



Development and Integration of Early Learning Guidelines for Infants and Toddlers

GRANTEES FEATURED

Georgia

New Jersey

Pennsylvania

Vermont

In December 2013, **Georgia, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Vermont** became the newest states to receive Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge (ELC) grants. Although they, like the 14 states that received awards before them, do not plan to use a significant portion of their grants to fund initiatives targeting infants and toddlers specifically, their efforts to strengthen the systems that support all young children and families have potential to improve outcomes for babies if their needs are intentionally addressed. This excerpt from *Meeting the Challenge: How the Newest Early Learning Challenge Grantees Can Meet the Needs of Infants and Toddlers* [www.zerotothree.org/public-policy/state-community-policy/elc-grantees-2014.pdf] discusses grantees' plans to develop and integrate Early Learning Guidelines (ELG) for infants and toddlers.

ELG describe what children should know (understandings) and be able to do (competencies and skills) across multiple domains of learning during specified age ranges. ELG for infants and toddlers can help parents, professionals, and policymakers understand early development and how they can support it. Embedding ELG for infants and toddlers into the framework of the early childhood system can result in a more qualified infant-toddler workforce, more intentional and appropriate practices to support infant-toddler development in early care and education settings, and stronger alignment between infant-toddler standards and those for older children.

Several of the new ELC grantees plan to develop, revise, and/or further integrate their ELG for infants and toddlers.

- **Pennsylvania** and **Vermont** are both revising their ELG to ensure they are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for all children. They are also taking steps to ensure the ELG are aligned with other standards and frameworks, such as the Head Start Child

Development and Early Learning Framework, Common Core State Standards for K–12, state education standards, and kindergarten entry assessments. **Pennsylvania's** standards already include infants and toddlers. **Vermont** will be extending their current ELG to include infancy to grade 3.

- **New Jersey** and **Georgia** adopted new ELG that include infants and toddlers before receiving ELC grants, but both plan to use ELC funds to roll them out. **New Jersey** will integrate the new ELG into its professional development system and Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS). The state is also creating a library of video clips aligned with the ELG to show what children know and are able to do at different ages. **Georgia** has plans to create resources, tools, and professional development based on the ELG. The state will also align them with national standards for English language learners and create professional development tools for early childhood educators working with English language learners.
- All four states—**Georgia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Vermont**—have plans to widely disseminate their ELG to parents and professionals to ensure they are used to support young children's healthy development.

This series explores six strategies the newest ELC grantees are pursuing: developing and integrating Early Learning Guidelines for infants and toddlers; professional development of the infant-toddler workforce; expansion of home visiting; building capacity in high-need communities; engaging and supporting families; and connecting families to appropriate services. Download all of the strategy briefs and full paper, as well as other ELC resources, at www.zerotothree.org/elc.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ZERO TO THREE has developed a number of resources related to the ELC, including a toolkit outlining how states can use the ELC to benefit infants and toddlers and articles detailing how the 2013 and previous ELC grantees targeted very young children. View them all at www.zerotothree.org/elc