
HANDOUT: Importance of KY's Early Childhood Standards and First Steps Assessments Course

Download and print this handout for the Importance of KY's Early Childhood Standards and First Steps Assessments course; you will use it throughout the course.

Course Content

- Lesson 1: KY's Early Childhood Standards
- Lesson 2: Federal Child Outcomes
- Lesson 3: The Importance of Accurate Assessments
- Lesson 4: The Relationship between Accurate Assessments and Funding
- Final Project: Putting it all Together

Other Early Childhood Standards Courses

- Free, in-depth, three-credit module, with videos, engaging activities, and frequent knowledge checks developed by KET entitled *An Introduction to the KY Early Childhood Standards*. Available at: <https://edstore.ket.org/product/an-introduction-to-the-kentucky-early-childhood-standards-2/>
- Free, one-hour, one-credit course entitled *Kentucky Early Childhood Standards 102*. Available at: <https://tris.eku.edu/ece>; go to the Calendar/Approved Trainings tab to search for the course.

Important Document

Before beginning the course, click on the following link to **download** a copy of **KY's Early Childhood Standards** (KDE, 2013), abbreviated in this course as **KY Standards**, as we will use it throughout the course: <https://hdilearning.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/20034106/Kentucky-Early-Childhood-Standards2013.pdf>

Lesson 1: KY's Early Childhood Standards (KY Standards)

Purpose: The purpose of Lesson 1 is to explore the following: **Where** are KY's Standards found? **What** are KY's Standards? **How** are they structured? **Why** do they matter to me?

❖ Topic 1.1: Key Message

The key message for this lesson is that **KY's Standards apply to your work with young children in First Steps**, even though you may not have been familiar with the KY Standards.

We will refer to the KY Standards, as defined for early childhood development in KY, for this course. Let's see **where**, **what**, and **how** the KY Standards are organized, and **why** they matter.

❖ Topic 1.2: Where are KY Standards?

KY's Standards are posted on the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC) website at <https://www.goec.ky.gov/>. If not done previously, **download this document**; it is key for this course and is important to understanding expectations for KY's young children, with and without disabilities.

❖ Topic 1.3: What are the KY Standards?

As defined by KY's Standards, standards refer to the **expectations** that we have for the development of young children. They outline the general expectations we have for children in all domains of development, from ages birth through four years.

Think Spot A: Define KY Standards

Look on page 2 of the KY Standards document; how are the KY Standards defined? Write the definition in the box provided.

Read the first and second paragraphs on page 12 in the KY Standards. What are the KY Standards, and what are they not intended to be? Write your response in the box provided.

The KY Standards are a general guide to children's development. They are **not** a curriculum guide or assessment tool. The KY Standards outline **general expectations** for children's development.

What they are not: The KY Standards are **NOT** the occupational standards set by professional organizations such as ASHA, or Boards of Licensure for OT or PT providers. They are **NOT** personnel standards, service coordination standards, or discipline-specific standards for First Steps providers.

Think Spot B: Approved assessments

What are the 3 assessments that are approved for First Steps' use in KY? These assessments are used in First Steps to guide interventions with children (hint: they are the five area assessments or 5AAs). Write them in the box provided.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

❖ **Topic 1.4: How are the KY Standards Organized?**

The KY Standards are organized into **domains** for children aged birth to three years, and into **areas** for children aged three and four years.

Think Spot C: Domains of development

What 5 **domains** of development are addressed in the KY Standards for children aged birth to three years? See page 13 of the KY Standards. Write them in the box provided

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Think Spot D: Which domain applies?

If you had a question about a young child's developing relationships with peers or siblings, which domain would you check for related expectations? Write your answer in the box provided.

Looking at page 13 and 14 in the KY Standards, you will see that there are 3 components that define

each KY Standard.

Think Spot E: Define the components of each KY Standard

What are the 3 components that define each KY Standard, and how are they defined? Write each definition in the box provided.

Standard:

Benchmark:

Developmental Continuum:

Example Behaviors:

Let's review each of these definitions. We've discussed what a **standard** is, as a general statement that represents the information or skills that we expect a child should know or be able to do.

Each standard is further defined by at least 2 **benchmarks**, or statements that tell what the standard looks like in terms of child behaviors. The skills in all benchmarks are necessary to fully define each Standard. The benchmarks may or may not be in developmental order; all are essential to the intent of the Standard.

Then, each benchmark is further defined by a series of **developmental continuum** - predictable but not rigid behaviors that give the general sequence of development for that benchmark. The developmental continua appear in developmental order, and further define the behaviors that describe each benchmark.

Lastly, each developmental continuum is further defined by some **example behaviors**. The examples are not complete lists, but are a few examples of behaviors that illustrate each developmental continuum.



Think Spot F: One example

Let's view one specific example of each of these components, to further understand how KY's Standards are organized. Turn to page 29 of the KY Standards, in the beginning of Section III for children aged birth to three years. Write the full response in the box provided, including the number when applicable and the text.

What is the KY **Standard** listed there?

What is the first **benchmark** that defines this standard?

What is the first **developmental continuum** that defines Benchmark 1.1 (hint: it's in the first box under the benchmark)?

Lastly, what is the first **example behavior** listed for this first developmental continuum?

❖ Topic 1.5: Why use the KY Standards?

The standards are important both to an understanding of child development, and are used in KY to evaluate some of the funding of your work with young children. Whether you have been aware of them or not, the expectations in the KY Standards are the basis for the work done with children and their families.

To conclude this lesson, the key message for this Lesson is that **the KY Standards apply to your work with young children in First Steps.**

Lesson 2: Federal Child Outcomes

Purpose: The purpose of Lesson 2 is to examine the definitions for federal child outcomes, which are the basis for measurement of child progress for federal reporting by First Steps. This course will examine where, what, and why the child outcomes matter to your work in First Steps.

We are NOT referring to the child outcomes that you develop for Individual Family Service Plans (IFSPs) or that you use in your treatment plans.

❖ Topic 2.1: Key Message

The **key message** for this lesson is that **3 federal child outcomes** are used to examine child progress in KY, across the nation, and are some of the basis for First Steps funding.

❖ Topic 2.2: Where Can You Find the 3 Federal Child Outcomes?

Download a description of the 3 child outcomes here:

http://ectacenter.org/~pdfs/eco/Child_Outcomes_handout.pdf

❖ Topic 2.3: What Are the 3 Federal Child Outcomes?

The 3 federal child outcomes were originally written in 2006, when the Office of Special Education Programs, or OSEP, developed a national plan to examine child progress for children receiving special education funding and services. In brief, the 3 federal child outcomes are that children:

- A. have positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
- B. acquire and use knowledge and skills (including early language and early literacy); and
- C. use of appropriate behaviors to meet needs.

The 3 outcomes are intentionally broad, so that each outcome includes children's skills in a variety of domains and reflects a whole child approach to development. For example, outcome A, positive social-emotional skills, includes social and language skills. Outcome B, acquiring knowledge and skills, considers children's cognitive and language skills. Outcome C, using appropriate behavior to meet needs, includes motor, adaptive, and language skills.

What they are not: For the purposes of this course, outcomes do **not** refer to the outcomes you write for children on their IFSPs or in your treatment plans. While those are equally important, they are **not** the outcomes that are discussed in this course. For this course, child outcomes refer to the federal child outcomes that were developed by OSEP for young children with disabilities.

❖ Topic 2.4: What Do the 3 Outcomes Measure?

To more fully understand the 3 federal outcomes, **watch** this video:

<http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/videos.asp>

Edelman, L. (Producer). (2011). *Child Outcomes Step-by-Step (Video)*. Published collaboratively by Results Matter, Colorado Department of Education; Desired Results *access* Project, Napa County Office of Education; and Early Childhood Outcomes Center. Retrieved from

<https://draccess.org/videolibrary>.

Think Spot G: Federal child outcome examples

Which federal child outcome covers these skills: cognitive and language skills? Write your response in the box provided.

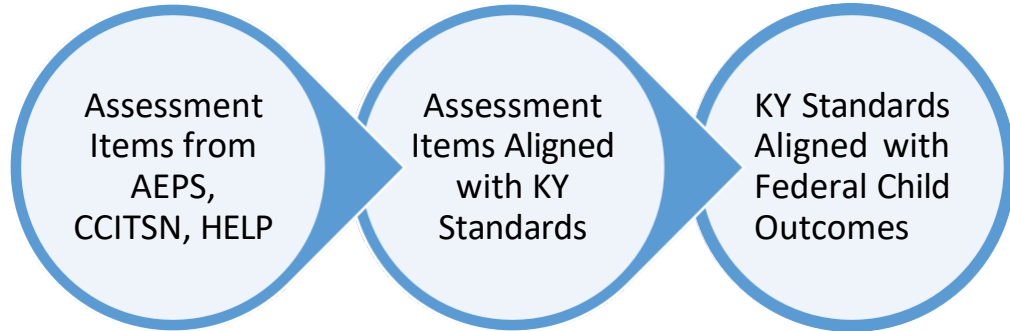
Which federal child outcome covers these skills: motor, adaptive, and language skills? Write your response in the box provided.

❖ Topic 2.5: Why Are the Federal Child Outcomes Important?

Here's the key to how these federal outcomes relate to the measurement of child progress in KY. In KY, the items in the 3 approved 5AAa are aligned with each of the KY Standards. See "Assessment Guide, updated 2010, <https://hdilearning.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/21051814/assessment-guide-2010.pdf> To reach this link, please copy and paste it into your browser.

Download the Assessment Guide for your reference, and examine the alignment between assessment items for each of the 5AA and KY's Standards, beginning on page 53 of the PDF Assessment Guide (numbered as page 9 of Recommended Assessments section). You will see that the alignment begins with the first Cognitive Standard and the AEPS.

Here's a diagram of this relationship:

**Think Spot H: Review key term**

What is the key term we discussed in this lesson, and how is it defined? Write your answer in the box provided.

The **key message** for this lesson is that **3 federal child outcomes** are used to examine child progress in KY, across the nation, and are some of the basis for First Steps funding.

Now that we have studied the terminology necessary for this discussion, let's move to Lesson 3, where we'll examine one important indicator of child progress on child, state, and federal levels - the 5AAs that you give.

Lesson 3: The Importance of Accurate Assessments

Purpose: The purpose of Lesson 3 is to emphasize the importance of accurate 5AAs that you give, with several steps for how accuracy can be ensured.

❖ Topic 3.1: Key Message

The **key message** of this lesson is that your accurate 5AAs are the basis for accurate measurement of child progress, at the child, state, and federal levels.

❖ Topic 3.2: Accurate Five Area Assessments (5AAs)

There are 3 approved 5AAs for use in KY: The Assessment, Evaluation, and Performance System (AEPS), Carolina Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers with Special Needs (CCITSN), and the Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP). There are several steps that you can take to ensure the accuracy of your assessments, and to support the accurate measurement of child progress in KY.

1. **Receive training** on the assessment instrument that you administer. While this practice is not required in KY, it greatly increases the reliability of your assessments. In KY, AEPS training is arranged individually with the publisher at <https://brookespublishing.com/seminar/aeps-seminar>. For training on the CCITSN or the HELP, you may register for online courses at <https://www.hdilearning.org>.
2. **Practice assessing** with the assessment instrument for which you receive training.
3. Obtain **reliability training** for the assessment instrument you use, as available.

Think Spot I: Assessment training

Where can I find **initial** training for the CCITSN or HELP? Write your response in the box provided.

Topic 3.3: Accurate data entry in KY's Early childhood Data Systems (KEDS)

Your attention to detail in recording 5AAs in KEDS is important, as it results in accurate reporting of child progress.

Accurate assessment data reporting includes 4 steps:

1. **Prior to assessing a child, check your KEDS account to be sure the child is listed.** Contact your POE manager if not, to avoid delays in payment.
2. **Record responses in your assessment booklet** for each child, accurately and completely.
3. **Record a response for EVERY item** in the assessment booklet.
4. For each child assessed, **if you are the Primary Service Provider, enter assessment results accurately in KEDS**, with a score listed for EVERY item. Instructions for accurate data entry may be found at the KEDS website at www.kedsonline.org > First Steps users.

Check Your Knowledge

Record the answers for each question online, and review the feedback received for each question as needed.

- 1.
- 2.

3.

4.

5.

Think Spot J: Key message

To summarize the discussion for Lesson 3 can you state the **key message**? Write it in the box provided.

Lesson 4: The Relationship between Accurate Assessments and Funding

Purpose: This Lesson examines the relationship among 5AAs child progress reporting, and funding for First Steps. Your 5AAs serve many purposes. They guide your work with children and families, improve child progress, and inform state and federal reporting and funding for First Steps.

❖ Topic 4.1: Key Message

The **key message** for this final lesson is that **5AAs inform state and federal reporting**, which are used, in part, to determine federal funding for First Steps

❖ Topic 4.2: Accurate Measurement of Child Progress

5AAs are used to determine child progress; they indicate the amount of skill development for children while enrolled in First Steps. Two **recommended (not required)** practices facilitate accurate reporting of child progress.

1. In some regions, the **same provider** administers the 5AA each time for a child, at least for the entry and exit assessments. This practice supports consistency of administration and scoring for each child.
2. In some regions, the **same 5AA** is used at entry and exit. This practice supports clear measurement of child progress, with the same assessment used to show progress from entry to exit.

In addition, one **required** assessment practice ensures accurate data reporting. Entering an accurate score in KEDS for EVERY item on each 5AA gives the clearest picture of child progress. If the score for an item is left blank, there is no way to determine the child's true progress. When scores are left blank, the assessments are considered incomplete, and cannot be used for reporting.

For federal reporting purposes, the 5AAs have been aligned with the KY Standards. These alignments are included in KDE's Assessment Guide that was referenced earlier. The KY Standards were then aligned with the 3 federal child outcomes, as part of KY's unique assessment system.

Think Spot K: Accurate 5AAs

Why are accurate 5AAs important? Write a reason in the box provided.

❖ **Topic 4.3: The link between assessment, child progress, and funding**

Let's put it all together and look at how accurate assessments inform your interventions with children and families, the reporting of child progress, and First Steps' federal funding.

- 1.
1. Accurate 5AAs guide the interventions you use with children and families. Once you have a clear picture of children's skills, you can effectively plan their interventions.
2. When you enter complete and accurate 5AAs in KEDS, your assessments accurately inform the analyses that are done to examine child progress while enrolled.
3. KEDS annual reporting of child progress, that is a part of First Steps' report to the federal government, is used, in part, to determine funding for First Steps- a very important step indeed!

Let's discuss the process used to determine reporting to the federal government of children's progress. This process includes three steps.

1. Primary Service Providers enter **complete 5AA records** in KEDS.
2. KEDS uses the first and last **5AAs** for each child to **measure growth on the KY Standards** while enrolled in First Steps.
3. Each child's **growth on the KY standards**, as informed by 5AA results, is aligned with the three, broad federal child outcomes to **determine each child's progress** on the three federal outcomes.

Now let's consider where these federal reports are posted, what they include, and why they matter to you.

❖ **Topic 4.4: Where are federal child progress data reported?**

KY's reports of child progress are reported annually to OSEP and are posted on the First Steps website at <https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dph/dmch/ecdb/Pages/fsreports.aspx>. Scroll down.

You will see one report for each of the recent years of reporting. **Note** that it takes several years of data gathering, analysis, and reporting before results are posted online. For example, for calendar year 2019, the most recent annual report posted on the website will be for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2016.

Select one of the posted reports, click on it, and search for **Indicator 3: Early Childhood Outcomes**- you will see the results for KY’s child outcome progress for that year. Indicator 3 shows child progress from entry to exit, for all children leaving First Steps for whom data were received that year. Scroll through the Indicator 3 section to see all results for federal child outcomes for that year.

Here is a sample of that report:

FFY 2016 Part C State Performance Plan (SPP)/Annual Performance Report (APR)
Indicator 3: Early Childhood Outcomes

Monitoring Priority: Early Intervention Services In Natural Environments
Results indicator: Percent of infants and toddlers with IFSPs who demonstrate improved:

A. Positive social-emotional skills (including social relationships);
 B. Acquisition and use of knowledge and skills (including early language/ communication); and
 C. Use of appropriate behaviors to meet their needs.

(20 U.S.C. 1416(a)(3)(A) and 1442)

Does your State's Part C eligibility criteria include infants and toddlers who are at risk of having substantial developmental delays (or "at-risk infants and toddlers") under IDEA section 632(5)(B)(i)? No

Historical Data

	Baseline Year	FFY	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
A1	2008	Target ≥						62.00%	72.00%	71.50%	80.00%	86.00%	86.01%
		Data					70.10%	66.80%	92.00%	91.00%	90.00%	86.37%	85.71%
A2	2008	Target ≥						31.00%	60.00%	61.00%	62.50%	68.98%	68.98%
		Data					48.10%	62.40%	55.00%	52.00%	73.00%	68.98%	65.19%
B1	2008	Target ≥						50.00%	63.00%	76.00%	85.00%	90.66%	90.66%
		Data					61.80%	67.70%	95.00%	95.00%	93.00%	90.66%	91.39%
B2	2008	Target ≥						26.00%	55.00%	56.00%	57.50%	71.54%	71.54%
		Data					28.80%	57.40%	48.00%	48.00%	75.00%	71.54%	68.47%
C1	2008	Target ≥						50.00%	62.00%	76.00%	80.00%	85.77%	85.77%
		Data					57.30%	67.20%	90.00%	90.00%	88.00%	85.77%	83.92%
C2	2008	Target ≥						26.00%	52.00%	53.00%	54.50%	53.80%	53.80%
		Data					29.10%	56.70%	30.00%	29.00%	58.00%	53.80%	48.86%

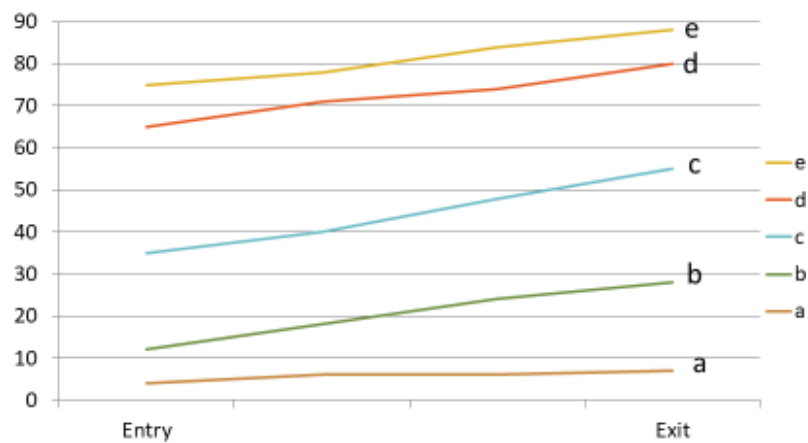
	FFY	2015
A1	Target ≥	86.02%
	Data	88.30%

❖ **Topic 4.5: What data are reported to the federal government?**

As you scroll down in the document listed above to Indicator 3: Early Childhood Outcomes, you will see KY’s results for child outcome progress. You may notice two aspects of this reporting:

1. **Each federal child outcome** is reported according to **5 levels of progress from entry to exit**, ranging from child made: a) no progress on the outcome; to e) maintained age-appropriate skills on the outcome, as illustrated.

Child Outcome Levels of Progress



2. The 3 child outcome results have been further consolidated into two **summary (or target) statements**. The two target statements report children who 1) made significant progress on each outcome; and 2) are at age-appropriate functioning, for each outcome at exit.

For additional information on this topic, explore the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) Outcomes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document at <http://ectacenter.org/eco/pages/faqs.asp>.

❖ Topic 4.6: Why does this federal reporting matter to you?

Based on First Steps' annual State Performance Plan, the federal government monitors how well KY meets the targets for child growth each year. The federal government expects KY to show that children are making good progress, in order to continue receiving the funding that is awarded each year.

This course has outlined the relationship between 5AAs, reporting of child progress, and the funding that KY receives to provide those services from the federal government.

Check Your Knowledge

Record the answers for each question online, and review the feedback received for each question as needed.

- 1.
- 2.

3.

4.

5.

Final Think Spot L: Key message

Now that you have completed this course, can you indicate the **key message** for this final lesson? Write your response in the box provided.

Final Project: Put it all Together

To demonstrate your mastery of the content on this online course, select and complete one of the following final projects. Create the product you select below, submit it for grading, and earn credit for the course! Feedback will be given for projects that need to be revised and resubmitted for credit. Select one of the following projects:

- Create an attractive **one-page flyer** with at least 3 major points **OR a PowerPoint presentation** with at least 12 slides that could be given or shown to families, that explains the message: “What are KY’s Early Childhood Standards and how do they relate to my child’s First Steps assessments?”
- Create an attractive **one-page flyer** with at least 3 major points **OR a PowerPoint presentation** with at least 12 slides that could be given to professionals that explains the message: “How accurate results from First Steps assessments relate to federal funding for First Steps.”
- Create an attractive **one-page flyer** with at least 3 major points **OR a PowerPoint presentation** with at least 12 slides that could be given to KY legislators that explains the message: “How KY’s First Steps assessments relate to child progress reporting and First Steps funding.”
- Prepare a 12-question **Frequently Asked Question document** that poses questions and answers them, on the topic of “How KY Standards relate to accurate First Steps child assessments and federal First Steps funding.”

Be sure that your project is attractive, informative, and has been proofed for spelling, grammar, and formatting.