

# Early Childhood Indicators of Progress: Minnesota's Early Learning Standards

## Introduction to The Arts Domain



*"I am four-years-old and I like to make things. I make towers and buildings with blocks. I make snakes and balls with modeling dough. I make sounds and rhythms when I pound on a drum. I make up stories and act them out when I put on dress-up clothes or play with puppets. I really like to look at the pictures in books, to sing songs, to dance and move to music, and to paint and draw with different kinds of materials. Sometime I want to sing because I'm happy and sometimes I like to paint people that I'm thinking about. Sometimes I feel better when I'm I've pretended with my friend. At my preschool program, I have time to do these things and my teachers help me, encourage me, give me new ideas and things to work with, and join me in joyfully experiencing creativity in many ways."*

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist when he grows up." -Pablo Picasso

Children's development related to creative expression in the arts begins in their very first days. They interact with their family members in loving care that may include the soothing sounds of lullabies and the rhythmic movements of being rocked and patted. As their visual capabilities develop, they see the colors and shapes in their home environment and in nature. As their mobility increases, they move their bodies and experiment with what their muscles can do to get places and to express themselves. And, as children are able to make use of various tools, they make marks on paper, engage their senses with finger paint and modeling dough, and explore and create with various toys and objects. Books, photographs, music and media surround young children and expose them to the creativity of others. The arts for the young child are an integral part of living in the world and figuring out one's own capabilities for self-expression.

The expectations that are set out in the Early Indicators of Childhood of Progress (ECIPs): Minnesota's Early Learning Standards recognize that in the early years, children are developing skills in the arts that allow them to explore a variety of ways to be creative and to express themselves. For this domain, the term "arts" is used to include all types of artistic expression that can be used in an early childhood classroom (painting, drawing, making to music, dancing, pretend play, photography, building, etc. In addition, exposure to a variety of experiences help children further their appreciation of the arts and set life-long patterns for enjoying the arts. The indicators in this domain are aligned with the Minnesota Kindergarten Academic Standards. The ECIPs provide guidance so that teachers and providers can know appropriate expectations for young learners and understand how best to support children in their development in the arts.



The Arts Domain includes three components:

A1-2: Exploring the Arts

A3-4: Using the Arts to Express Ideas and Emotions

A5: Self-Expression in the Arts

The subcomponents and indicators identified for the ages of birth through kindergarten entry address the specific expectations across the developmental spectrum.

- For infants, indicators focus is on the ways that children begin to explore their senses, and their own preferences
- The indicators for toddlers include how they begin to explore art materials including finger paint, crayons, music, dancing and clay.
- The indicators for preschoolers focus on how children intentionally use the arts, develop the vocabulary to describe their own creations and begin to combine artistic elements.

Creative thinking and innovation are skills that are promoted in educational standards that lead to workforce readiness and academic success. Skills in the arts are seen as highly interrelated with development across domains. Teachers and providers can infuse arts experiences into all parts of their curricular planning for young children and bring about meaningful engagement. Arts experiences are motivating and allow children to learn in fun and interesting ways.

When students experience learning through creativity, they will be better prepared for meeting the challenges of society and participating in the workforce (NEA 2012). Embracing creativity as a 21st century skill by addressing academic and arts standards in one lesson can inspire, motivate, and engage children in the learning process and move them forward in their learning and in their future careers. (Hunter-Doniger 2016, 35)

The indicators in the ECIPs help teachers and providers, along with children's family members, understand the expectations for arts development that are appropriate for the youngest learners.

*Resources:*

*Hunter-Doniger, Tracey. 2016. "Snapdragons and Math Using Creativity to Inspire, Motivate, and Engage." Young Children. 71, no. 3: 30-35.*

## Domain: The Arts

### Components A1 - 2: Exploring the Arts

Subcomponent	0-1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4-5 years, K Readiness	K Alignment
<b>A1</b> Child shows an interest in learning about different artistic experiences	<b>A1.1</b> Actively explores their environment (through song, music, movement etc) to enrich their senses	<b>A1.2</b> Begins to choose senses to explore	<b>A1.3</b> Investigates different art experiences	<b>A1.4</b> Select their own art experience during play	<b>A1.5</b> Integrates a variety of art experiences during play	
<b>A2</b> Child can distinguish differences within each area of artistic expression	<b>A2.1</b> Notices differences	<b>A2.2</b> Show a preference for toys, people, experiences	<b>A2.3</b> Chooses a artistic expression of their choice	<b>A2.4</b> Uses art-related vocabulary when discussing different media (stage, easel, brush, etc...)	<b>A2.5</b> Discuss differences among artistic expression	<p><b>K1.1.1.1 – K1.1.5.1</b> Identify the elements of dance, media arts, music, theater, visual arts</p> <p><b>K1.2.5.1</b> Identify the tools, materials and techniques from a variety of two- and three-dimensional media such as drawing, printmaking, ceramics or sculpture</p>

## Components A3-4: Using the Arts to Express Ideas and Emotions

Subcomponent	0-1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4-5 years, K Readiness	K Alignment
<b>A3</b> Child demonstrates interest and emotions in artistic expression	<b>A3.1</b> Responds to music by vocalizing, moving body, smiling or frowning at pictures, colors, shapes, etc.	<b>A3.2</b> Shows emotion when engages in artistic expression	<b>A3.3</b> Chooses to spend time in artistic expression with available materials (paint, crayons, dramatic play, music etc...) and shares ideas	<b>A3.4</b> Demonstrates their preference by combining artistic elements (color, sound, media etc...)	<b>A3.5</b> Elects to spend time in artistic expression with purpose and analyzes their work	K2.1.2.2 Revise creative work based on feedback of others
<b>A4</b> Child understands patterns in artistic media	<b>A4.1</b> Imitates sounds, motions and gestures	<b>A4.2</b> Shows preference for familiar sounds, motions and gestures	<b>A4.3</b> Begins to duplicate artistic patterns	<b>A4.4</b> Extends their artistic patterns with sounds, music, motions, gestures and materials	<b>A4.5</b> Creates their own artistic patterns	<b>K1.1.3.1</b> Identify the elements of music including melody, rhythm, dynamics, tone color, texture, form and their related forms (and other standards in the strand Artistic Foundations)

## Component A5: Self-Expression in the Arts

Subcomponent	0-1 year	1-2 years	2-3 years	3-4 years	4-5 years, K Readiness	K Alignment
<b>A5</b> Child uses art for self-expression	<b>A5.1</b> Expresses emotions when exposed to the arts	<b>A5.2</b> Shows preference in a variety of the arts to express oneself	<b>A5.3</b> Shares feelings and ideas through the arts	<b>A5.4</b> Describes own feelings through artistic expression	<b>A5.5</b> Intentionally uses art for self-expression	<b>K3.1.2.1</b> Share and describe a personal media work