

NAEYC Guidelines Correlation Chart

This chart outlines how the content of the monthly FunShine Express™ curriculum programs correlate with the guidelines developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education [adopted November 1990].

NAEYC GUIDELINE	FUNSHINE EXPRESS EARLY LEARNING CURRICULUM PROGRAMS
1. The curriculum has an articulated description of its theoretical base that is consistent with prevailing professional opinion and research on how children learn.	The members of the Curriculum Team at FunShine Express™ use their early childhood experience and continuing education to work together to create curriculum programs that are aligned with classic child development and learning theories that have been widely accepted by the field of early care and education (see Appendix for summary).
2. Curriculum content is designed to achieve long-range goals for children in all domains – social, emotional, cognitive, and physical – and to prepare children to function as fully contributing members of a democratic society.	The FunShine Express™ curriculum programs offer comprehensive lesson plans that encompass eight developmental areas: math, literacy, social/emotional, language, approaches to learning, physical/health, science, and creative arts. Activities range from group to independent exploration in learning centers. This appropriate balance of activities promotes development of the whole child. Materials are included to encourage providers to carefully observe children’s play and collaborate with parents to develop learning goals.
3. Curriculum addresses the development of knowledge and understanding, processes and skills, dispositions and attitudes.	Providers are encouraged to arrange their setting into learning centers so that children can explore areas that interest them most. This reinforces a positive attitude toward learning. In addition, subject matter is presented in an integrated manner. Activities from all domains are connected to the topics being introduced. This allows children to apply the knowledge they’ve accumulated in their daily lives and make connections to real-world situations.
4. Curriculum addresses a broad range of content that is relevant, engaging, and meaningful to children.	The FunShine Express curriculum offers many activity suggestions each day. Providers are instructed to choose the activities that best meet the interests, needs, and abilities of the children in their care. Activities utilize real objects and the environment to reinforce concepts. Letters, numbers, colors, and shapes are taught by relating each to how it actually exists in the world around us.
5. Curriculum goals are realistic and attainable for most children in the designated age range for which they were designed.	The FunShine Express curriculum is designed for children ages 2-5 years. We believe this is more beneficial than compartmentalizing children by age. We offer suggestions for adapting the degree of difficulty [either up or down] for many of the activities throughout the monthly Curriculum Guide to assist providers in implementing each activity at the level that best matches each child’s abilities. Curriculum writers regularly encourage providers to be flexible in their planning. They are careful to note realistic expectations for younger children when activities are geared toward children with higher levels of cognition and development.

<p>6. Curriculum content reflects and is generated by the needs and interests of individual children within the group. Curriculum incorporates a wide variety of learning experiences, materials and equipment, and instructional strategies, to accommodate a broad range of children's individual differences in prior experience, maturation rates, styles of learning, needs, and interests.</p>	<p>FunShine Express™ curriculum programs are designed to take into account how children learn and develop (through hands-on, active opportunities). However, it is up to providers to ensure that the manner in which the material is presented is developmentally appropriate for the children in their group. FunShine Express instructs providers to individualize lesson plans in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjust when and how topics and basic skills are being introduced based on the children's interests and abilities. If the children require more time for a topic than we have scheduled, it's important to adjust for that. Move on when the children have grasped the concept or when the interest begins to wane. • Incorporate children's cultures and community resources into the curriculum. • Include all children by adapting activities for different ages and abilities. We offer suggestions every month! <p>By implementing these concepts and strategies, early childhood professionals can foster enthusiasm for learning, build readiness skills, and ensure that the activities they are offering to the children are developmentally appropriate.</p> <p>We also offer suggestions for ways to include parents and families and for providing opportunities (field trips, special visitors, etc.) to enrich children's normal experiences.</p>
<p>7. Curriculum respects and supports individual, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Curriculum supports and encourages positive relationships with children's families.</p>	<p>Providers are instructed to consider and incorporate children's cultures in the adaptations of the curriculum to meet the needs of each child, linguistically, culturally, and developmentally. At least one "Global Corner" activity is offered in each curriculum which introduces a holiday or special event focusing on a particular group of people or locality.</p>
<p>8. Curriculum builds upon what children already know and are able to do (activating prior knowledge) to consolidate their learning and to foster their acquisition of new concepts and skills.</p>	<p>Since the FunShine Express™ curriculum programs are designed for children ages 2-5 years, the activities are open-ended and flexible to allow children to play with the same materials at varying levels of development and ability. Many of the activities offered cover numerous learning domains which are connected to real-life experiences. Children need many experiences with these kinds of activities before understanding is possible. For this reason, the idea that children learn by building on previous experiences drives our lesson planning.</p>
<p>9. The curriculum provides conceptual frameworks for children so that their mental constructions based on prior knowledge and experience become more complex over time.</p>	<p>The FunShine Express™ curriculum programs are presented using the conceptual framework of themes. These themes are chosen to appeal to young children's interests which makes learning fun and meaningful, therefore increasing retention and interest. Traditional subject matter and concepts are reinforced within the context of the monthly themes.</p>
<p>10. Curriculum allows for focus on a particular topic or content while allowing for integration across traditional subject-matter divisions by planning around themes and/or learning experiences that provide opportunities for rich conceptual development.</p>	<p>We offer monthly themes that feature topics of interest to children. A variety of instructional methods are used within each theme to present basic skills and traditional subject matter, which results in increased retention of material since it is presented within the context of topics that are interesting to children. Activities reflect the way subject matter in the real world intertwines and is not compartmentalized.</p>

<p>11. The curriculum content has intellectual integrity; content meets the recognized standards of the relevant subject-matter disciplines.</p>	<p>The FunShine Express™ curriculum programs are designed to align with what credible research tells us about how children learn and grow. The Curriculum Team Members are careful to maintain their education and do continual reading and research and regularly attend national and state early childhood conferences. Each monthly curriculum is written to reflect the most current findings in research. Content is reliable, factual, and accurate.</p>
<p>12. The content of the curriculum is worth knowing; curriculum respects children's intelligence and does not waste their time.</p>	<p>Content in the FunShine Express™ monthly curriculum programs is presented in a child-friendly manner. This means only appropriate topics are introduced and only what is relevant and understandable to children is covered. The concepts and themes are chosen to give children a better understanding of the world around them.</p>
<p>13. Curriculum engages children actively, not passively, in the learning process. Children have opportunities to make meaningful choices.</p>	<p>Arranging the environment in learning centers is encouraged because children can independently choose from a number of meaningful and valuable experiences. The daily schedule of activities consists of a balance of longer periods of child-initiated free play and shorter teacher-facilitated group play periods. Activities during both are hands-on and active experiences for children. We describe the child care provider's role during free choice time as supportive. Children initiate their play and providers offer support by asking open-ended questions and providing opportunities and materials to help children's play and understanding develop further.</p>
<p>14. Curriculum values children's constructive errors and does not prematurely limit exploration and experimentation for the sake of ensuring "right" answers.</p>	<p>We believe children will learn to correct their own errors as learning progresses. Guidance for helping child care providers allow this process to happen is offered throughout the Curriculum Guide each month. In addition, the FunShine Express™ curriculum programs are open-ended, hands-on, and designed to be flexible in order to be used with multiple levels of development. This framework lends itself to acceptance of multiple answers and away from closed-ended right or wrong activities.</p>
<p>15. Curriculum emphasizes the development of children's thinking, reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities.</p>	<p>The FunShine Express™ curriculum programs do not underestimate children's ability to perform tasks from Bloom's higher levels of cognition including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Examples of activities offered in the monthly Curriculum Guides that fall under these levels include sequencing, creating art projects, and being asked to respond to questions regarding opinion. Children are encouraged to practice critical thinking, reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving.</p>
<p>16. Curriculum emphasizes the value of social interaction to learning in all domains and provides opportunities to learn from peers.</p>	<p>We believe children can learn a lot from each other. Since our curriculum programs are designed for children ages 2-5 years, social interactions and learning from peers are key aspects of our framework. We offer child care providers guidance for engaging in dialogue with children as well.</p>

<p>17. Curriculum is supportive of children’s physiological needs for activity, sensory stimulation, fresh air, rest, hygiene, and nourishment/elimination.</p>	<p>Every daily lesson plan includes at least one large motor activity and providers are encourage to take activities outdoors when weather permits. Safety, health, and hygiene are covered regularly in curriculum content and activities.</p>
<p>18. Curriculum protects children’s psychological safety, that is, children feel happy, relaxed, and comfortable rather than disengaged, frightened, worried, or stressed.</p>	<p>The daily schedule suggested in the FunShine Express™ Program Overviews and as outlined in monthly Curriculum Guides is not rushed or over-filled. Child care providers are encouraged to allow children to learn at their own pace in a relaxed and predictable environment. Suggestions are made to help providers adapt activities to overcome fear and avoid stress.</p>
<p>19. The curriculum strengthens children’s sense of competence and enjoyment of learning by providing experiences for children to succeed from their point of view.</p>	<p>The open-ended activities provided in the FunShine Express™ curriculum programs are naturally engaging, meaningful, and rewarding to children. Providers choose activities that match each child’s individual needs and interests, and children can engage in the activities at their own level of development. This allows them to be successful and their confidence and love of learning grows naturally.</p>
<p>20. The curriculum is flexible so that teachers can adapt to individual children or groups.</p>	<p>The Program Overviews and the monthly Curriculum Guides encourage early care and education professionals to use their knowledge of early childhood, as well as the children in their care, to individualize lesson plans. Not only do we provide a free blank calendar online for child care providers to use to plan activities and adjust the lesson plans provided as needed, we also offer numerous suggestions for adapting activities for differing abilities throughout the Curriculum Guides.</p>

Appendix

Before Learning Is Possible...

The work of Abraham Maslow describes certain needs all people have. He organized these needs into a hierarchy of basic and growth needs. He pointed out that children must have their basic needs met before growth and learning are possible. Providers using FunShine Express™ curriculum programs choose only the activities that are appropriate for the children in their group, and supervision is a requirement. In addition, the curriculum provides consistency and a predictable routine, which is comforting to children. Children feel secure when they know what to expect each day. The open-ended activities FunShine Express™ curriculum programs offer result in feelings of achievement and increased confidence in children. Their art and ideas are accepted and respected as is, without harsh critiquing or the requirement to conform to unrealistic standards and expectations.

Cognitive Development

Jean Piaget identified four stages of cognitive development. Throughout each monthly Curriculum Guide, providers will find that many activities offer suggestions for adjusting the level of difficulty to meet each child at their stage of cognition. In addition, lengths of free play provide opportunities for children to explore learning centers. An important principle of Piaget's findings is that children need hands-on experience within their environment in order to form concepts of the world and how it works. Providers are encouraged to acknowledge children's ideas and support them non-judgementally, so as not to stifle the natural way in which children learn and think.

Social Emotional Development

Lev Vygotsky taught the early childhood community that children's potential for learning is maximized through interacting with peers and adults. That is, they can learn more by interacting with others than they can alone. The FunShine Express™ curriculum programs offer open-ended questions and suggested dialogue to encourage children's thinking and encourage social interaction.

Erik Erikson developed an approach to psychosocial development which divided the area into eight stages that span from infancy to adulthood. He identified an important event that must be conquered in each stage before progression to the next stage could occur. The FunShine Express™ curriculum programs offer guidance for providers to support children's needs in each stage. One to three year olds experience the "Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt" Stage where they are learning self-help skills such as walking, toilet training, and dressing. Three to six year olds are working through the "Initiative vs. Guilt" stage where independence is the underlying focus. To help children maneuver these stages, the FunShine Express™ curriculum programs encourage providers to create an environment that is child-friendly and predictable. Children are also challenged to do as much as they are able to by themselves (with minimal assistance). With support and encouragement, children can very often do more than they thought they could. Such an atmosphere helps children learn independence and feel confident and in control.