Vermont Early Learning: Approaches to Learning

Younger Preschoolers

Play and Exploration	**Children engage in play to understand the world around them.** 1 Engage in associative play (e.g., play without planning and negotiation) with other children for short periods of time 2 Primarily engage in basic constructive play activities (e.g., building road with rocks) and dramatic play activities by taking on a role 3 Build knowledge through play (e.g., blocks/math, dramatic play/literacy, water table/problem solving, outdoor play/science)
Initiative	**Children show curiosity about the world around them and take action to interact with it and learn.** 1 Observe others to enter play 2 Initiate play with one or more peers 3 Show interest in how things work 4 Explore and discuss a range of topics
Problem Solving	**Children display an interest in novel situations and demonstrate flexibility, creativity and innovation in solving challenging tasks.** 1 Invent new ways to use everyday items 2 Investigate new objects, scenarios, and problem situations 3 Seek to understand cause and effect (“If I do this, why does that happen?”) 4 During play, problem- solve with others