



The CT Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) and the CT Documentation and Observation for Teaching System (CT DOTS) were designed to help families, communities, and schools work together to support children's early learning and growth. The CT ELDS include what children, birth to age five, should know and be able to do. CT DOTS provides a system for teachers and families to work together to observe and communicate about children's learning and development.

Do you have questions about your child's development?

Many families have questions about how their child is developing. Partnering with your child's teacher may be a first step. In addition, the Child Development Infoline can provide information and connect families with screening tools, such as the Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ). The ASQ is used to quickly check for children's strengths and find areas where more information might be needed. Visit the Child Development Infoline at <http://cdi.211ct.org> or call 1-800-505-7000 to learn more about resources and services for young children in CT.



Connecticut Office of
Early Childhood

Building Social and Emotional Skills At Home

Talk about feelings

Label emotions and talk about ways to calm down when upset. Work with your child to find what works for his/her (e.g., quiet time, looking at a book, listening to music, cuddling with a favorite toy or blanket).

Model ways to resolve conflict

Show your child how to handle disagreements by talking through them. Ideas for helping your child include:

- Suggest words to use when upset (e.g., "Tell him that you feel mad when he knocks over your tower.")
- Model ways to calm down before talking (e.g., "I'm feeling a little mad right now. I need a minute alone to calm down before we talk.")
- Help your child figure out a compromise (e.g., "You both want this toy. What could we do so you both get to use it?")

Teach your child about getting along with others

Show your child how to get along with adults and children. Help your child understand why we have rules and use nice words. Talk about how words and behavior make other people feel so your child can make choices about their words and behaviors.



Building Language and Literacy At Home

Read, Read, Read

Reading lots of different books with your child can build a love of reading and help them learn new things! Let your child pick books or topics for reading. Pair reading with other things your child enjoys such as sitting in a favorite, comfortable chair or having a snack.

Point out the words and symbols you see everyday

Talk about how words tell us where to go (e.g., exit and bathroom signs) and what to do (e.g., stop signs). Point out times that you use words to help you, such as reading a recipe or reading a letter or message from a family member. Share signs and symbols that your child might get excited about, such as the sign for the library, the grocery store, or a favorite restaurant.

Make words fun!

Engage in word play, rhyming and using words that start with the same sound (alliteration). Sing silly songs that play with words or sounds. Read books with rhymes. Have fun learning new words or making up new words.



Building Social Studies Skills and Knowledge At Home

Explore roles and responsibilities of different jobs.

Talk to your child when you are out in the community about different roles, responsibilities, tools associated with jobs, etc. Wonder about how all the people you see contribute to the community. Young children learn a lot through play so pretending to take on one of these roles can help children to understand what different people do.

Talk with your child about similarities and differences.

Children often notice similarities and differences between individuals or groups of people. Talking respectfully about these similarities and differences helps to show that these differences are okay and reinforces children's observation skills.

Talk about your family and history

Tell your child about what has changed since you or an older family member were young children! Looking at pictures of your family or telling stories from your own past can help children to understand their family history. It can be a powerful way to begin to understand changes that occur over time, especially if they know the family members.



Supporting Creative Arts At Home

Encourage Creativity

Encourage creativity and expression and don't worry about how things turn out! Ask your child questions about his/her thoughts and actions. Point out things you notice about the artwork instead of focusing on whether it looks like something or matches someone else's work.

Allow you child to make pictures and sculptures

Provide your child with materials to create visual works! Use recycled materials and glue or paste, paints, and items with different textures, pencils, and paper. Ask your child about what he/she is doing. Encourage creativity and expression.

Build on children's pretend play and interest in music

Many young children enjoy pretending to be other people or animals. Play games with your child that involve pretending to be different things. Use your body and voice and any handy props. If your child enjoys listening to music, explore listening to and/or playing different types of music.

Dance

Encourage your child to use his/her body to express how he/she feels or to show the mood of the music. Show your child how he/she can move fast or slow, smooth or choppy, etc.



Building Mathematics Skills At Home

Talk Numbers

Count, point out numbers in the environment, talk about age, and use other math words such as *more*, *fewer*, *longer*, *taller*, etc. Make numbers fun by singing songs that include numbers or playing games that involve counting.

Use numbers to solve problems

If you are trying to see if something fits in a certain space, use a ruler and count the inches. If your child draws something, ask them to draw it bigger and then measure to compare. Ask your child find out if you have enough plates for the dinner. Have him/her count the number of people who will be eating and the number of plates to figure out how many more you need.



Building Science Skills At Home

Explore and Investigate.

Talk with your child about solving problems and about how things work. Wonder how something works as you are using it and help them figure out the answer by trying some different things. For example, if your child is playing with cars and ramps, investigate how changing the height or slope of the ramp affects the speed of the car.

Children are often more interested in exploring or talking when the activity started with their own curiosity. Answering their questions does not always help them to understand how things work. Doing simple experiments gives children a chance to research, observe, and record their results—all skills that are needed for future scientists!

Help your child come up with his/her own answers.

If your child says something incorrect, help with discovering the accurate information instead of just sharing it with him/her. For example, if your child says “Heavy things sink,” you can ask, “Which heavy things have you seen sink?” Or, “I wonder if we can find something heavy that can float?” Then, allow your child to explore and discover more information on their own. Modeling curiosity and teaching them to wonder is the first step to scientific discovery.



Building Physical Health and Development At Home

Plan time for your child to be active.

Make sure that your child has time to engage in vigorous physical activity. Go to a park, play in a gym, or have a dance party in your living room. Try to vary the actions so your child gets to use a variety of muscles. Play with your child or find others who will play and help him/her stay engaged and interested in moving.

Make motion a part of everything you do.

Jump off the curb, walk a silly walk to the bus stop, stretch like a giraffe in the morning. Physical activity can be a part of many everyday activities and helps children to learn and grow.

Make nutrition fun!

Challenge your child to find foods from various food groups and help plan a healthy menu. Use the list to go grocery shopping together and talk about other foods. Try one new food each week, rotating the food groups you try. Talk about how food is a part of your own past or your culture.

