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# Family and Consumer Sciences National Standards Supported by Parenting: It's a Life Curriculum

## Introduction

Parenting: It's a Life (PIAL) is an outreach program that provides a life skills curriculum to teachers for their 7th-12 grade students. To date, PIAL has been utilized most often by Family and Consumer Science (FCS) teachers in the high school classroom. From previous research, students have reported increased understanding following participation in PIAL's curriculum covering a variety of topics, such as healthy relationships, peer pressure, co-parenting and financial awareness.

PIAL aims to increase outreach and inclusion of the PIAL curriculum in classrooms throughout Iowa by providing an in-depth report on the number of FCS standards that align with PIAL. A plan of action was developed to identify how the PIAL curriculum aligns with many of the FCS teaching standards, benchmarks, and competencies. The FCS teaching standards are statements that describe the framework for teacher instruction in middle school and high school classrooms across the U.S.

## Research Question

*How does the PIAL curriculum align with the Family and Consumer Science standards that are taught in FCS classrooms across Iowa?*

## Methods

To determine the alignment, a single investigator compared the 10 PIAL module objectives and activities to the 16 FCS teaching standards, benchmarks, and competencies by answering the following questions:

- ❖ Do PIAL module *objectives* fulfill specific FCS teaching standards?
- ❖ Do PIAL module *activities* fulfill specific FCS teaching standards?

If the investigator thought the student would actively apply the standard, benchmark, or competency in a module activity, it was recorded in a table. Then a spreadsheet was created to illustrate when the PIAL module aligned with one or more of the FCS teaching standards. This document was sent to local FCS teachers for review and a final booklet was created.

## Findings

All 10 PIAL modules aligned with 3 or more of the 16 FCS teaching standards (mean = 5). The FCS teaching standards that aligned with the PIAL curriculum included: multiple life roles and responsibilities in a variety of settings, respectful relationships, factors that influence human growth and development, management of human and economic resources, skills required for future careers, evaluation of the importance of families, and parenting responsibilities (see Figure 1). An example of how a PIAL module aligns with specific FCS teaching standards and benchmarks is shown in Figure 2.

PIAL Modules	National FCS Standards Supported By PIAL Curriculum															
	FCS Standard 1	Standard 2	Standard 3	Standard 4	Standard 5	Standard 6	Standard 7	Standard 8	Standard 9	Standard 10	Standard 11	Standard 12	Standard 13	Standard 14	Standard 15	Standard 16
Module 1: Decisions and Goals	✓	✓									✓	✓		✓		
Module 2: Peer Pressure	✓	✓									✓	✓				
Module 3: Healthy Relationships	✓				✓						✓	✓				
Module 4: Risk and Protective Factors	✓				✓	✓					✓	✓		✓		
Module 5: Resiliency	✓				✓	✓					✓	✓		✓		
Module 6: Cost of Raising a Child	✓	✓	✓			✓								✓		
Module 7: Managing Money	✓	✓	✓			✓								✓		
Module 8: Establishing Paternity	✓				✓	✓								✓		
Module 9: Co-Parenting	✓				✓						✓	✓		✓		
Module 10: Child Support	✓	✓			✓	✓					✓	✓		✓		

Figure 1. National FCS Standards Supported By PIAL Curriculum. The standards that did not align were ones related to career readiness, hospitality, food production, service, nutrition, housing, and interior design.

PIAL's Module Nine: Co-Parenting correlates to the following FCS National Standards		
Standards	Description	Benchmarks
STANDARD 1	Integrate multiple life roles and responsibilities in family, work, and community settings.	1.1
STANDARD 6	Evaluate the significance of family and its effects on the well-being of individuals and society.	6.1 6.2
STANDARD 12	Analyze factors that influence human growth and development.	12.1 12.2
STANDARD 13	Demonstrate respectful and caring relationships in the family, workplace, and community.	13.1 13.3 13.6
STANDARD 15	Evaluate the impact of parenting roles and responsibilities on strengthening the well-being of individuals and families.	15.1 15.2 15.3

Figure 2. An example of a PIAL module activity (pictured left) that aligns with FCS teaching standards (pictured right).

## Conclusion and Future Direction

This study found that 8 of the 16 FCS teaching standards align with the PIAL curriculum. These findings were used to develop a booklet to distribute across Iowa to FCS middle school and high school teachers. The purpose of this booklet is to inform teachers about the resources provided by the PIAL curriculum. PIAL plans to bring this resource to the attention of future FCS teachers through collaboration with university faculty. In addition, this study will be replicated to incorporate cross-checking with PIAL collaborators to strengthen reliability and validity.