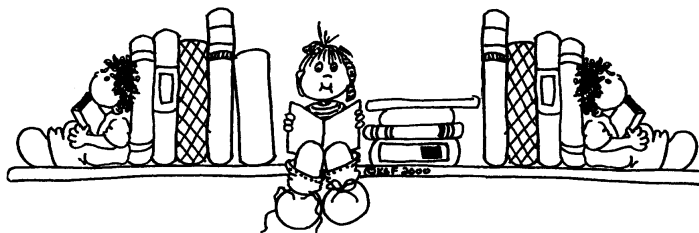
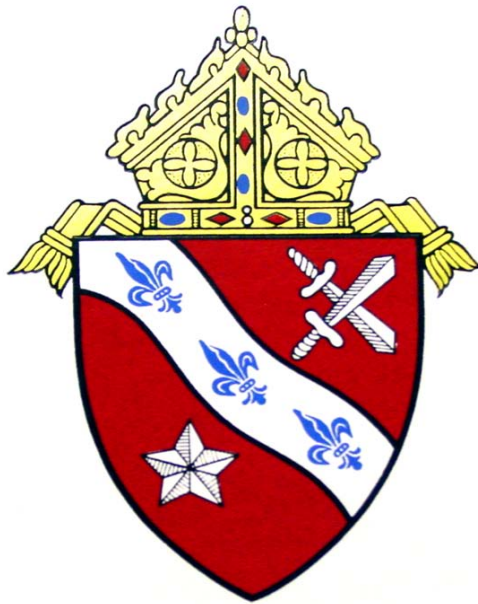


Early Childhood Educational Standards

Diocese of Dallas
as adapted from the
Archdiocese of Hartford, CT



September 2008

Table of Contents

The Child at Four

Spiritual Development.....	3
Physical Growth	5
Social-Emotional Growth	6
Cognitive Development	9
Literacy Development	11
Creative Expression/Aesthetic Development	15

The Child at Four Spiritual Development

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>The preschool religion program is designed for the young child to experience a personal relationship with God through concrete experiences of nature, plants, animals, and people as gifts of a loving God.</p> <p>Daily opportunities for discovering God's gifts are developed through aesthetic expression: art, music, movement and dramatic play.</p> <p>Sharing these experiences with the early learner gradually enables the young child to move from an ego-centered/possessive stage to a higher level of reverencing others. Children's experiences of being special are transformed to an understanding that God's greatest gift of love is Jesus Christ.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe him/herself as a child of God • Discuss the uniqueness of his/her name • Express love of God and family through Scripture, music, and prayer • Describe families as a gift from God • Describe ways in which families love, care for, and help one another • Describe how they are members of the family of God • List ways in which they can help their community • Discuss ways that sharing brings happiness to self and others • Pray for family members • Pray the Sign of the Cross with teacher modeling • Describe friends as a gift from God • Describe the world as God's creation 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses poetry and hand gestures to express the uniqueness of his/her name • Participates in class and school prayer • Draws a picture of him/herself to demonstrate "I am special." • Draws and label family members to show each family is unique in the eyes of God • Re-enacts the story of the Good Samaritan • Participates in parish outreach programs • Sends cards to hospitals, nursing homes, hospice, and to sick people in their school and parish communities • Recites the Sign of the Cross at the beginning of class prayer • Draws pictures of God's creation • Prays the psalms through repetition • Recites simple poems about animals • Role plays the story of Noah's Ark

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>The preschool program will nurture an atmosphere of love which deepens the young children experiences and points toward their God so they will be ready to live, pray and celebrate as members of God's family</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List ways to take care of animals as part of God's creation • Describe St. Francis of Assisi as someone who took care of animals • List the five senses as gifts from God • Participate in quiet reflection, 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composes prayers giving thanks for their five senses

	prayer, and silence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a classroom prayer corner to pray and reflect independently • Recite grace before and after meals 	
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
	The child will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate Advent as a time of waiting for the birth of Jesus • Celebrate Christmas as the birth of Jesus • Describe the Holy Family – Jesus, Mary and Joseph • Describe the seasons as ways that God gives us to celebrate life • Celebrate the symbols of new life as a preparation for Easter • Develop positive ways to help others during Lent • Describe May as the Month of special devotion to Mary, the Mother of Jesus 	The child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates Advent wreathes, calendars • Re-enacts the Christmas story • Assembles the manger scene in the classroom • Draws a picture of the four seasons • Draws or makes puppets of the life cycle of a butterfly • Lists ways to help others during Lent • Makes a Mothers Day card for Mary

The Child at Four Physical Growth

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Motor Development</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to engage in a wide variety of gross-motor activities that are child selected and teacher initiated.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine several large muscle movements • Perform activities that combine large muscle movements with equipment • Sequence several motor skills in an organized way 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Runs and jumps • Runs and steps in to kick a ball • Runs, stops, starts and stops without falling • Throws a ball towards someone • Negotiates obstacle course • Chooses activity at play time
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to use a variety of materials that promote eye-hand coordination and small muscle development</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage in physical activity that is self selected or teacher initiated • Perform fine-motor tasks that require small-muscle strength and control • Show beginning control of writing, drawing and art tools • Use eye-hand coordination to manipulate smaller objects with refined precision • Strengthen use of hand skills through building with materials 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strings ½ inch beads with accuracy • Operates puppets with limbs • Holds markers, crayons, pencils, paintbrush with a three point grasp • Uses computer mouse with control • Holds scissors using opposing thumb and finger when making snips • Cuts a curved line or circle with scissors with accuracy • Builds with a variety of blocks (wooden, Lego, etc.)
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to practice basic hygiene and self-help skills.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage most aspects of dressing, eating and toileting independently • Practice personal hygiene 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeds self with no help • Puts on jacket and zips it (May need zipper started by teacher.) • Serves self food for lunch or snack using the appropriate utensils • Uses toilet independently • Washes hands using soap • Dries hands using towel • Blows nose with tissue

The Child at Four
Social-Emotional Growth

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Development of the child's uniqueness, a sense of reverence for what is sacred, a concept of others and of the world</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a sense of prayer through reverence for God's creation • Discover the mysteries of nature through multi-sensory experiences culminating in a respect for life • Develop a sense of trust • Show empathy and caring • Respect personal and community property • Demonstrate a sense of justice by caring for his/her peers • Cooperate and shares with peers 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses words to pray • Folds hands in prayer • Makes the Sign of the Cross • Cares for classroom pets • Cleans up after snack • Shares emotions with teacher • Shares emotions with peers • Responds with distress and delight to peer situations (i.e., responds when a friend is hurt, forgives and apologizes) • Cares for toys in the room • Share with peers • Helps peers with classroom responsibilities • Joins others in play • Uses words to express emotions or feelings
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to exhibit curiosity, creativity, self-direction, and persistence in learning situations.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independently choose wide variety of familiar materials • Tries new materials with either teacher or peer support • May experiment by combining materials • Usually participate in both familiar and unfamiliar activities • Sustain attention to task • Demonstrate delight or satisfaction when completing a task or solving a problem 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chooses to work and play in a variety of centers • Responds positively to teacher's suggestion to choose a more challenging puzzle or game • Begins to make predictions about materials selected (how high to construct a structure before it will topple)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains engaged in an activity they have selected for a minimum of 15 - 20 minutes with teacher encouragement • Stays to complete a challenging activity or task with teacher assistance • Works on completing a puzzle for 20 minutes until completed without teacher prompting
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to describe themselves using several basic characteristics.	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refer to him/herself by first and last name • Identify him/herself by family and by gender 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices similarities and differences ("My name is like yours. ") • Notices similarities and differences in family composition
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to participate in and exhibit self-control in group situations and to achieve personal autonomy.	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in small and large group activities • Manage transitions, follows classroom and playground rules, and be aware of and follow classroom schedules and routines • Set realistic goals for him/herself 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comes to group voluntarily • Remains with group for at least 15-20 minutes • Moves from one activity to another appropriately and follows rules and routines when give signal by teacher • Evaluates own work
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to interact appropriately with peers and familiar adults	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust behavior in response to others • Take complementary role and sometimes able to take turns in play • Succeed in entering ongoing play when players and/or activity are familiar • Interact with several 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately to teacher requests • Makes attempts to join others in play • Interacts cooperatively with peers • Frequently gets teacher to assist in conflicts

	<p>children, playing and working cooperatively and entering into or initiating a play situation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek help from peers or adults 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes responds to the teacher's suggestion to refrain from using force (i.e., At the teacher's suggestion, return the toy that was grabbed.)
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to use age appropriate conflict resolution strategies</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use word to identify the conflict • Engage in developing solutions to end conflict • Seek adult help when involved in a conflict 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorms with teacher and peers for resolutions to conflicts • Participates in and agrees upon using the solution (Playing in the play house two children want a certain doll. The solution could be taking turns with the doll for ten minutes.)
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to recognize similarities and appreciate differences.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State at least two ways in which children are similar and two ways in which they are different • Interact with a variety of children in the program 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • States similarities and differences among peers (Your hair is curly, mine is straight; we have the same color eyes.) • Interacts with peers regardless of gender, race, or ability • Plays with a range of children other than a few friends

**The Child at Four
Cognitive Development**

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;">Logical – Mathematical/Scientific Thinking</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to express wonder; ask questions and seek answers.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions about and/or comment on observations and experimentation • Make and verify predictions about what will occur • Compare and contrast objects and events 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manipulates materials and comments on own actions related to cause and effect and describes how changes in actions create different effects (What will happen if....) • Observes and comments on events or nature • Makes observations like objects move with force and energy (leaves when kicked) and weather may produce a rainbow • Changes height of a ramp, notices and then tries to make speed of cars vary
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;">Logical – Mathematical/Scientific Thinking</p> <p>Preschool will provide children with opportunities to recognize and solve problems through active exploration, including trial and error and interacting with peers and adults.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect, describe and record information • Use experiment for investigation • Use language that shows understanding of scientific principles to explain why things happen 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observes, predicts, and verifies simple classroom experiments • Child places data in a journal (text or electronic)
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p style="text-align: center;">Logical – Mathematical/Scientific Thinking</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to organize and express their</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of one to one correspondence • Group and count various objects in the classrooms • Recognize that numbers are used in technology 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compares animals in two different stories • Counts ten balls, six crayons, etc. • Sorts animals by habitat (land, air, sea) • Sorts objects by categories

<p>understanding of common properties and attributes of things.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classify objects and events based on self-selected criteria • Recognize simple patterns and duplicate or extend them • Create and duplicate patterns and shapes using a variety of materials • Sort objects by one or more attributes and regroup the objects based on a new attribute (teacher demonstrates) • Order several objects on the basis of several attributes • Show spatial awareness by demonstrating a deeper understanding of position and order • Record work • Use common instruments to measure things • Show curiosity and independent interest in number related activities • Collect, organize, and display information • Demonstrate understanding of one to one correspondence • Recognize that the clock and calendar are measurement tools of time and space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies numbers on a computer • Uses calendar activities to establish patterns (Select pattern for month – apple leaf/apple – and children predict what will come next.) • Repeats patterns by using a drum or rhythm instrument • Sorts blocks by size, color and shape • Makes shapes with his/her body using hands, arms and legs • Makes shapes by tracing them in the sand, at the light table or making them with play dough • Identifies objects, people, or animals by small, smaller, smallest or tall, taller, tallest • Compares peers by who is taller or shorter • Keeps journal of experiments • Participates in simple cooking experiences • Participates in a variety of scientific experiences using different measuring instruments (thermometer, rain gauge, six inch ruler, scales, etc.) • Makes graphs • Counts 10-20 objects • Groups of five to ten objects in one to one correspondence with teacher assistance. • Sings songs with numbers • Recognizes the clock and calendar as important tools for organizing days • Uses calendar for planning • Estimates the size of a container needed to hold a liquid or a solid • In cooking activities, estimates measurements – cup, ½ cup, etc. • Recognizes numbers in a displayed recipe • Creates own recipes for favorite foods
---	--	---

**The Child at Four
Literacy Development**

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Language and Literacy</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to communicate their experiences, ideas, and feelings by speaking.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak clearly including use of appropriate tone and inflection • Use complex sentences and vocabulary to describe ideas, feelings, and actions • Speak to initiate a conversation or enter into a play situation and speak for a variety of other purposes • Connect ideas with word like "then," "next," and "because" • Use correct sentence structure • Speak for a variety of purposes • Engage in dialogue and role play • Formulate and ask questions • Name primary and secondary colors 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks dominant language clearly • Uses indoor voices • Uses sentences with two or more separate ideas connected by words such as <i>and</i> or <i>but</i> • Takes different roles in dramatic play or puppetry • Asks questions of teacher and peers • Takes at least two turns talking to adults or peers: responses are brief but related to speaker's prior comments
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Language and Literacy</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to listen with understanding to directions, conversations and stories.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of basic conversational vocabulary • Demonstrate understanding of message in conversation • Participate appropriately in extended conversational exchange • Comprehend and take part in discussions of less predictable stories and nonfiction selections • Repeat a sequence of three to five words 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows directions • Role plays appropriately • Acts out one of the related ideas in a story

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Language and Literacy</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to develop visual perception.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify some colors and shapes • Recognize his/her name • Identify the concepts of top, middle, bottom, front and back • Recognizes some labels and symbols • Reproduces visual sequential patterns • Recognizes visual differences • Interprets pictures 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Names the color or shape of an object in a picture book • Names shapes in environmental (Classroom door is rectangle, play house stove burners are round, etc.) • Names letters in his/her name and identifies those letters in other words • Plays directional Simon Says (put the book on top of the desk, under the bookcase, etc.) • Puts materials in a box identified as his/her own • Goes to centers identified by labels • Reproduces patterns using pattern cards • Describes blocks as bigger, smaller, red, etc. • Tells stories from pictures
	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Language and Literacy</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to develop phonemic awareness.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to presence or absence and/or location of sounds and other sound characteristics • Name gross differences in sound characteristics; i.e. loud or soft, fast or slow • Name a variety of environmental sounds and match these sound with their associated pictures • Use imitative and creative expression in the recall of poems and role play 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies common sounds in rhyming words • Identifies the rhyming parts of words in common nursery rhymes, songs, and chants • Identifies in common objects whether the sound is loud or soft, hard or soft (Pouring of water – soft; ambulance siren – loud; keyboarding – soft) • Identifies harsh sounds • Matches animals and objects to the sounds they make • Completes lines with rhyming words

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Language and Literacy</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide opportunities to assist the child in mastering language and expressive skills necessary for problem solving and critical thinking.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe and compare experiences and events • Describe unique characteristics of self and own culture • Compare and contrast people and objects • Use simple phrases and sentences to express personal observations • Use simple phrases and sentences to think through and solve problems • Recognize the relationships between objects and words 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes family vacations and compares these with story characters and classmates • Uses dramatic play to describe and compare personal experiences • Describes family customs • Contributes to classroom journal of field trips • During story time, tells what he/she would do if faced with the conflict or events of the story • Completes simple analogies • Solves simple riddles
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Language and Literacy</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to exhibit interest in reading.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match words to some objects, people and actions • Retell information from a story using words, pictures and objects • Show interest in reading-related activities • Attend to a story • Demonstrate book awareness • Demonstrate an understanding that print is what conveys the story or meaning • Recognize some common matching sounds and some printed letters • Recognizes several printed words 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes related comments about the story • Identifies characters in a story • Retells one or two main events in a story • Responds to stories with appropriate emotion • Chooses books or reading activities during learning center time • Looks at pictures and tries to read • Listens to stories • Holds book right side up and turns pages starting at the front of the book • Points to printed words as he/she pretend reads • Points out names that begin with the same letters • Identifies repeated sounds in stories (<i>Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?</i>) • Identifies rhyming words in nursery rhymes • Points out letters in print • Generates rhymes and/or similar beginning sounds in play

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plays with words creating nonsense words • Points out commonly used words in text (Mom, Dad, love, to, from, own first name)
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Language and Literacy</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to use different forms of writing such as drawing, letter-like forms, invented spelling and conventional forms.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use symbols or drawings to express thoughts, feelings, and ideas • Copy first name • Dictates simple labels for illustrations of objects, characters and actions • Uses pictures to complete sentence frames • Attempts to write one or two captions • Writes names of classmates and family members 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses crayons, markers, pencils, etc. to write messages using letter-like shapes and some conventional letters • Uses pretend writing and some letter-like shapes to convey meaning • Uses some recognizable letters often unrelated to sound (A chain of letters that represents a word to the child) • Copy several letters • Independently write some identifiable letters (Note: letter usually come from own name; child may not write left to right)

The Child at Four
Creative Expression/Aesthetic Development

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Creative Expression</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to exhibit curiosity about and explore how materials function and affect the senses.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of art materials and activities for sensory experience and exploration 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pours water, sand, or other material back and forth from one container to another • Lines up a unit of blocks on the floor • Puts glue on paper and sticks different materials on it • Stacks Lego® blocks
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Creative Expression</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to create (imagine, experiment, plan, make, evaluate, refine and present/exhibit) works that express or represent experiences, ideas, feelings and fantasy using various media.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elect to use art media • Demonstrate the ability to represent experiences, thoughts and ideas using several art forms • Use a variety of art media for self-expression • Name and use primary and secondary colors 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates collages • Creates buildings, roads, etc. with blocks and identifies them • Chooses art activity during learning center time • States what its to be constructed and demonstrate an understanding of how materials work to make representations (Uses toilet paper rolls to make binoculars) • Paints lines up and down at an easel • Draws shapes and labels them (i.e., a head and four legs, a dog) • Uses different colors in artwork • Mixes colors to make new ones • Uses yarn to add "hair" to a picture • Uses paints, chalk, pencils, markers, crayons, etc. in artwork

Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Creative Expression</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to represent fantasy and real-life experiences through pretend play.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume the role of someone or something else and talk in the language/tone appropriate for that person • Engage in cooperative play with another 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stirs pretend coffee in a cup, drink it and says "Mmm." • Puts phone to ear and has pretend conversations • Plays "house" or "store" with peers
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Creative Expression</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to engage in musical and creative movement activities.</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in group musical experiences, which may include listening to music, singing songs, doing finger plays and using musical instruments 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join in with peers at appropriate times during class singing of songs like "The Wheels on the Bus" or "Bingo." • Uses simple percussion instruments to keep time • Choreograph own dances to different kinds of music (Dance is made up of patterns.)
Content Standard	Performance Standard	Benchmarks
<p>Aesthetic Development</p> <p>Preschool programs will provide children with opportunities to describe or respond to their own creative work or the creative work of others</p>	<p>The child will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use oral language to explain or describe or ask questions about a work of art • Express interest in and show appreciation for the creative work of others 	<p>The child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds appropriately to questions like "Can you tell me about your picture?" and "What do you think about this picture?" • Responds to the creative work of others (claps hands, moves to music, taps, etc.) • Begins to create own shows

When a teacher observes that a child is not making appropriate progress in the Performance Standards, in consultation with the principal and parents of the child, a referral to the town's early intervention program should be made.