

# Program Performance Standards

Below are some of the Head Start Program Performance Standards that require children's experiences in math and science. The accompanying rationale statements explain the importance of each Program Performance Standard listed.

## For All Children Birth to Five

1304.21(a)(4) Child development and education approach for all children.

Grantee and delegate agencies must provide for the development of each child's cognitive and language skills by:

**(i) *Supporting each child's learning using various strategies including experimentation, inquiry, observation, play and exploration.***

*Rationale: Through meaningful interactions with adults, other children, and a rich environment, children gain knowledge and understanding of the world. Strategies that support the development of cognitive and language skills allow exploration in both indoor and outdoor environments.*

**(iv) *Supporting emerging literacy and numeracy development through materials and activities according to the developmental level of each child.***

*Rationale: Children need a foundation for reading and mathematics. The development of this foundation results from the interaction of children's early experiences, relationships with adults and other children, and maturation. The development of skills related to literacy and numeracy is an ongoing part of a child's cognitive development.*

## For Preschoolers

1304.21(c) Child development and education approach for preschoolers.

(1) Grantee and delegate agencies, in collaboration with the parents, must implement a curriculum (see **45 CFR 1304.3(a)(5)**) that:

**(ii) *Provides for the development of cognitive skills by encouraging each child to organize his or her experiences, to understand concepts, and to develop age appropriate literacy, numeracy, reasoning problem solving and decision-making skills which form a foundation for school readiness and later school success.***

*Rationale: Children expand their knowledge and skills through a variety of experiences and interactions with other children and adults. Intellectual development is reinforced and extended through opportunities to engage in meaningful work that stimulates questioning, forming ideas, and represent what is being learned.*

(2) Staff must use a variety of strategies to promote and support children's learning and developmental progress based on the observations and ongoing assessment of each child. (See **45 CFR 1304.20(b)**, **1304.20(d)**, and **1304.20(e)** for additional information).

*Rationale: Flexible and dynamic programs support children's development and changing knowledge and skills, as well as their individual strengths and needs.*