



Unit 4 – Health:

Key Topic 2: Getting to Know Environments and Materials That Support Health

Health Domain:
Key Topic 2 – Getting to Know Environments and Materials That Support Health

Focus of Unit 4 – Key Topic 2

Students become familiar with environmental arrangements and materials that can be used to support children’s health development and have opportunities to explore some ways they can be applied.

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.

- Introduction to Curriculum
- Principles and Practices of Teaching Young Children
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- Practicum-Field Experience

Instructional Methodologies

- Class discussion
- Pairs work
- Small group work
- Class presentation
- Development of resource tool
- Individual reflection



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
- Observation, Screening, Assessment, and Documentation
- Learning Environments and Curriculum
- Health, Safety, and Nutrition
- Professionalism



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Before You Start

It is important that students understand they are helping children build lifelong habits. If students have not done Subtopic 1 in Key Topic 1 of this unit, it would be helpful to do so before beginning this key topic.

Students will be working with the strands and substrands of the health foundations. These are listed on page 232 of the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*. Be sure you are familiar with the foundations in the health domain, and if possible, have students become familiar with those foundations as well. There is an exercise for students to do this in Key Topic 1, Subtopic 2 of this instructional guide.

This key topic focuses on environments and materials. Key Topic 3 focuses on strategies and interactions. This Key Topic 2 will highlight opportunities to arrange environments and embed materials related to health and safety learning into everyday activities in a preschool classroom. Key Topic 3 will examine strategies and interactions that can support intentional teaching of these practices. These approaches—embedding and intentional teaching—are not always separate in practice, but giving each key topic a different emphasis ensures that students will be exposed to these different instructional approaches. Because these two key topics are highly related, they can be done independently of each other or in sequence.

This key topic looks at daily routines, but it is helpful for students to recognize that routines are part of the whole schedule of the day. Ask students to read the “Daily Schedule” section on pages 19-25 of the introduction to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*.

It is suggested that the active learning here be done in groups of three. Pairs would work as well, but some of the idea generation would be richer with three students working together.

The suggestion for “Taking it further” could be incorporated into the learning experience from the start. Sample daily schedules could be examined in the “Information Delivery” segment or in the active learning exercise as part of the learning experience.

The time needed for the active learning exercise will vary greatly depending on the experience of students and how much of the supporting material is new reading. The extent to which they can work independently in their pairs or groups will also depend on their level of experience and familiarity with the material. Frequent scaffolding and support may be needed to make the connections required in this exercise.



Handout 1, provided with this key topic, can be used when students identify ways each recommendation for an environment and material can be used to support children's development within these substrands. An electronic version of this handout will be available when this instructional guide is online at www.wested.org/facultyinitiative.

Information Delivery



Slides 2-3

As a group, review the “Daily routine as curriculum” section on page 25 in the introduction to the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*. Emphasize the following sentence: “routines offer opportunities for children to . . . learn and practice health and safety procedures.”

Together review the vignette on page 25 of the curriculum framework. Ask students to note, or point out to students, the ways in which children in this vignette are learning and practicing health and safety procedures. These would include learning about nutritious foods, safe handling of knives, safe handling of food, and washing hands and putting on plastic gloves before handling food.

Because they will be consulting various sections of the health domain in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*, make sure they are familiar with the location of the following information:

- Glossary at the end of the domain (pp. 290–293)
- Suggested environments and materials (pp. 229–231)

These pages provide many examples and ideas that can be helpful in the active learning section.

Active Learning



Slide 4

Getting it started

Let students know that they will be taking a closer look at how health and safety practices can be addressed through routines of the day. They will be doing this by exploring the suggestions for environmental arrangements and materials in the *California Preschool Curriculum Framework, Volume 2*. Students will first explore how the environmental arrangements and materials can be applied in each of the strands and substrands.

Organize students into pairs or groups of three. If you have students with some experience or exposure to preschool, distribute them among the groups.

Ask each pair or group to work with Handout 1 provided with this key topic. This handout provides a process for exploring ways that environments can be arranged and materials provided



to promote healthy and safe practices and habits.

This could be approached in a number of ways, depending on class size and instructor preference. The substrands could be divided into clusters, such as into four clusters of two substrands each, and each group or pair could respond to all environments and materials for their assigned cluster. Or, each group could take one of the suggestions for environments and materials and work with that across all the substrands.

Online Options

Students, individually or in small groups, could complete one or more sections of Handout 1 and post them online for class review. Students would then consolidate all the examples into a resource tool they could use in their teaching.

Students are asked to think about and generate examples in response to the following question: How could each of the suggestions for environments and materials support children's development in each of the health substrands?

Students would benefit from reviewing the introduction to each substrand in order to gain a better idea of what it includes. Handout 1, provided with this key topic, details the page numbers of the introductions to each of the substrands. Both introductions and vignettes in the curriculum framework provide examples and suggestions.

After students have been working for a while, reconvene as a large group to explore the results of their work. This can be done by one of several methods: each group could report verbally, instructors could provide a chart for each substrand upon which students could write their examples for each of the suggested environments and materials, or instructors could also include those results in an electronic presentation.

Taking it further

Before beginning this next part of the learning experience, it will be helpful to list and discuss some examples of routines, such as snack, mealtime, cleanup time, toileting, nap or rest time, arrival, and departure. Students who might be currently working in an early care and education setting could bring in a daily schedule from their settings, or other samples of daily schedules could be gathered.



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As students look at these sample daily schedules, ask them these questions:

- Where are the routines?
- What examples from Handout 1 would support the development of health habits, safety, and nutrition in those routines?

Online Options

Students could share online samples of daily schedules. Each student would then write an individual response to the two questions in the “Taking it further” section that could be included in journals or submitted to instructors.

This discussion could be done in the pairs or groups of three, but if done in the whole group, it would support sharing across substrands and would help solidify what might already have been heard.

Putting it together

Consider compiling and providing to students this information as a resource.

Reflection

Ask students to reflect on this experience by considering the following questions. This could be done as a journal exercise, an online submission, or an in-class writing assignment.



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- What was hard about doing this?
- What worked well in your pair or small group?
- What did you think about that you had not thought much about before doing this exercise?
- What was familiar and comfortable in this exercise?
- What are some new ideas that emerged in this exercise?
- How can you find out more about them?
- How will this impact the work you do or will do with young children and their families?



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Handout 1

	Health Habits				Safety	Nutrition		
<i>How could each of the suggestions for environments and materials support children’s development in each of the health substrands? Find some examples in the suggested text and add more if you can.</i>	Basic Hygiene (pp.234–235)	Oral Health (p.238)	Knowledge of Wellness (pp.241–243)	Sun Safety (p.246)	Injury Prevention (pp.253–255)	Nutrition Knowledge (pp.263–264)	Nutrition Choices (pp.267–268)	Self-Regulation of Eating (pp. 271–272)
Establish a physical learning environment designed for children’s initiative.								
Provide safe, inviting learning environments and appropriate supervision of children.								
Maintain a clean, healthy, and sanitary environment.								
Have supplies available and accessible to promote routine health practices.								



	Health Habits				Safety	Nutrition		
	Basic Hygiene (pp.234–235)	Oral Health (p.238)	Knowledge of Wellness (pp.241–243)	Sun Safety (p.246)	Injury Prevention (pp.253–255)	Nutrition Knowledge (pp.263–264)	Nutrition Choices (pp.267–268)	Self-Regulation of Eating (pp.271–272)
<i>How could each of the suggestions for environments and materials support children’s development in each of the health substrands? Find some examples in the suggested text and add more if you can.</i>								
Provide stimulating and developmentally appropriate materials in interest areas for children’s use during dramatic play.								
Provide furnishings and utensils appropriate for children’s size and abilities.								
Be creative and include a gardening space, either indoors or outdoors, where children can plant seeds, tend the garden, and watch the plants grow.								