



## Overview of Adaptive Skills

Adaptive skills are those in which the child uses the information and skills acquired in the other domains. **Adaptive skills** are defined as practical, everyday skills needed to function and meet the demands of one's environment, including the skills necessary to effectively and independently take care of oneself and to interact with other people. (Adaptive Skills – PAR – Psychological Assessment Resources)

As adaptive skills develop there are increases in a child's participation in personal care and daily routines. Adaptive skills also include a child's ability to enter a new environment or situation as well as engage in a familiar/desirable activity with minimal prompting.

## Development of skills is interrelated across domains.

### **Examples of the interrelated relationship of adaptive skills to skills in other domains:**

- Understanding the steps in daily routines, responding to adult actions, and anticipating next steps in routines are related to cognitive skills of imitation, memory, cause-and-effect, and problem solving.
- Development of self-care routines can be impacted by a child's motor development. The child's ability to use muscles impacts use of materials in the environment, therefore impacting development in adaptive skills which require standing, balancing, and coordinating movements. Adaptive skills such as eating (holding utensils) are interrelated with the use of small muscles and fine motor skills.
- Communication skills impact development of adaptive skills based on a child's ability to understand and process directions, as well as expressive skills such as requesting help and stating needs for toileting.
- Delays in personal-social development might impact adaptive skills if a child does not understand social expectations associated with tasks such as self-feeding, toileting, and cleaning up materials.

It is important to be aware of the **interrelatedness of domain skills** in order to determine the impact of various delays or difficulties when teaching adaptive skills. It is likely that several domain needs will have to be addressed in order to best teach adaptive skills.

## General Strategies for Teaching Self-care Skills

- Understand the steps involved in each skill
- Provide frequent and purposeful opportunities to practice the skill
- Ensure the student has the time they need to successfully complete the task
- Use strategies that are appropriate for your individual child, including hand-over-hand physical assistance, guided practice, visuals, modeling
- Provide specific and positive feedback and praise
- Be aware of reducing the level of prompting so that you do not fall into a pattern of "over-prompting" or helping too much
- Be patient and do not to move on to the next step until your student is ready

## A. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

### b. Safety

3-4 years (36-48 months)

1. Shows awareness of safety and increasingly demonstrates knowledge of safe choices and risk assessment when participating in daily activities



**Correlations of Florida Early Learning and Development Standards** Note: FELDS does not include a separate domain for “Adaptive” skill development. The following correlation is based on skills throughout the FELDS which relate to children’s development of adaptive skills. For that reason, the correlation includes skills that are included in FELDS developmental areas of Physical, Social Emotional, and Communication.

Subdomain	FELDS Standards	
Health and Wellness	A.1	Engages in physical activities with increasing balance, coordination, endurance, and intensity
	A.2	Shows awareness of safety and increasingly demonstrates knowledge of safe choices and risk assessment when participating in daily activities
	A.3	Responds to and initiates care routines that support personal hygiene
	A.4	Responds to feeding or feeds self with increasing efficiency and demonstrates increasing interest in eating habits and making food choices
Motor Development	B.1	Demonstrates increasing control of small motor muscles to perform simple tasks
	B.2	Uses eye-hand coordination to perform fine motor tasks

Subdomain	FELDS Standards	
Social-Emotional Domain	C.1	Plays with peers in a coordinated manner including assigning roles, materials, and actions
		Develops sense of identity and belonging through routines, rituals, and interactions

Subdomain	FELDS Standard	
Listening and Understanding	A.1	Increases knowledge through listening
	A.2	Follows multi-step directions
Vocabulary	C.1	Shows an understanding of words and their meanings

Notice that FELDS does not designate one domain as “Adaptive”, however skills that related to self-care, safety, and participation are included throughout FELDS.

The examples shown here illustrate the resources of ideas provided in FELDS. There are descriptions for each benchmark related to developmentally appropriate activities for children, suggestions for lessons and embedded instruction, and ideas for families to reinforce the skills at home.

FELDS benchmarks are arranged to show the developmental continuum of the skills which can serve as a resource to find ideas that are specific to a developmental level. This is helpful in guiding your instruction for children whose skills are delayed in a specific area.

#### Benchmark a.

Follows basic safety practices with close adult supervision (e.g., tries to buckle own seatbelt; seeks adult assistance to use step stool)

Children may...	Educators may...	Families may...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use helmets when riding tricycles or wheeled toys.</li> <li>Wait for the child ahead of them to get off slide before going down.</li> <li>Participate in and follow the routines of emergency drills, such as fire drills with adult assistance.</li> <li>Inform an adult when they see dangerous behaviors such as someone throwing objects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schedule outdoor play and exploring experiences into your routine each day.</li> <li>Establish and use consistent routines.</li> <li>Sing songs and read books to reinforce safety rules.</li> <li>Add visuals to the classroom so children understand routines and expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give children an opportunity to try things themselves before offering assistance.</li> <li>Discuss safety practices for their homes and areas frequently visited. Brainstorm reasons for the safety rules.</li> <li>Offer and follow consistent routines.</li> </ul>

Technical Assistance and Training System (TATS)  
3280 Progress Drive  
FAAST Center, Suite 250  
Orlando, FL 32826

Tel: 407-823-3058  
Fax: 407-823-1360  
Email: [tats@ucf.edu](mailto:tats@ucf.edu)  
Website: <http://www.tats.ucf.edu>

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