children express their anger and learn to channel it into something positive (e.g. give or receive a hug, hug a teddy bear). They must also be flexible in their thinking to adjust to everyday situations. Working memory, too, can play a role in emotional development by helping children to act alone and independently (e.g. remember the steps involved in putting on a snowsuit). Lastly, symbolic play requires skills derived from all the executive functions and allows children to explore their emotions (e.g. re-live a situation) by inventing increasingly complex scenarios.

End-of-preschool outcomes

The children know themselves and their own needs better. They make choices based on their tastes and interests. They are aware of their strengths and can talk about their successes. They undertake a variety of tasks and are keen to accept challenges at their level. Guided by adults, children also demonstrate the ability to regulate their emotions.

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Québec Education Program – Preschool Education

CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN

In general, 4- to 6-year-olds:

- have different temperaments that affect how they interact with others and react to events that happen around them
- still need the support of their parents or the adults around them to confidently explore their environment
- are willing to interact with adults who make them feel safe enough to engage in learning
- understand that they are unique
- exhibit an increasingly realistic concept of self, allowing them to identify the characteristics that distinguish them from others
- are aware of their place within their family
- often overestimate their skills and explore the boundaries they should respect
- demonstrate a desire to develop their sense of initiative and competency (development of their own identity and self-esteem)
- are sensitive to how others perceive them, which plays an increasingly significant role in their definition of self
- feel proud when they contribute to the achievement of a common goal (e.g. doing a jigsaw puzzle with a classmate)
- are learning to express, recognize and name their emotions
- have some understanding of their emotions and those of others

In preschool education, 4- to 6-year-olds need:

- a suitable context (an adapted physical environment and emotional stability)
- to be surrounded by caring adults who provide structure, protect them and collaborate with each other
- constant and consistent supervision, a warm environment and reassurance
- consistent interventions by the adults with whom they interact (e.g. permission to bring a transitional object such as a blanket to class, to daycare or to the gym)
- to feel accepted as they are, without being judged
- help to manage their emotions, from adults who are attentive to their feelings (e.g. adults who can put their feelings into words)
- to experience success, however modest, so that they can identify their strengths and improve their self-esteem
- to feel proud of their accomplishments
- activities and tasks suited to their zone of proximal development
- to feel capable of learning
- to be supported, so that they can build a positive sense of self that will allow them to develop awareness of their potential and their sense of competency



The emotional area of development

Social development

Refers to social skills and the ability to be part of a group

- Refers to the relationships that the children build with others in the different spheres
- Takes place in all contexts



Description of the area of development

Social development refers to social skills and the ability to be part of a group, as well as to the relationships that the children build with others in the different areas of family life, at school and in their community. Social development encompasses all the attitudes, skills and strategies underlying behaviours that are considered socially acceptable and that enable children to establish positive interactions with their peers and to resolve conflicts. The children must therefore create a place for themselves in the group and be accepted by the other group members. Social development requires an open attitude to others that includes knowledge of and compliance with the applicable rules.

Context for learning

Social development takes place in all contexts, but especially in everyday life in the classroom and at school. These different contexts allow children to interact socially with others during play (e.g. spontaneous, symbolic, construction, outdoor or co-operative games and games with rules), during activities and projects, and during transitions (e.g. moving around in the school). Children also develop social skills by becoming involved in formulating group rules of conduct and making certain decisions.

Connections with other areas of development

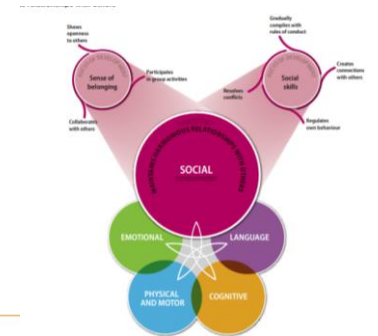
By developing social skills, children can perform tasks that require increasingly complex motor skills (e.g. playing with others on playground equipment). They also develop appropriate attitudes with their peers, playmates and the adults around them. If an environment fosters interactions, children have many opportunities to express their needs and interests, negotiate, learn new words and use those words in context. In addition, they can name their own emotions and the emotions they observe in other people. They have opportunities to compare their ideas, share strategies and projects, etc.

Connections with the executive functions

Social development fosters support for the executive functions. Inhibition helps to regulate behaviours, and children who are flexible in their thinking can adopt solutions to their conflicts and other interpersonal problems. Working memory is used to apply or comply with group rules of conduct. The ability to observe and adjust to signs of emotion in other children requires similar skills to those used in planning.

End-of-preschool outcomes

The children participate in and contribute to group life. They adapt their reactions and behaviours to the situation. They can share, offer help and encourage others. Guided by an adult, they use different strategies to try to resolve conflicts.



CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN

In general, 4- to 6-year-olds:

- realize that their social environment is growing ever wider
- create emotional bonds with their classmates
- seek to maintain relationships in which they feel safe, with the classmates they know best
- have increased interactions with their peers that extend over time
- begin to acknowledge the presence of others by adopting socially acceptable behaviours (e.g. lending, borrowing, giving, helping, accepting, exchanging, waiting)
- want to become part of the group
- try to collaborate and co-operate with others to achieve their goals
- gradually become aware of what is appropriate or inappropriate, depending on the context
- manage, with help, to control their reactions and behaviours in certain situations

In preschool education, 4- to 6-year-olds need to:

- experience a stable and safe environment where the rules of conduct are clear and adapted to them
- receive support as they build positive relationships with other children and adults
- feel accepted and acknowledged by the other children
- receive help in using words to express their needs, requests, frustrations and preferences
- receive guidance to recognize signs of emotions, and to be supported as they learn to regulate their behaviours
- participate frequently in activities in small or large groups
- be supported as they learn and comply with the rules of conduct in the school and in the classroom
- be involved in certain decisions concerning group life



The social area of
development

Language development

Covers two focuses of development: oral language and written language

- It refers to the children's ability to:
 - make themselves understood
 - express their ideas
 - understand the ideas of others
 - gradually develop reading and writing skills and knowledge
- Oral language serves as a foundation for written language and it is important to understand the relationship between the two.
- Takes place in all contexts



CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN

In general, 4- to 6-year-olds:

- › react appropriately to simple messages using imitation, gestures, sounds, words or actions, and usually make themselves understood
- › produce combinations of words to form simple statements
- › communicate spontaneously during play
- › can have a fairly long conversation with another child or an adult when the subject interests them
- › can describe what they have done, seen, discovered and completed successfully
- › expand their vocabulary daily, allowing them to express their ideas more clearly and to picture themselves in the world around them
- › provide more complex explanations and seek to elaborate the ideas they express using words (e.g. but, also, or, before, after, in, between, on, under)
- › grasp the meaning of more complex questions with relative ease
- › gradually begin to structure their discourse more coherently
- › show interest in writing and pay attention to the symbols used to communicate in writing (illustrations, shapes, colours and graphic symbols)
- › are keen to try to write in their own way
- › explore the alphabetic system in different reading and writing contexts and in their own attempts to write
- › play with letters and sounds in a variety of contexts

In preschool education, 4- to 6-year-olds need to:

- › play to communicate spontaneously
- › be in contact and interact with people who model good language practices (speaking, reading and writing)
- › be placed in an environment that provides visual and gestural means that help to develop their functional communication skills (e.g. making requests, expressing needs, nodding in agreement)
- › be encouraged to speak and to feel safe when doing so
- › be accepted when they express themselves (e.g. non-verbal communication through silence, gestures, facial expressions)
- › be supported by different means when formulating messages intended to express a need, request help, obtain an object or material, or ask to take part in an activity
- › have numerous opportunities to speak throughout the day
- › sing, recite nursery rhymes, play guessing games, etc.
- › perceive acceptance and respect of their linguistic background as an asset and not as an obstacle to learning the language of instruction
- › be exposed on a regular basis to children's literature and written words through song lyrics, nursery rhymes, word games, riddles, maps, pictograms, books, posters, etc.
- › have rich and diversified cultural experiences using a wide variety of media
- › to be placed in learning contexts in which reading and writing are pleasant experiences



The language area of development

Cognitive development

- Refers to the development of knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours that allow children to think in a more complex way and acquire strategies.
- Children develop strategies that include the actions, tools and practices they need to feel engaged, motivated and confident...

Description of the area of development

Cognitive development refers to the development of knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours that allow children to think in a more complex way and acquire strategies. Children from age 4 to 6 begin to transition from perceptive reasoning to logical reasoning, which changes their view of the world. Children develop strategies that include the actions, tools and practices they need to feel engaged, motivated and confident in a given task or situation.

Context for learning

Cognitive development takes place in all contexts of everyday life, in both ordinary situations and those involving problems to be solved. As children become involved in different types of play (e.g. motor play, dramatic and symbolic play, games involving construction, logic, mathematics and experimentation), they learn to analyze and gradually understand the world around them. For example, they begin to structure their thinking, develop strategies and become familiar with various subject areas (e.g. languages, mathematics, arts education, social sciences, science and technology, personal development). By providing a rich, stimulating environment conducive to exploration and success, children acquire knowledge, develop new concepts, adapt to their environment, and develop their reasoning skills and creativity.

Connections with other areas of development

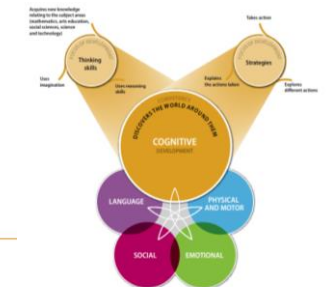
Cognitive development has an impact on physical, motor, emotional, social and language development. The knowledge and strategies from each of these areas also play a role in children's cognitive development. In other words, the things they learn in these other areas of development fuel their cognitive development, and vice versa. By exploring their environment, children can improve their physical and motor skills. Children who engage in and complete a game or activity will be proud of their accomplishment. Similarly, the better their cognitive skills, the more they can interact with other children and find solutions to conflicts. As they discover new concepts, they are better able to ask questions and use an increasingly varied vocabulary.

Connections with the executive functions

Inhibition skills allow children to progressively adjust to the demands of their environment (e.g. delays, routines, transitional and to suppress spontaneous gestures that are not appropriate to the situation). In addition, working memory skills allow them to make connections between what they know, what they discover and what they learn, and to reinvest their learning in different contexts. By being flexible in their thinking, they gradually learn to change their opinions, consider the opinions of others and propose different ideas or solutions to problems. Children also use their planning skills to predict and take the steps required to achieve a predetermined goal.

End-of-preschool outcomes

The children show interest, curiosity and a desire to learn. They apply their knowledge and use their reasoning to ask questions, explain, make connections and attempt to understand the world around them. They use their imagination when they play. They are able to set an intention, to work toward it and adjust it to achieve a goal. They can discuss their processes, strategies, learning and accomplishments.



CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF CHILDREN

In general, 4- to 6-year-olds:

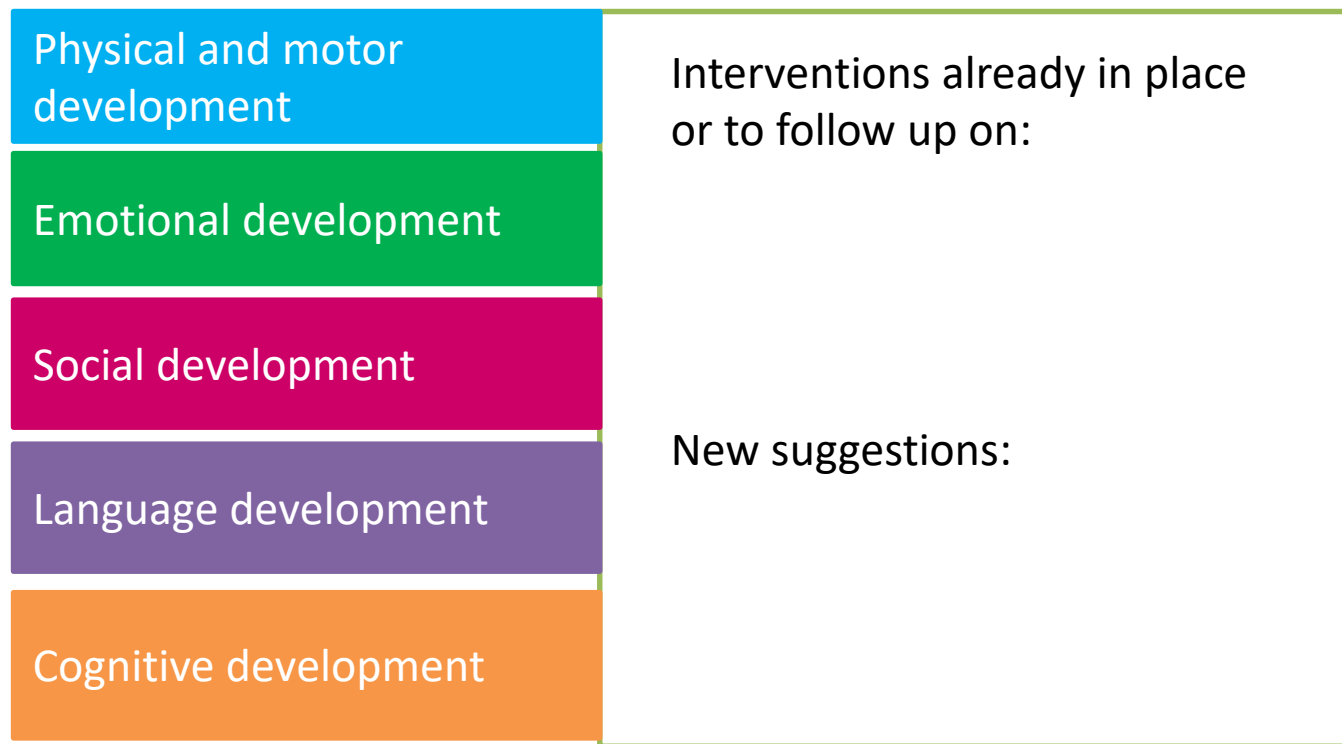
- › are naturally curious
- › often jump from one activity to another because they are interested in everything that captures their immediate attention
- › are at the symbolic and intuitive thinking stage and are beginning to construct their first concepts
- › have their own perceptual view of the world, which may differ from the adult view
- › will attempt to do things that are beneficial for their development and learning
- › can compare quantities of objects and use words like more and less, put together, take away, add and share
- › begin to count larger quantities of objects
- › explore shapes and measurements
- › increasingly attempt to represent something precise in their drawings, such as a house, a human figure or a sun
- › are increasingly able to plan simple, intentional actions
- › are increasingly able to take initiative
- › display a certain type of egocentrism that may limit their access to others' opinions and sometimes prevent them from grasping different aspects of a situation at the same time

In preschool education, 4- to 6-year-olds need to:

- › explore, feel and touch to discover the world around them
- › have time to explore their environment
- › be given opportunities to move from one activity to another, based on their interests and needs
- › manipulate a variety of objects that foster the exploration and construction of concepts related to the various subject areas
- › engage in and play an active role in meaningful activities based on their interests, needs and experience
- › regularly converse with other children and adults about what they are doing
- › interact with others (children and adults) to structure their thinking by considering different points of view
- › be exposed to a range of cultural experiences that require skills and knowledge in different subject areas
- › have opportunities to develop strategies (e.g. ask questions, make hypotheses, attempt to do things)
- › apply what they know with the support of adults who engage in dialogue with them and ask them questions about their strategies while providing prompts and feedback on their learning
- › explore situations in which they must think on their feet (e.g. planning their play, organizing materials)
- › explore and imagine different ways of performing an action or solving a problem
- › experience situations in which they are free to be creative and flexible

The cognitive area of development

Basic needs and interventions to support development



In order to grow, I need ...

to feel accepted,
to feel listened to,
to feel loved

to move, to touch,
to experiment

to play, to imagine

to laugh, to have
fun

time

to learn, to
discover



**What we should
keep in
mind with regard
to global
development**

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Votre gouvernement

Québec

Main video:
Child development

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[Question from the network](#)

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