

# *message from me*

## **EDUCATOR'S GUIDE**

**BASED ON THE PRE-KINDERGARTEN PENNSYLVANIA  
LEARNING STANDARDS for EARLY CHILDHOOD**

**4th Edition  
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## **About this Book**

The Message from Me Educator’s Guide gives you the essential ingredients to begin your journey with the Message from Me (MFM) or iPad app. This set of ideas for classroom integration and activities aligns with the Pennsylvania Pre-Kindergarten Learning Standards for Early Childhood and provides you with easy ways to incorporate Message from Me into your own particular curriculum and early childhood setting. “Classroom Management” ideas are provided to help you the educator use MFM as another tool for learning that will enhance the total family’s early childhood experience. The “Activities” section provides ways to invite children to share their daily experiences with family while they develop skills in all developmental domains. Ideas are provided for individual and group messaging, as well as “Educator Prompts” that guide implementation and “Family Prompts” that enhance communication between the child and the recipient. Message from Me activities are meant to be used in whatever way best suits you, your children, your families, and your program. This book is meant to be a starting point for your MFM experience... the possibilities are endless.

## **Table of Contents**

|   |        |
|---|--------|
| Part 1. Classroom Integration of MFM<br>Technology Time Management<br>Photo Guidelines                                | Page 3 |
| Part 2. Classroom Approaches for MFM Use<br>Group Messages<br>Learning Centers<br>Classroom Jobs                      | Page 4 |
| Part 3. Before you Begin: Setting the Stage for Effective MFM Use<br>Classroom Instruction<br>Enhancing Communication | Page 5 |
| Part 4. Activity Ideas for Using MFM to Meet the PA Pre-Kindergarten Learning Standards                               | Page 8 |

## **Part 1. Classroom Integration of MFM**

### **Technology Time Management**

How often should we use MFM?

- Weekly usage by each child is appropriate. More frequent usage is acceptable as well. However, check the website to make sure all children are using MFM equitably.

### **Photo Guidelines**

Set Ground Rules for Photographs:

- As you guide children using the Message from Me system, here are some basic ground rules regarding photographs. You may need to add more ground rules to fit your context.
  - Pictures should not be taken of children whose parents have not given permission for them to be photographed.
  - Pictures should be of appropriate content, e.g., no bathroom or changing photos.
  - Children may be uncomfortable having their photo taken by another child. Guide children in proper photo taking etiquette, for example asking permission before taking someone's photo.

## **Part 2. Classroom Approaches for MFM Use**

### **Group Messaging**

- Family Prompts - Group Messaging can be used to send a message to all recipients describing the MFM activity of the day (or week) to explain the family prompt and encourage use of the message at home.
  - For example, the educator could say, “This week everyone will be sending a message about their favorite book. You might want to find this book at the library to read at home.”
- Group Messaging can also be used to share other special events with the family members of the whole class, for example: field trips, class visitors, and special class events.
  - Send a reminder before the event. Take a photo of the stage of your class play, a poster with date and time details, special items students need to remember to bring, or a conversation starter to encourage children and families to discuss the event before it begins.
  - Share highlights during the event.

### **Learning Center**

- MFM can be used as a child centered choice in which MFM is open to all, at any time.
- Turn Taking chart - A chart listing all of the children can be hung in the classroom. Place velcro next to each child’s name. Make a small picture to represent the MFM. The picture is hung beside the child who has the MFM turn. After a defined amount of time or messages sent, the picture moves down to the next child on the list.

### **Classroom Job**

#### Standard 5.2 Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship

- Options for use the MFM as a class job.
  - One child has the MFM job and has the turn to take the pictures for that day, week, etc.
  - One child is responsible for making sure all of the children in the class have a turn (best for older children).
  - If a group message is sent, the child with the MFM job can send the message for the group with adult guidance.

### **Part 3. Before You Begin: Setting the Stage for Effective MFM Use**

These activities are to help prepare you and your children to use MFM and should be implemented in the recommended sequence before the children begin using the technology routinely. They can be revisited as needed with your group. Reviewing these concepts periodically will help the children move to a new level of mastery. Activities are aligned with the Pennsylvania Pre-Kindergarten Early Learning Standards.

**NOTE: Any activity using Message from Me will meet the following standards:**



1.5 Speaking and Listening



9.1V Production and Performance: Visual Arts



15.4 Computer and Information Technology



16.1 Self-Awareness and Self-Management



PL.3 Families have the support and information they need to encourage their child's learning and development

### **Classroom Instruction**

#### **Communicating Your Experience with a Photograph**

Standard 1.1 Learning to Foundational Skills

The idea of MFM is for the child to take a photograph of a meaningful experience to share with family. Here are some questions to scaffold the experience of selecting a meaningful topic.

- What would you like to share?
- What did you do that was new today?
- What do you want your family to see / know about your day?
- Remind the child that the family is not here now. They cannot see what you have done today. What would your family not know that you could share?

#### **Framing a Photograph**

Standard 15.4 Computer and Information Technology

Using a cardboard picture frame, allow children to “practice” framing their potential subject.

#### **Using a Camera**

Standard 15.4 Computer and Information Technology

Once children have become comfortable taking pretend pictures with the cardboard frames, allow them to take photographs with a digital camera. You can either print the pictures or allow children to view them on the computer. Talk with the child about the photograph.

## **Telling a Story about My Picture**

Standards 1.1 Foundational Skills & 1.5 Speaking and Listening

Work with the children on telling meaningful stories with photos. Use the book, "Off We Go" by Beverly Abramson to practice storytelling or take some photographs of the class and ask them to tell a story about the picture. Guide them as they tell stories about the pictures they take with MFM. Let them plan and practice their story before recording. Continue practicing storytelling using photographs, wordless story books or just allowing the children to tell an experience to the group.

## **Key Vocabulary to Integrate into the Instruction**

Standard 1.1 Foundational Skills

### General Vocabulary

- Aim (the camera) – to point the camera where you want to take the photo
- Articulate – to speak clearly and slowly
- Audio - sound
- Camera – a machine that takes pictures
- Choose – to think and then select
- Communicate – to share your ideas with someone
- Focus – to see clearly
- Level – to hold the camera straight
- Introduce – to tell another person who you are
- Message – what you want to tell the recipient about your picture
- Microphone – a tool that transmits or record sounds
- Power Button – the on and off switch
- Recipient – the person who will get the message
- Record – to talk into the microphone so that you can hear your voice later
- Select – to choose
- Sender – the person making the message
- Still – not moving
- Volume – how loud a sound is

### iPad

- App - software
- iPad - tablet style computer
- Tap - touching the buttons on the iPad screen

## Enhancing Communication

### **General Educator Prompts to Deepen the Experience**

- **Report Back** – When a message is sent, have the child report back to the group the next day on the interaction with the family at home.
  - Guiding questions for the educator: Did you look at your message? Who showed it to you? What did you tell them about the photo? What did they ask you about the photo? Do you have an idea for a new message to send?

### **Family Education and Involvement**

- Teach family members how they use messages to enhance their child's communication skills. General family prompts that could be used or adapted for any activity are: Who? What? Where? When? Why?
- Note that ideas for more specific prompts are included with some activities below

## **Part 4. Activity Ideas for Using MFM to Meet the PA Pre-Kindergarten Learning Standards**

So, you have set up the rules, taught the children to take a meaningful picture, tell a good story.... Now what? This section contains various activity ideas for meeting the Pre-Kindergarten Pennsylvania Learning Standards for Early Childhood. The activities provided are examples of what you could do to meet a standard using MFM. You will have many other wonderful ideas of your own. We encourage you to be creative with your MFM use and to share your ideas with others!

**NOTE: Any activity using Message from Me will meet the following standards:**



1.5 Speaking and Listening



9.1V Production and Performance: Visual Arts



15.4 Computer and Information Technology



16.1 Self-Awareness and Self-Management



PL.3 Families have the support and information they need to encourage their child's learning and development

The following pages contain detailed activity ideas grouped by key learning area.

**KEY LEARNING AREA:  
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT:  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

## 1.1 FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS

### Practice appropriate book handling skills.

- ***Favorite Book*** - Each child can take a picture of the cover of a favorite story to send home.
  - **Family Prompt** - Encourage families to go to the library and find the book to read together.
  - **Group message idea** - Send home a picture of the books read to the class during the course of the day.
- ***Book Reactions*** - Each child can send a message about a book they/the class read today. Have the child tell why they liked or didn't like the book.
- ***Printed Materials*** - Children can be encouraged to send home pictures of printed materials around the classroom. For example, if you label your centers, children can send a picture reading the words as the message.
  - **Family Prompt** - Ask your child to read the words in the photograph to you.

### Develop beginning phonics and word skills.

- ***See a Sound*** – Have each child find an object in the classroom that begins with a certain letter sound.
- ***Letter Scavenger Hunt*** – Hide letters around the room. Each child is given a specific letter to find, photograph and send as a message.
- ***Practicing Verbs*** - Send pictures of students doing a verb with a matching message using the verb to describe the action. Throwing a ball (pretending), jumping off the step, etc.

### Demonstrate understanding or spoken words, syllables, and sounds (phonemes).

- ***Word of the Day*** - Introduce a “Word of the Day” during circle time. The children could send a picture message of the word with the object it represents. For example, the word could be “sink”. Each child could take the word to the sink and photograph the word and the sink together while reading the words as part of the message. It could also be an action word such as “jumping” and the child could take a picture of a friend holding the word while jumping.
  - **Family prompt** - Have the child read the word in the message to you and then find that object in your home to connect the word to the object or action.
- ***Morning Message*** - Encourage children to send home a photograph of the morning message and audio of them reading the message.
- ***New songs, rhymes or chants*** - When a new one is taught, you could send a group message of the class reciting it or each child could send their own message.

## 1.2 READING INFORMATIONAL TEXT

### With prompting and support, make connections between information in a text and personal experience.

- ***Favorite Book Extension*** - After children send messages about a favorite book, encourage them to send messages about a favorite character in the story or the plot of the story.

**With prompting and support, actively engage in group reading activities with purpose and understanding.**

- **Real vs Imaginary** - Children send home 2 messages - one that is fact (real) and one that is fiction (imaginary). Families have to decide which is which. For example, The fact message could be “I had a bagel for snack” while the fiction message could be “A pig visited us for snack today.”
- **Facts** - As new topics are explored, children can share facts about the topic with families. For example, if studying Transportation, children can share facts about kinds of vehicles.

#### 1.4 WRITING

**Dictate narratives to describe real or imagined experiences or events.**

- **Daily Journal** – If your children participate in a daily journal activity, allow them to photograph their work and dictate the story to their family.
- **Writing Center - Encourage children to create illustrations and then dictate a story about it as the message**
  - **Note - This can be used as portfolio documentation**
- **Finish the Story** – Have students write a story or journal. Leave the story unfinished. Let the student dictate the story to their parent and end by asking “How does the story end?”

#### 1.5 SPEAKING AND LISTENING



Any activity using Message from Me will meet this standard.

**Participate in collaborative conversations with peers and adults in small and larger groups.**

- **Report Back** – When a message is sent, have the child report back to the group the next day on the interaction with the family at home.
  - Guiding questions for the educator: Did you look at your message? Who showed it to you? What did you tell them about the photo? What did they ask you about the photo? Do you have an idea for a new message to send?

**KEY LEARNING AREA:  
MATHEMATICAL THINKING AND EXPRESSION:  
EXPLORING, PROCESSING AND PROBLEM SOLVING**

## 2.1 NUMBERS AND OPERATIONS

### Count to tell the number of objects

- **Counting songs** - As a group message, sing a counting song to send to families to teach them the song.
  - **Family Prompt** - Practice the song at home.
- **Counting Activity** - When counting concrete objects, children can send a message showing how many objects they can count especially if it is a new milestone in counting for that child.

### Compare Numbers

- **Number of the Day** - Send a group message explaining that tomorrow's number of the day is 5. Ask each family to send in 5 of the same items (pennies, Kix, etc.). A group message could be sent to then show what everyone brought.

## 2.2 ALGEBRAIC CONCEPTS

### Use mathematical processes when representing relationships.

- **What Doesn't Belong?** – Children sort objects by: use, category, shape, etc. Once sorted, add another object that doesn't belong in the set. Take a picture of the set. In message, child asks parent, "What doesn't belong?"
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Ask child "How did you sort the objects? Why doesn't the \_\_\_\_\_ belong? You find something at home to add to the set?"
- **Clapping Patterns:** Have children clap a pattern and send it as a message.
  - **Family Prompt:** Listen to the pattern together. Have the child clap their pattern and ask you what should come next. Clap the pattern for your child and let them tell you if it is correct.

## 2.3 GEOMETRY

### Identify and describe shapes

- **Shape Search** (or color, number, etc.) - Ask the children to find a certain color, shape, or number of objects and send that as a message to a family member.
  - **Family Prompt:** Have the family find 3 of the same shape at home to report back to school.

## 2.4 MEASUREMENT, DATA AND PROBABILITY

### Use mathematical processes when measuring; representing, organizing, and understanding data.

- **Units of Measure** – Measure items in the classroom. Find something that is 1 foot or 1 inch. Send a message home showing the item being measured.
  - **Family Prompt** - Find an item at home that is the same size.
- **Measuring Steps** - Use footsteps to measure various distances to places within the classroom. Each child selects a distance to measure at home (i.e. bed to bedroom door). The child then sends a message of his / her feet showing how to step with the toe touching the heel with the message "I think it will take \_\_\_ steps to go from \_\_\_ to \_\_\_."

- **Family prompt** - Complete the activity and help the child write down their findings to bring to school.
- **Height in Water Bottles** – Ask “How many water bottles tall are you today?” Have the students write down their guess. Photograph them being measured by the water bottles. “I thought I was \_\_\_\_ bottles tall, but I am \_\_\_\_ bottles tall.”
- **Long Jump** - Use a tape measure or yardstick to measure how far each student can jump. Send a message showing the child’s feet next to the tape measure and say how far the student can jump. Repeat the activity later in the year and compare jumping distance by reviewing the original message on the Message from Me website.
  - **Family prompt** - Ask parents or siblings to try the long jump at home. Let the child count the number of feet jumped.



- **Graphing** - Share class graphing activities with family members by taking a picture of the children making the graph or of the completed graph. The child can explain the graph in the message.
- **Family Prompt:** Ask your child to count the number of each graphed item and explain it to you.
- **Weight** - Using a balance while exploring the weights of classroom objects, child places two objects in front of balance. Child uses message to guess/predict which object will be heavier.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Family asks child which object was heavier. Talk about if guess was correct or not. Look for two items at home that you can guess which will be heavier and compare guesses.

**KEY LEARNING AREA:  
SCIENTIFIC THINKING AND TECHNOLOGY:  
EXPLORING, SCIENTIFIC INQUIRY AND DISCOVERY**

**3.1A BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES – Organisms and Cells**

**Recognize the difference between living and non-living things.**

- **Life Cycle Stories** - Send a series of messages documenting the life cycle of chicks, tadpoles, ladybugs, etc. Send a new picture each day showing the progress or at each new phase in the life cycle.

**Identify basic needs of plants (water and light) and animals (food, water and light).**

- **Class Pets** – Have children photograph class pets and send a message.
  - **Family Prompt:** What kind of pet is this? How do you take care of it? What does it eat? Where does it live in the classroom? Can you hold it?
- **Growing** - When planting seeds, have children document each phase of the process - planting, sprouting, growth, blooming, etc. This can be extended to developing tadpoles, hatching eggs, and transforming caterpillars.

**Unifying Themes**

- **Patterns** - Ask children to find a pattern in the classroom such as stripes or spots and send a message explaining the pattern.
  - **Family prompt** - Find a similar pattern at home.

**3.1B BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES: GENETICS**

**Heredity**

- **Physical characteristics** - Children can send messages describing their own traits. “I have blue eyes - what color are your eyes?”
  - **Family Prompt** - Discuss other similarities.

**3.1C BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE: EVOLUTION**

**Unifying Themes**

- **Changes at school** - When a change occurs in the school such as new materials or room arrangement, children can send a message explaining the change.
  - **Family Prompt** - Talk about the change at school. Extend the conversation by discussing any changes in the home.

**Science as Inquiry**

- **Class Experiments** - Have children record messages of scientific explorations and findings in the classroom.

**3.2A PHYSICAL SCIENCES: CHEMISTRY**

**Properties of Matter**

- **Collections** - After creating a collection of materials, children can send a message describing their collection.
  - **Family Prompt** - What did you collect? Why did you choose these objects?
- **Sorted or Classified Collections** - After sorting the collection, children can send a message describing their sorting rule.

- **Family Prompt** - Have the child explain the rule used for sorting. See if you can find any objects that would fit the criteria. Make collections and sort them at home.

### **Matter and Energy**

- **Class Experiments with different types of matter** - After discussing solids, liquids, and gas, have children record messages of the observations. For example, child can photograph a melting ice cube and describe the situation.
  - **Family Prompt** - Find examples of solid, liquid, and gas at home to discuss.

### **Science as Inquiry**

- **Changes in matter** - Send a group message at the beginning of an experiment and again at the end. For example, if shaking cream into butter, a group message can be sent when the cream is put in the jar, while the children are shaking the container, when the butter is made, and when the children are tasting the butter. (This activity can also be done with materials that melt such as ice or wax, mixing paint, dissolving sugar or salt, etc.)
  - **Family Prompt** - Ask the child to describe the butter making process depicted in the messages. Try the activity at home.

## **3.2B PHYSICAL SCIENCES: PHYSICS**

### **Force & Motion of Practices & Rigid Bodies**

- **Magnet exploration** - Send messages depicting objects that are attracted to magnets and objects that are not.
  - **Family Prompt** - Use a magnet at home to find 3 object that are attracted to a magnet and 3 items that are not. The child can report the findings to school the next day.

### **Nature of Waves**

- **Mystery Sounds** - Set up a center with items that make noise (for example, instruments). Have the child take a picture of the whole table and then choose one item to make a sound that they record in the message - “ Hi. This is \_\_\_\_\_. Can you guess what made this sound \_\_\_\_\_ ?” The family has to guess what item made the sound.
  - **Family Prompt** - Guess the sound. Play the game at home.

## **3.3A EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCES: EARTH STRUCTURE, PROCESSES AND CYCLES**

### **Weather and Climate**

- **Weather Report** – Take a picture of the weather every day in the same location. Later, review the pictures with the students on the website. Look at pictures for different lengths of time such as at the end of the week, over the course of a month, or pictures from each month of the year.

## **3.3B EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCES: ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF THE UNIVERSE**

### **Comparisons and Structure**

- **Shadow Puppets** – After a visit to the planetarium or a lesson about the sun as a star, set up a flashlight so that students can make shadow puppets against a white

wall. Cover the flash on the camera and take a picture of the shadow puppet. Have the student describe what the shadow puppet is.

- **Why I Have a Shadow** - Outside, have students locate their shadows on the ground and take a picture. Describe why they can see their shadow.

#### 4.1 ECOLOGY

- **Seasonal Clothing** - Have children sort into groups of who wore gloves vs. mittens, shorts vs. pants, etc. Send a group message showing the sorted groups and describing how many children are in each group.
  - **Family prompt** - Discuss why you would chose to wear those clothes based on weather conditions.

#### 4.2 WATERSHEDS AND WETLANDS

- **Puddles and Creeks** – Send a group message home for the parent to ask if they saw any puddles or creeks on the way home. Take a walk around the school to see if the class can find any bodies of water on the walk.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – the parent will ask if the child saw puddles on their way home or during any point in their day.

#### 4.5 HUMANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

- **Loose Parts Play** – Use recyclable objects in a creative manner to build new things out of materials that would otherwise be thrown away. Take pictures of the new creations to share with families. Talk about the importance of taking care of our earth and recycling/reusing items to reduce amount of garbage.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Encourage parents to send in items to add to our “loose parts play” collection. Host a loose parts party for children and parents.
- **Earth Day – Clean up a yard for Earth Day and recycle materials collected. Talk** about the importance of taking care of the environment, read books, and watch a video about it. Send group messages showing the yard before, during, and after the cleanup, or send a message showing the items collected and sorted for recycling.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Encourage parents to help children recycle at home and allow them to sort items to be recycled.
- **Planting** – Discuss the types of plants and vegetables the class would like to plant in the class garden. Send a group message to parents asking their predictions about what will be grown.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Children and family will have discussion about what will be planted in the garden. They may also possibly plant a small garden or plant.
- **Guess What’s Growing** – Children will take a picture weekly of the same plant and send home a group message saying, “What do you think we are growing?”
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Parents and children will discuss what is growing and create a picture of what they think it will look like.
- **Mud Day** – Celebrate National Mud Day on June 29<sup>th</sup> ([facebook.com/internationalmudday](https://www.facebook.com/internationalmudday), [www.worldforumfoundation.org](http://www.worldforumfoundation.org)). Send messages showing how you celebrated.

- **Family Follow-Up** – Talk about Mud Day. How did you celebrate? What did the mud feel like? How did you create mud?
- **Dinosaur Puppet Show** – Children can send pictures of dinosaur play to parents.
  - **Family Follow-Up** –Encourage parents to send in books and pictures of dinosaurs. Possibly a trip to the Museum of Natural History: talk specifically about which dinosaurs you learned about.
- **Recycling** - Children and teachers will discuss ways to protect the environment. The children can send a message about how recycling is done at the school. Have the children take pictures of the center’s Abitibi (paper retriever) and the box where we recycle our paper in the classroom.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – The parent and child could brainstorm how they could protect the environment at home, e.g. collecting litter in the neighborhood, recycling cans.



#### 15.4 COMPUTER AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- Any activity using Message from Me will meet this standard.

**Family Follow-Up** – Discuss the proper way to use technology and how the family uses it at home.

##### **Influence of Emerging Technologies**

- **Vehicles** – Take pictures of a nearby road or the view out the window. Let students create a game for their family. Can you find the blue bus?
- **Transportation** – Children could go outside and see how many different types of transportation they can find. Children can chart this.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Parents can take children for a walk and ask them to identify the difference types of transportation.
- **Construction Vehicles** – Take advantage of nearby road work or construction to photograph construction vehicles. Name them and describe what they do.

**KEY LEARNING AREA:  
SOCIAL STUDIES THINKING:  
CONNECTING TO COMMUNITIES**

**5.1 PRINCIPLES AND DOCUMENTS OF GOVERNMENT**

**Rule of Law**

- **Classroom Rules** – As we learn and continue to use classroom rules have each child demonstrate or speak about classroom expectations.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Talk about all the classroom rules, see if they are similar to rules at home, and talk about what rules parents follow at home.

**5.2 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENSHIP**

**Civic Rights and Responsibilities**

- **Class Jobs** - As each child begins a new class job, photograph the child completing the job and let the child send a message describing the responsibility.

**Conflict and Resolution**

- **Pickle Problem** - Complete a “pickle problem” where a problem that is addressed in the classroom is solved. Describe and discuss a problem or conflict and different solutions.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Have the parent ask what solution was used or decided on as the best option, encourage discussion of problem solving at home with adults and peers, and make at home pickle problems.

**6.2 MARKET AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS**

**Price Determination**

- **Shopping** – The teacher can set up the dramatic play center as a store with prices on items that can be bought, play money, and a cash register. The children can send pictures of their “play” (exchanging play money for goods) to their parents.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Parents can ask their children what they bought at the classroom store, how much it cost, and what kind of store it was. They can also talk about what they buy at what stores.
- **When I Grow Up** – Students can read books about different community workers. Then they can dress up like the community worker that they would like to be when they grow up and send a message to their family about it. They could say, “I want to be \_\_\_\_\_ when I grow up.”
  - **Family Follow-Up** – After parents receive the message, they can ask their children why they chose the community worker that they did and what the community worker’s job consists of. They could also take them to visit someone in their community that has that job.

**7.1 BASIC GEOGRAPHIC LITERACY**

**Location of Places and regions**

- **Favorite Building** - Ask each child to create a replication of a building they know in their town and send it as a message.
- **Doll House** – Children set up furniture in a doll house and a take picture of the room. The message can include details such as the names of furniture and name of room.

- **Family Follow-Up** – “Tell me what you put in your \_\_\_\_\_?, Does this \_\_\_\_\_ look like our \_\_\_\_\_?, What furniture is the same/different?”

## 8.1 HISTORICAL ANALYSIS AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

### Continuity and Change Over Time

- **Describing Time, Making a Plan** - Children can send a message indicating an activity they want to do in the future. For example, “Tonight I will / want to \_\_\_\_\_.” “Tomorrow, I will / want to \_\_\_\_\_.” “This weekend, can we \_\_\_\_\_?”
  - **Family Prompt** - Discuss the child’s plan. If the message says, “Tomorrow, I want to wear my blue striped shirt”, help the child to find the shirt and wear it.

**KEY LEARNING AREA  
CREATIVE THINKING & EXPRESSION:  
COMMUNICATING THROUGH THE ARTS**

**9.1.M PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE: MUSIC AND MOVEMENT**

**Elements and Principles**

- **Ballet Positions** – Learn about the different positions in ballet. Students demonstrate the position and name the position or describe what they learned about ballet.

**Representation**

- **Favorite songs** - Encourage children to sing a favorite song and send it as a message.
  - **Family Prompt:** Listen to the message and have the child sing the song with you.

**Technologies**

- **Musical Instruments** - Encourage children to take a picture of a favorite classroom instrument and play it as a message.
  - **Family Prompt:** What is the name of the instrument? Listen to music and see if you can hear that instrument in the song.

**9.1.D PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE: Dramatic and Performance Play**

**Representation**

- **Community Helpers** – Let students dress up as different community helpers such as the letter carrier. Send a message where the student describes what they learned about that type of community helper.
- **Nursery Rhymes** – Act out nursery rhymes as a class. Use props and dress up clothes to help tell the story. Take a picture of the performance and send a message with the nursery rhyme narrative.
- **Building a Performance** – Create a puppet show or other class performance. Send a group message each day showing the progression of the project and describing what the students worked on today. Then remind parents to come see the performance at the end.

**9.1.V PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE: Visual Arts**

**Representation**

- Encourage children to take pictures of their artwork.

**Demonstration**

- Encourage children to take pictures of items not easily brought home (playdough creations, block structures, collaborative work).

**9.3 CRITICAL RESPONSES TO WORKS OF ART**

**Critical**

- **Art Critique** – Take a picture of someone else’s art. Have students express their reaction to the art. I like/dislike this. Ask children to describe something they like or dislike about it. I want to try this at home.

## 9.4 AESTHETIC RESPONSE TO WORKS IN THE ARTS

### Emotional Response

- ***Drawing to Music*** – Play a piece of music. Have students draw along to the music. Photograph their drawing and play the music in the background as the child describes their picture, how the music makes them feel, or what the music makes them think of.

**KEY LEARNING AREA:  
HEALTH, WELLNESS AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT:  
LEARNING ABOUT MY BODY**

**10.1 CONCEPTS OF HEALTH**

**Nutrition**

- **Documenting Healthy Routines** - Early in the year, have children take pictures of healthy routines such as washing hands and send a message describing the procedure to family members.
  - **Family Prompt** - Have the child teach the family the healthy routine.
- **Mealtime** - At mealtime, allow children to send pictures of what they are having for lunch or snack. The MFM helper could send this as a group message daily or to highlight particularly nutritious or new snack items.

**Interaction of Body Systems**

- **Head Shoulders Knees and Toes** - Sing “Head Shoulders Knees and Toes”. Have different children demonstrate different parts of the song. Send a group message of the class singing together.
- **Fire Drill** - Document a fire drill by taking a picture of everyone meeting outside at the designated meeting location. Send a group message to let parents know there was a fire drill today. Let parents know where the class meeting location is and ask, “If there was a fire at home, where would your family meet?”
  - **Family Prompt** - Encourage parents to practice a fire drill at home and designate a meeting location for the family.

**10.4 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: GROSS MOTOR COORDINATION**

**Balance and Strength**

- **Gym Class and Playground Experiences** - Children can send messages of new games learned in gym class or new activities or accomplishments on the playground. If a child masters riding a trike, the teacher could take the picture and allow the child to record the message declaring their achievement.

**10.5 CONCEPTS, PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES OF MOVEMENT: FINE MOTOR DEVELOPMENT**

**Strength, Coordination and Muscle Control**

- **Active Outdoors** - Take pictures of students participating in outdoor activities such as monkey bars, etc. Practice using the correct verb vocabulary to describe the activity, and have the students describe their physical accomplishments. I hung on the monkey bars for 10 seconds. I climbed 6 rungs on the ladder. I completed the obstacle course in 1 minute. I caught the ball 4 times in a row.

**Use of Tools**

- **Grip** - The teacher could send a picture demonstrating the child’s achievement of a correct grip when writing or drawing. If the child is struggling with the grip, the teacher could also send a message showing how to help the child.

**KEY LEARNING AREA**  
**APPROACHES TO LEARNING THROUGH PLAY:**  
**CONSTRUCTING, ORGANIZING, AND APPLYING KNOWLEDGE**

**AL.1 CONSTRUCTING AND GATHERING KNOWLEDGE**

***Curiosity and Initiative***

- **Question of the Day** - Have a specific question of the day for children to report to families. For example, have each child take a photo of a caregiver and ask his / her favorite color to report to families.
- **Mystery Box** - Bring in a box. Children can hide an object in the box and send a message giving their family clues (3) about the object.
  - **Family Prompt:** The family member then has to guess what is in the box.

***Risk Taking***



- Any activity using Message from Me will meet this standard. Children willing to try Message from Me are displaying an increased willingness to participate in familiar and new experiences.
- **New Center** - When a new center is introduced in the class, children can send a message to families describing the center.

***Stages of Play***

- **Board Games** - Children can send pictures of board games used in the classroom with a message of who played the game together.
  - **Family prompt:** The family member can ask how do you play the game.
- **Block Center** - Ask the children to send messages explaining their block buildings.
- **Dramatic Play** - Children can send messages of their dramatic play experiences.
  - **Family prompt:** Who played with you? What are you pretending?
- **Playdough** - Children can send messages explaining their playdough creations.

**AL.2 ORGANIZING AND UNDERSTANDING INFORMATION**

***Engagement and Attention***

- **Puzzles** – When a child completes a puzzle, encourage them to photograph it and send a message.

***Task Analysis***

- **Daily Routine** - Have children take a picture of your posted daily schedule and send it as a message.
  - **Family Prompt:** Encourage families to ask children about the day. For example: What do you do first in the day? What do you do next, etc. What is your favorite part of the schedule? What do you like the least? Why?
- **Story Sequence:** Give the children a set of story cards to sequence. Have the children put the cards in the proper order then take a picture and tell the story based on the cards. The children could also omit the last card and have the family guess what happens next.

**KEY LEARNING AREA:  
PARTNERSHIPS FOR LEARNING:  
FAMILIES, EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND COMMUNITIES**

**PL.2 Families experience relationships with early care and education programs/professionals that are affirming, reciprocal and build upon their strengths.**

- **Parent Night** – Set up a parent night to show parents the class and to share artwork. Prior to this meeting, have each child send a photo of a favorite area to parents saying “I like to play in blocks. I want to show you blocks.”
  - **Family Follow-Up** – At Open House/Parent Night have parents visit the area their child sent them a photo of.
- **Culture** - Have children send a message to parents about children’s favorite family traditions or food. The children’s favorite cultural meals can be graphed in the classroom.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Parents can send in the recipe for their child’s favorite cultural meal to create a classroom cookbook.
- **Thinking of You** – Send a happy birthday message home to a family member. Send a message to cheer up a teacher or family member who is sick.
- **Schedule** – During the typical daily schedule, have pictures taken and sent to parent’s that show the schedule the children follow.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Have the children ask parents if they saw a certain portion of the day.
- **Family Traditions** – When planning a lesson on different family traditions, have students send a message to parents asking them if they would like to volunteer to speak to the class about family traditions.
  - **Family Follow-Up** – Have parents talk with children about different family customs and traditions.

**PL.3 Families have the support and information they need to encourage their child’s learning and development** 

- Any activity using Message from Me will meet this standard. Messages can be downloaded and transcribed as evidence for portfolios.

**KEY LEARNING AREA  
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:  
STUDENT INTERPERSONAL SKILLS**

**16.1 SELF-AWARENESS AND SELF-MANAGEMENT**

**Influences of Personal Traits on Life**

- **Personal Preferences** – Have each child take a picture of something they like or do not like to demonstrate awareness of the child's preferences.
- **Personal Introductions** – MFM can be used to teach children to introduce themselves to others. When using the MFM, encourage children to say, “Hi \_\_\_\_\_. This is \_\_\_\_\_. I took a picture of \_\_\_\_\_. Good-bye.”

**Manages Emotions and Behaviors**

- **Class rules** - While learning about class rules, children can send a message about the “rule of the day”. For example, if the rule is “be a kind friend”, children can send messages of ways they see others being kind.
- **Expressing Feelings** – MFM can be used as a way for children to communicate their feelings to their family throughout the day. For example, encourage children who are experiencing separation issues to send a message to let family know how they are feeling. For a child who has lost a tooth, they can report their emotions via a message. Have the child answer the question “I feel...” as a prompt for their message.

**Resiliency**

- **Sharing Accomplishments** - When children approach educators to share an accomplishment, the children can record the accomplishment and send it to parents. The teacher can also be part of the message to the parents.

**16.2 ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS**

**Diversity**

- **Getting to Know You** - Use MFM as a way for children to learn information about peers / adults and introduce them to their family. Children can ask a question of a peer and send it as a message. “This is a picture of Bob and he likes to eat Cheerios.”