

Early Learning Development Standards Age Validation Project Description

Ministry of Education and Science of Kyrgyz Republic established Thematic working group that drafted Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) that will accompany the State Standard on Preschool Education and Childcare that was initially approved by the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in January 2007.

The process of developing and finalizing ELDS takes place in five distinct phases. In Kyrgyzstan, the first three phases have been completed and it is expected that the full process will be completed in 2010.

Phase I: Planning

Complete

Phase I includes training of national experts and Ministry officials in the ELDS approach, determining country values, deciding on the domains of development and the ages that will be covered in the ELDS, determining some provisional uses of the standards, and the composition of the working group.

Phase II: Drafting

Complete

Phase II includes the writing of the first draft of the standards by an ELDS Working Group composed of a diverse group of relevant professionals including policymakers, technical experts and service providers from Education, Health and Social Welfare backgrounds.

Phase III: Review and Revision

Complete

Phase III includes the review and revision of standards by the full working group, a review by the international experts, Sharon Lynn Kagan and Pia Rebello Britto, and the editing and revision of the draft standards by the national group of experts.

Phase IV: Validation

Planned: 2010

Phase IV includes a systematic process for ensuring that the content of the standards is accurate and appropriate for the country and for the ages of the children covered. In March 2009, Ministry of Education officials from Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan participated in a workshop on designing an appropriate and scientifically sophisticated validation process. Their participation helped to build communication and awareness within the Ministry on ELDS validation processes.

The purpose of age validation is to determine whether the expectations are accurate and valid for the age range reflected in the standards. It assesses age expectation - the anticipated age of accomplishment for normatively developing children - and whether these expectations are too easy, too advanced, or just right for the indicated ages of the children.

The key strategy for age validity evaluation is the assessment of systematic and structured observations of children's behaviour based on items from the standards. Children to be observed should be selected from the upper end of each of the age groupings for the evaluation, as that is the age by which the specific behaviour is expected to be mastered. The children involved should

represent the socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the country. A rule of thumb is that there should be about 100 children tested per age and population group. The criterion for evaluating the accuracy of the standards is based on determining the cut-off percentages at which the indicator would be considered normatively age-appropriate (usually between 40% and 60%). The results from age validation are used to revise the content and order of the standards.