



Unit 3 – Physical Development: Key Topic 5: Exploring the Research Highlights of the Physical Development Domain

Focus of Unit 3 – Key Topic 5

Students become familiar with the research highlights related to the physical development domain by examining the source articles for the research highlights.

Curriculum Alignment Project (CAP) Student Learning Outcomes

The Curriculum Alignment Project's (CAP) lower division eight courses and student learning outcomes are mapped onto each instructional guide key topic. See Appendix A for the specific student learning outcomes, objectives, and examples of course content and topics for the courses listed below.

- Child Growth and Development
- Introduction to Curriculum
- Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- Observation and Assessment
- Practicum-Field Experience

Instructional Methodologies

- Class discussion
- Small group work
- Short paper
- Creation of a visual representation
- Class presentation
- Reflective discussion—large group
- Individual reflection
- Development of resource tool
- Literature review



California Early Childhood Educator Competency Areas to Consider

The Faculty Initiative Project will be undertaking a comprehensive process in the future to map the content of the instructional guides to the California Department of Education, Child Development Division's California Early Childhood Educator Competencies. The "Competency Areas to Consider" below are listed in this instructional guide as a preliminary exploration of how particular competency areas might be addressed through these key topics.

- Child Development and Learning
- Learning Environments and Curriculum
- Observation, Screening, Assessment, and Documentation
- Professionalism



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Before You Start

There are seven research highlights in the physical development domain chapter of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*. Some of the highlights address themes that are threaded throughout the domain while others provide information related to a specific component such as an interaction or strategy. All provide an opportunity for students to become more engaged in a particular topic and could encourage further reading on that topic.

The research highlights may be an introduction to the research base of the physical development domain in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*. By becoming more familiar with this research base, students will increase their understanding of how research influences and impacts their work as preschool teachers. Students may also find research—and these research highlights in particular—helpful in explaining to parents why the physical development curriculum is designed the way it is and how it will support their children’s growth and learning in many developmental areas.

In this key topic, students begin their work by reviewing and discussing the seven research highlights. They then choose one research highlight that is particularly interesting to them and form a group with other students who selected the same highlight. The students locate the references in the research highlight and create a poster for a class poster session.

Some students may be unfamiliar with poster sessions at conferences; it might be helpful to share examples. Remind students that their posters need not be as elaborate or as in-depth as the shared examples, but should demonstrate the main theme(s) of their chosen research highlight and the research that supports it. One resource for explaining poster sessions is provided in the “Information Delivery” section.

Information Delivery



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The following research highlights from the physical development domain of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2* are used in this key topic:

- Physical Activities Enhance Young Children’s Brain Development (p. 133)
- Must Young Children Sit Still in Order to Learn? (p. 137)



California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2

- Locomotor Skills (p. 148)
- Development of Handedness in Children (p. 170)
- Beyond the Five Senses (p. 172)
- Does Increasing Children’s Physical Activity Really Make a Difference? (p. 198)
- Strength Training for Young Children: Is It Okay? (p. 204)

Students are asked to create a poster similar to the kinds that are presented in poster sessions at conferences. Faculty may choose to describe a poster session or refer students to the definition and summary from the Colorado State University’s Writing Studio—Writing@CSU – 2012.

<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=78>

Active Learning



Slides 2-4

Getting it started

Begin this key topic by discussing with students how research in the different aspects of physical development has increased our understanding of (1) how children’s physical development and active physical play relate to other areas of children’s development and learning, and (2) what children’s physical development looks like and how intentional teaching supports this development. The seven research highlights in the physical development chapter of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2* represent both areas of research.

Ask students to read the research highlights in the three strands and list key points or questions that arise for them. It is suggested that students do this reading individually so that they become familiar with the research in each of the three strands:

- Fundamental Movement Skills
- Perceptual-Motor Skills and Movement Concepts
- Active Physical Play.

Keeping it going

Next, conduct a class discussion on the students’ reading. The following questions could be used to guide the discussion:

- What caught your attention in these research highlights?

Online Options

Ask students to read the research highlights outside of class and post their responses to these four questions.



- What was something new or surprising that you learned?
- How does the information from the research highlights change the way you plan learning experiences for children's physical development? What questions came up for you?
- Which highlight do you want to explore further?

Taking it further

Ask the students to group themselves according to the research highlight they selected for additional exploration. Depending on class size and the number of students for each highlight, forming multiple exploratory groups for one or more highlights could prove beneficial.



Slide 5

Ask students to locate the references listed in their research highlight and write a brief summary of each reference. They can then use the research highlight and their summaries to create an informational poster similar to the type found in poster sessions at

conferences. The posters could include both text and graphics. If students do not have experience creating this type of poster, it may be helpful to show them a sample or describe the purpose and key elements; posters should demonstrate the main theme(s) of their chosen research highlight and the research that supports it. Because these posters will require time for planning and assembly, consider providing sufficient time for completion.

Online Options

Ask students to group themselves according to the research highlight they selected for additional exploration. Students can plan how to write summaries of the reference(s) for each highlight. These groups can then go on to develop their accompanying posters.

Putting it together

Hold a poster session during a class session. Students from each group can take turns remaining with the poster to describe it and answer questions from the other students. Using an informal timer system could ensure that all students have adequate time to see and reflect upon all the posters.



Slide 6

Conclude the poster session with a class discussion on the following questions:

- Which elements from the posters caught your attention?
- What was the most challenging part of creating your poster?
- What did you learn from creating a poster?
- How could you use posters to explain to family members some of the research highlights that describe children's physical development?



Reflection

The following questions provide students an opportunity to think about the content of the research highlights:

- Which facts from the research highlights do you remember?
- Which ones were the most intriguing to you?
- How does an understanding of the research help you in your curriculum planning around children's physical development and active physical play?
- Which research highlight other than the one you selected do you want to explore further?



Slides 7-8

This second set of questions is more general and can be used for individual reflection here and with the other key topics.

- What part of this class session stood out most for you today?
- Which ideas or concepts from today's work reinforced what you have already learned or experienced? Which ones gave you a new perspective or insight?
- How might you apply a new idea or perspective to your work now or in the future?
- What information or support do you need to do this?
- What is a first step you could take to locate this support or information? What steps could you take to start applying the new idea or perspective?

Deeper Understanding

Some of the endnotes refer to research journals related to physical development. Ask students to review the endnotes or bibliography to identify these.



Slide 9

Students could then choose one journal and find two articles related to some aspect of young children's physical development that are not listed in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*.

Students then could write a brief summary of the articles, including a full journal citation. Compile the students' summaries so that each student has a complete annotated bibliography of these additional research articles.