



# RI EARLY LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS



EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS ARTICULATE SHARED EXPECTATIONS FOR WHAT YOUNG CHILDREN SHOULD KNOW AND BE ABLE TO DO. FURTHER, THEY PROVIDE A COMMON LANGUAGE FOR MEASURING PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING SPECIFIC LEARNING GOALS.<sup>1</sup>

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## WHAT IS IT?

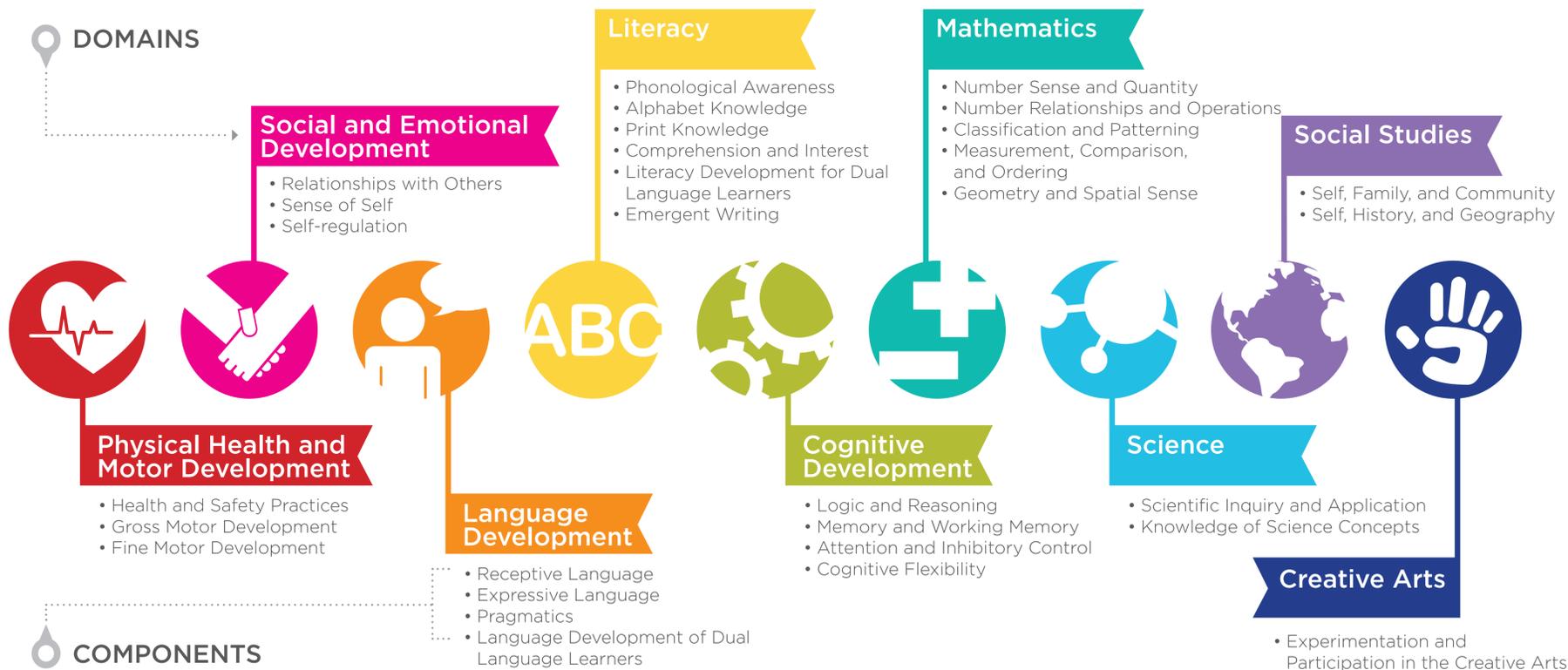
**FROM BIRTH, CHILDREN ARE CURIOUS AND MOTIVATED TO LEARN.** As they grow and learn, their brains change dramatically, especially during the first three years of life. These changes are influenced by genetics and environmental experiences (including relationships and physical conditions) as children develop in realms of thinking, speaking, behaving, and reasoning.<sup>2</sup> By interacting with their world, young children make discoveries, figure out how things work, try out new behaviors, learn social rules, and solve problems. High-quality early learning and relationships enhance their development in every way: social, cognitive, linguistic, artistic, and physical. When they actively explore environments and materials, children build concept knowledge and thinking skills. When they are able to develop nurturing and supportive relationships with caregivers (their parent or other primary caregiver, adult family members, and other familiar adults), childcare providers, and teachers, they are also laying a solid foundation for learning.<sup>3</sup> Early development across all domains secures this foundation for a child's later success in school and in life.<sup>4</sup>

**EARLY LEARNING CONTINUUM:** The early learning and development standards outline a birth- to-60-month continuum, with six developmental benchmarks:



## HOW DOES IT WORK?

**RHODE ISLAND'S EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS ARE ORGANIZED INTO DOMAINS, COMPONENTS, LEARNING GOALS, AND INDICATORS.** Domains represent the broad areas of early learning. Components are specific areas within a domain. Learning goals state those general categories of competencies, behaviors, knowledge, and skills that children develop in increasing degrees and with increasing sophistication as they grow. Indicators establish the specific developmental benchmarks for the competencies, behaviors, knowledge, and skills that most children possess or exhibit at a particular age for each learning goal.



## HOW TO USE

- To guide early educators in the development of curriculum
- To inform families about learning milestones
- To provide a framework for implementing high-quality early childhood programs
- To promote optimal early learning trajectories into kindergarten

## HOW NOT TO USE

- As specific teaching practices or materials
- As a checklist of competencies
- As a stand-alone curriculum or program

## GET STARTED!

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