

Curriculum Corner

New Child Development Curriculum

Nebraska 4-H has embarked on a new 5-year Strategic Plan. The plan focuses on 5 outcomes that were identified by stakeholders as important to the youth of Nebraska. These outcomes can be integrated into the program in many different ways; at club meetings, at workshops, at new programs and more.

One additional way will be in the Child Development exhibits for this year. Four of the traditional exhibits will be making an adjustment to fit these outcomes.

Let's first review the outcomes.

- **4-H Science:** Developing science interests, skills and abilities in the areas of agriculture, energy, environmental stewardship and technology. Helping youth think and problem solve within a scientific framework and encouraging an excitement for science.
- **Agricultural Literacy:** Ensuring that Nebraska youth have a knowledge and appreciation of Nebraska's largest industry.
- **Career Development/College Readiness:** Preparing youth to make informed decisions about their college and career path. Developing skills in young people that will lead to greater persistence in college and employability.
- **Citizenship and Leadership:** Fostering youth's commitment to their communities and growing future leaders.
- **Healthy Living:** Educating youth about how to make healthy and safe decisions in their daily lives.



Now let's look at our exhibits.

1. THE INFANT: Toy, game, or activity made for baby (Birth - 18 mos.)
2. THE TODDLER: Toy, game or activity made for toddler (18 mos. - 3 yrs.)
3. THE PRESCHOOLER: Toy, game or activity made for preschooler (3 - 5 yrs.)
4. MIDDLE CHILDHOOD: Toy, game or activity made for grade-schooler (6 - 9 yrs.)

So how do we combine the two? The fairbook states: As you consider and develop your exhibits for these classes, remember that the toy, game or activity must be able to teach the child about something related to one or more of the outcome areas. This could be a game that teaches about healthy eating (healthy lifestyles), or a game that teaches about being a farmer (careers/agricultural literacy). Be creative!

Let's consider some other ideas:

Science – A stuffed bug for an infant.

Ag Literacy – A barn to play in for toddlers.

Healthy Living – A matching game of fruits and vegetable pictures for preschoolers.

Careers – A picture book of careers in your community for preschoolers

Citizenship/Leadership – A game about being a citizen for grade-schoolers.



When you stop to think about it, it can be very easy to develop something that fits. First pick the age of child you want to target and then pick an outcome you might be interested in learning more about. Decide what you want to teach that child and create a toy, game or activity that would expose the child to the outcome. Think broadly and we only ask that an attempt is made at connecting these exhibits to our outcomes.

Just think if we start teaching our youngest youth about these outcomes, how much of a difference it will make.