2024 - 2025

A Look Inside

Lillio Learning™
powered by FunShine Express

A look into Lillio Learning Curriculum

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Welcome to Lillio Learning™

As an early childhood educator, you know that building strong, trusting relationships with the children in your care is one of the most critical components of their success. For nearly three decades, first as FunShine Express and now as Lillio Learning, we've developed high-quality, research-based, state-aligned early learning curriculum that simplifies planning and provides daily opportunities for you to do just that.

Our curricula stimulate thinking, reasoning, decision-making, and problem-solving, with approaches to learning that account for the fact that children learn best by doing. We incorporate activities to help adults build strong relationships by paying attention to children's feelings, interests, and needs. Active learning and choice are encouraged so that young children can grow and develop in a loving, nurturing environment.

Thank you for partnering with us to help ensure that every child has access to high-quality early care and education during these critical years for development and learning. We invite you to learn more at our website: **lillio.com/features/curriculum**.

Beth Ehlis
VP, Educational Content

Why Lillio Learning™?

Lillio Learning begins with the premise that when children are actively engaged, they are learning. By providing consistency and a predictable routine, children can anticipate what happens next and feel safe to explore and discover. Activities that include open-ended questions to promote language development, thinking, and problem-solving help children develop deeper understanding of concepts, and multisensory experiences allow children to learn through touch, smell, taste, sight, and hearing. Each activity is designed to help educators address each child socially, physically, emotionally, and cognitively.

Lillio Learning for Infant and Toddler Classrooms

Lillio Learning for Infant and Toddler Classrooms is an interactive curriculum for children from birth up to 36 months. It includes daily lesson plans, tips for individualizing activities, observation prompts, and extensions for older toddlers. Each theme includes a set of infant-specific activities and six exploration stations with suggested interactions.

Lillio Learning for Preschool Classrooms

Lillio Learning for Preschool Classrooms is a research-based curriculum developed for children ages 3 to 5 years old. Teacher guidance, transition ideas, observation prompts, and individualization strategies are embedded into activities in each theme. The activities are designed to create enthusiasm for learning and to build critical school readiness skills.

Lillio Learning Weekly Planner

The Lillio Learning Weekly Planner is a digital planning tool that enables educators to schedule activities using an online calendar. Educators can use the tool to write their own learning activities, access Lillio Learning curricula, or plan custom content that integrates Lillio Learning activities. Educators can create a personal library of activities to reference and reuse as needed. When creating custom activities, educators can tag skills from their state early learning standards to demonstrate they are supporting learning across the learning domains and supporting children in developing crucial skills for school readiness.

The Weekly Planner contains two distinct features for ease of planning: a weekly routine section that allows teachers to set up a template of experiences for each week and drag & drop functionality to allow teachers to change plans quickly when necessary.

The Evolution of Lillio Learning™

Nearly 30 years ago, Lillio Learning began as FunShine Express, developed by Founder Beth Ehlis to provide activities for her own licensed childcare program in North Dakota. From the beginning, the curriculum has been grounded in a commitment to best practices and active learning, with support to help educators build strong, loving, secure relationships with the children in their care.

1995

FunShine Express founded by Beth Ehlis, Lisa Kessel, and Patricia Ehlis, sisters/mother team. 32 kits sold first month. All reorder.

1997

FunShine Express acquires first office space. Curriculum becoming more intentional, addressing specific learning goals.

2004

Developmental Skills are included for every activity. Assessment and Observation introduced. Business moves to a larger facility.

2005

Curriculum is redesigned and branded as Sprouts and Fireflies.

Sprouts

Fireflies

2008

Fireflies Buttercups

Sprouts curriculum is merged into Fireflies. Buttercups Infant/Toddler Curriculum is introduced.

2010

Recognized by North Dakota SBA as Small Business of the Year. Curriculum products now reach 50,000 children/day.

U.S. Small Business Administration
NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK
2010 Award Winner

Over the years, the curriculum has evolved, expanded, and improved, but that original commitment still holds true to this day.

2014

FunShine Digital curriculum is released. Work begins on individual state approvals of all programs.

2017

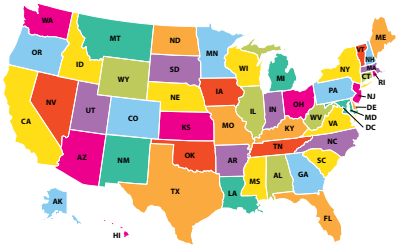
Development and release of the revised Early Learning and Development Continuum. New Assessment and Observation tools.

2019

FunShine Digital is a Finalist for EdTech Digest Awards for Cool Tool and Trendsetter.

2020

Alignment of Early Learning Development Continuum to every state is completed, assisting with state acceptance of content.



2021

FunShine Express partners with HiMama, the #1 rated childcare management software for early childhood programs.

2023

HiMama rebrands to Lillio to reflect larger product offering. Followed by the rebrand of FunShine Express to Lillio Learning.

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How Does Lillio Learning™ Support Individualized Instruction?

Individualized instruction focuses on the unique interests and abilities of each child and begins with knowing the children in your care and their skill levels on a developmental continuum. No two children develop at the same rate, and meeting children's needs at their unique developmental level helps them feel successful, develop a positive self-image, and feel intrinsically motivated to continue learning.

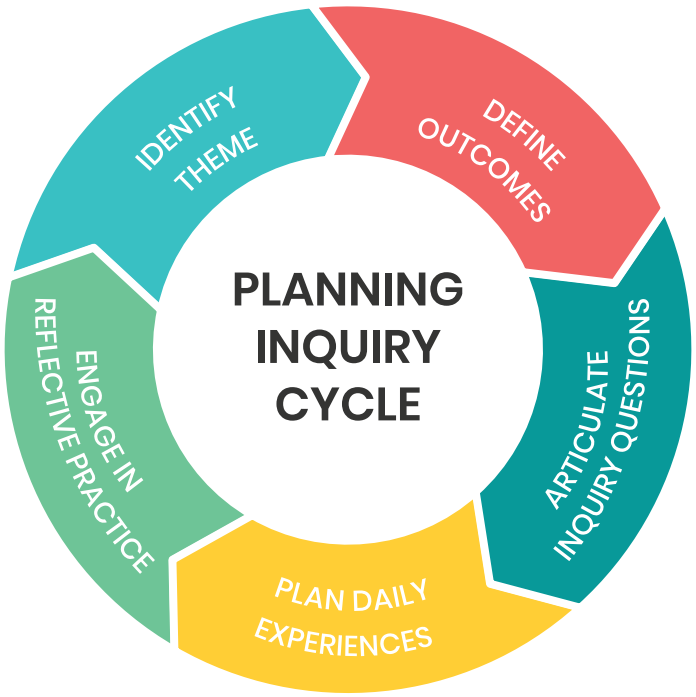
Lillio Learning offers support for individualizing instruction by embedding suggestions for individualization into the content of our daily activities. We focus on three forms of individualization within our curriculum guides: scaffolding, making adaptations, and strategies for extending learning. Each form of individualization encourages the educator to consider each child's level of development, emerging skills, and responses to the environment. Suggestions for individualization are marked in red font and appear at the end of daily activities.

How Does Lillio Learning™ Support Inquiry-Based Learning and Emerging Literacy Skills?

Lillio Learning curricula values play, fosters a positive learning disposition in each child, and provides a framework through which educators can ensure that the children's learning experiences are consistent with the program's goals.

Learning experiences are organized around themes that are related to children's natural interests, shared traditions, and seasons. Planning begins by explicitly defining the learning goals for each theme. This ensures that the offered learning experiences are purposeful and inform assessment and that instruction is grounded in outcomes. Once outcomes are clearly defined for a theme, we articulate questions related to the outcomes that children should be able to answer by the end of a theme. This ensures that our learning activities lead to the attainment of outcomes. We close the inquiry loop by offering reflective practice questions for educators. These questions support educators in scaffolding learning, developing and testing new strategies, and fostering a high-quality learning environment.

Our approach to pre-literacy is informed by the Science of Reading and ensures children leave preschool with the skills they need to learn how to read. We emphasize the relationship between letters, phonemes, and written expression, as well as rhyming, read-alouds, and robust vocabulary. Pre-literacy instruction is dynamic and interactive across the learning domains and age groups.



Is Lillio Learning™ Aligned to Early Childhood and State Standards?

The Lillio Early Learning and Development Continuum (LELDC) is a curriculum framework that ensures each activity and theme adheres to high-quality, developmentally appropriate practices. It is aligned to early learning and development standards in states across the country, which helps educators understand where each child is on the continuum of learning and development and that their planned activities meet required content.

The LELDC is organized into eight domains that represent major areas of development and learning. Each domain is divided into four subdomains and goals, which help define more specific skills that comprise the domain. Within each subdomain, we have identified a set of indicators. Each indicator shows what a child should know or be able to do in that area. Domains, subdomains, and sets of indicators for Dual Language Learners (DLLs) are also included.

State Alignments and Approvals

The Lillio Early Learning and Development Continuum is aligned with early learning standards and guidelines from states across the nation. We are confident our early learning materials meet or exceed the standards set forth by states and early childhood organizations. Developing alignments is an ongoing process. State alignment and approval lists for Lillio Learning can be found at: **funshineexpress.com/alignments**.

Early Learning and Development Continuum

Domains
Represent major areas of development and learning.

Subdomains
Organize the content within overarching domains into focused learning areas.

Goal
A broad skill the child is working toward within the subdomain.

Age Range
Approximate ages when certain development begins and progresses.

Indicators
Skills the child should know by the end of the developmental age range.

How Is Lillio Learning™ Implemented Throughout the Day?

Many teachers ask us how much time our program will take each day. You can provide the best situation to promote early learning by offering interesting and challenging opportunities throughout the day and allowing children to choose what is intriguing to them. Learning should happen all day long. At the same time, we realize children need a certain amount of routine and structure within each day. Predictable routines give them a sense of security and allow your day to transition smoothly between arrivals, snacks/meals, naps, play activities, and departures. For more tips on creating a schedule, visit **www.funshineexpress.com/theory-resources**.

Full-Day Schedule Sample

7:30-8:00	Welcome/Start Your Day	11:45-12:15	Lunch
8:00-8:30	Breakfast	12:15-1:30	Rest/Quiet Time
8:30-8:50	Circle Time/Music & Movement	1:30-1:40	Restroom
8:50-9:05	Whole Group, Share Time	1:40-2:20	Art, Station Activities
9:05-9:35	Free Play	2:20-2:40	Structured Group Activity
9:35-9:45	Cleanup	2:40-3:00	Snack
9:45-9:55	Read-Aloud	3:00-3:45	Outdoor Play
9:55-10:10	Structured Group Activity	3:45-3:55	Restroom
10:10-10:30	Restroom/Snack	3:55-4:10	Read-Aloud
10:30-10:50	Structured Group Activity	4:10-4:40	Free Play/Free Reading
10:50-11:35	Outdoor Play	4:40-4:50	Cleanup
11:35-11:45	Restroom	4:50-5:00	Songs and Rhymes, Share Time, End Your Day

How Does Lillio Learning™ Support Partnering with Families?

One of the most important goals of Lillio Learning is encouraging the involvement of family members in each child's learning. Strong partnerships between programs and families are a critical component of young children's success. Suggestions for family engagement are embedded throughout Lillio Learning, with guidance and encouragement for incorporating families' unique cultures and traditions and capitalizing on local and regional uniqueness.

How Does Lillio Learning™ Help Educators Track Progress?

Assessment Overview

Our authentic, observation-based assessment process pairs easily with Lillio Learning. It is a teacher-friendly, three-step approach:

1. Planning activities to observe
2. Gathering evidence, adjusting curriculum, and building portfolios
3. Meeting with family members

Lillio Learning includes detailed guidance to help teachers know what to assess. Observation suggestions and prompts are embedded into activities to support the ability to know what skills to look for as observations are being made. Proficiency levels have also been defined and guidance is provided to help teachers provide individualized instruction. Child Progress Reports are available online and can be printed for use; pre-printed copies can also be purchased from Lillio directly. These reports reflect the progression of activities throughout the year, which become more challenging and offer increased complexity in order to help teachers make clear observations about each child's progress against early learning goals.

Tracking Observations

Our digital Weekly Planner enables teachers to quickly and comprehensively record observations of child development in a way that supports future lesson planning, assessments, and conversations about each child's development with their families. Within the Weekly Planner, teachers will have the option to log an observation with a click of a button. While entering an observation, teachers can upload photos or videos as developmental evidence, tag developmental skills related to the activity or behavior being observed, link the observation directly to details of a lesson plan, and type relevant notes. All of this information is conveniently stored in a developmental evidence report for each child.

Lillio Learning™
FOR INFANT & TODDLER CLASSROOMS
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AGES 0-3

2024 -2025 Kit Components

Starter Pack - Use All Year

Color and Shape Display with Pieces

- Supports color and shape recognition
- Color and shape names on pieces help build a print-rich environment

Alphabet Display with Pieces

- Introduce letters/ build alphabetic awareness
- Interactive design supports hands-on learning

Weather Display

- Children choose a picture that best illustrates the weather and place it in the window.

Sign Language Poster

- Support emerging communication skills using American Sign Language

8 Emotions Cards

- Use to label and explore emotions

Developmental Continuum Poster

- Indicators for easy reference; track infant/ toddler development

Teacher Pack - New Bimonthly

Curriculum Guide

- Start/End Your Day group activities for each theme
- Includes tips for observation and assessment

- Easy-to-use lesson plans organized by day
- 2 themes per month
- Indicators listed with each activity
- Infant Activities and Exploration Stations for each theme

Activity Calendar

- Post on a wall to view daily activities at a glance and engage families.

Pictures below are examples. Each bimonthly kit includes new Teacher Pack resources and Children's Supplies.

6 Physical/Health Cards, 6 Song/Rhyme Cards

- Gross/fine motor and sensory activities
- Tips for individualizing
- Use on-the-go with children
- Collect, save, and reuse!

12 Vocabulary Cards

- Real photos to teach vocabulary
- On-the-go child engagement

All About Me Cards

- Review body parts, emotions, tasting foods, and movements

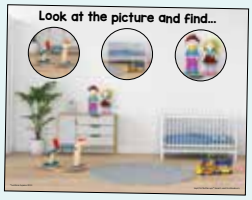
Play Manipulatives

- Durable, quality educational toys and tools
- Strengthen physical and cognitive development
- Collect and expand your classroom resources

Board Books

- Sturdy books reinforce concepts
- Collect and expand your classroom library

Search and Find Activity



- Invite children to search for and name objects in a theme-inspired scene
- Use to support language and memory skills

2 Nursery Rhyme Props

- Introduce rhyming, counting, and more

4 Sets of Early Learning Materials

- Reinforce early learning concepts, such as matching, sorting, opposites, and more

Materials List

- Monthly list of readily available materials needed for each day

Children's Supplies - New Bimonthly

Includes supplies for **12 exploratory art activities or props** and a **Family Newsletter** to help engage families and reinforce concepts

Lillio Learning™
FOR PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS
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AGES 3-5

2024 -2025 Kit Components

Starter Pack - Use All Year

Number/Color/Shape Display with Pieces

- Display the monthly numbers, colors, and shapes
- Interactive and contributes to a print-rich environment

Weather Display with Pieces

- Helps children explore, observe, and describe the weather, and understand what to wear to stay comfortable while playing outside

Calendar Grid with Monthly Headings

- Use to discuss daily schedule
- Reinforce math concepts with color patterns

A-Z Alphabet Displays

- 26 cards to introduce letters each month
- American Sign Language included

Developmental Continuum Poster

- Indicators for easy reference; track development of three- to five-year-olds

Teacher Pack - New Monthly

Curriculum Guide

- Circle Time and Whole Group activities at the beginning of each day
- Observation and assessment guidance
- Easy-to-use lesson plans; 3 pages of activities per day
- Indicators listed with each activity
- Tips for individualizing and extending content
- Exploration Stations for each theme

Activity Calendar

- Post on a wall to view daily activities at a glance and engage families

6 Physical/Health Cards, 6 Song/Rhyme Cards

- For on-the-go child engagement
- Collect, save, and reuse!

Pictures below are examples. Each monthly kit includes new Teacher Pack resources and Children's Supplies.

12 Alphabet Word Cards

- 4 cards per letter
- Help children associate sounds with letters and words

Calendar Numbers

- Numbered pieces to display on Calendar Grid
- Helps children recognize time and patterns

4 Word Wall Cards

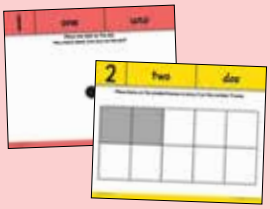
- Help children make connections between language and written text
- Create a print-rich environment

2-3 Learning Center Materials

- Use for the development of skills across the learning domains

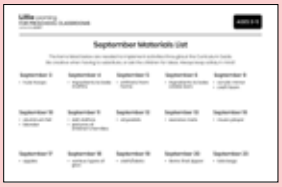
Math Activity Mats

- Support numeracy and problem-solving
- Collect, save, and reuse!



Materials List

- Monthly list of readily available materials needed for each day



Children's Supplies - New Monthly

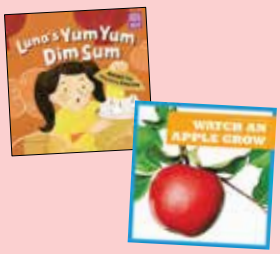
Includes supplies for **15 creative art activities** and a **Family Newsletter** to help engage families and reinforce concepts

Math Game

- Game Board with punch-out pieces
- Strengthen mathematical skills, such as patterning, problem-solving, sequencing, and more

2 Children's Books

- Increase interest and motivation in reading and literacy
- Collect and expand your classroom library



Discovery Journals

- Children explore mark making, drawing, and writing at their own developmental level
- Used often throughout each theme

Supplemental Programs

Buttercups Babies Infant Curriculum

Buttercups Babies Infant Curriculum was developed to support providers in offering meaningful infant care. Each kit includes activities that focus on the following learning domains: language/literacy, math, science, social studies, social/emotional, physical/health, and creative arts. The activities will support providers in introducing language, offering safe manipulatives and other materials to facilitate age-appropriate exploration, engaging children in movement, and responding to children's needs and feelings. Each activity and suggested interaction is influenced by developmentally appropriate practice and evidence-based research. Suggestions are included for observation and assessment.

Each theme-inspired box includes:

- 36 Activity Cards
- 4 American Sign Language Cards
- 1 Board Book
- 3 Infant Manipulatives
- 2 Music Playlists

Access information about our first three themes—My World, Pets I Know, and On the Go—at **funshineexpress.com** under the Shop, Buttercups Babies tab.

Digital Christian Activities

Lillio Learning™ offers digital Christian lesson plans that can be combined with daily lesson plans or used separately. Each monthly theme focuses on a key Bible story to foster children's spiritual and religious growth. Each story is organized into five flexible lessons, which include Bible verse practice, storytime, music, art and enrichment, and prayer time. We also offer a printable Family Newsletter that includes songs and additional activities that can be sent home with each child.

"We believe early childhood educators have the power to change children's lives and ultimately, the world."