

# North Iowa Community Action *HEAD START*



*Educational and Social  
Emotional Curriculum*

# Key Features of Creative Curriculum

## Child-Centered Learning

- Focuses on meeting children where they are developmentally.
- Encourages active exploration and learning.
- Supports children's natural curiosity through engaging, age-appropriate activities.

## Comprehensive Learning Domains

- Social-Emotional Development: Building self-regulation, social skills, and empathy.
- Language and Literacy: Fostering communication skills through reading, writing, and storytelling.
- Cognitive Development: Encouraging problem-solving, critical thinking, and creativity.
- Physical Development: Promoting motor skills through play, both fine and gross.

## Integrated Learning Experiences

- Activities are woven across various domains, promoting holistic development.
- Children explore a variety of subjects like math, science, art, and social studies.

## Play-Based Learning

- Play is a key strategy in fostering growth and learning.
- The curriculum includes structured and unstructured play to promote social skills, critical thinking, and emotional expression.



# ***Creative Curriculum Components***

## **Thematic Units**

- The curriculum is divided into thematic units that address specific topics (e.g., "All About Me," "Animals," "Seasons").
- Activities are designed to spark curiosity and learning in these areas.

## **Daily Routines**

- Emphasizes consistent routines that build security and support self-regulation in children.
- Includes morning greetings, circle time, free play, group activities, and reflections.

## **Teacher's Role**

- Teachers act as guides, observing children's interests, needs, and strengths.
- Provide individualized support and facilitate a balance between structured activities and child-initiated play.

## **Assessment and Observation**

- Regular observation to understand each child's development.
- Use of developmentally appropriate tools to assess learning and progress.



# Key Features of Second Step Curriculum

## 1. Focus on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Helps children develop skills to manage emotions and practice empathy.
- Promotes healthy relationships with peers and adults.
- Encourages positive decision-making and responsible behavior.

## 1. Developmentally Appropriate Content

- Tailored to the needs of preschool children.
- Uses age-appropriate lessons, activities, and stories to engage children.
- Provides practical, real-life scenarios to practice SEL skills.

## 1. Research-Based & Proven Results

- Backed by scientific research that shows children in SEL programs perform better academically and socially.
- Proven to reduce classroom disruptions and bullying behaviors.
- Strengthens children's ability to focus and engage in learning activities.



# Second Step Curriculum Components

## Skills for Social and Emotional Competence

- Self-Awareness: Recognizing and labeling emotions.
- Self-Regulation: Learning strategies to manage strong feelings and impulses.
- Social Awareness: Understanding other people's feelings and perspectives.
- Relationship Skills: Building positive relationships with peers and adults.
- Responsible Decision-Making: Making thoughtful and responsible choices.

## Thematic Units

- Emotions & Self-Regulation: Identifying feelings, practicing calm-down strategies.
- Empathy & Friendships: Understanding and respecting others' emotions, fostering kindness.
- Problem-Solving & Conflict Resolution: Teaching strategies to resolve disagreements peacefully.

## Engaging Activities

- Role-playing, songs, and stories to help children practice social skills.
- Interactive classroom activities to reinforce key SEL concepts.

## Teacher's Role

- Teachers lead by example, modeling social-emotional skills and providing guidance.
- Create a safe and supportive environment where children feel comfortable expressing themselves.



# *Your Role as a Family*

## Supporting Social-Emotional Development

### **Model Positive Behaviors at Home**

Children learn by observing the adults around them. Practice the same skills of empathy, problem-solving, and emotion regulation at home that they are learning in the classroom.

### **Encourage Open Communication**

Create a safe space for your child to express their feelings. Listen actively and validate their emotions to help them develop healthy emotional expression and self-awareness.

### **Reinforce Conflict-Resolution Skills**

Help your child navigate disagreements by using calm, respectful language and practicing solutions that promote peace and understanding, just like they learn in their Second Step lessons.

## Supporting Creative Academic Learning

### **Engage in Interactive Activities**

Encourage your child to explore, question, and create through hands-on activities. Whether it's crafting, storytelling, or simple problem-solving games, you can provide enriching experiences that complement the creative academic content they're learning.

### **Read Together Every Day**

Reading is one of the best ways to foster both literacy and imagination. Encourage a love for reading by exploring stories that reflect their interests, and talk about the characters, plots, and lessons.

### **Promote Curiosity & Exploration**

Create opportunities for your child to ask questions and explore the world around them. Whether it's a walk in the park, a trip to the library, or experimenting with art materials at home, fostering curiosity supports both academic growth and creative thinking.





***Get in touch!***



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