

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT READINESS CRITERIA CHART

1. Indoor space, equipment, and furnishings are generally in good repair with no serious safety hazards:			
	FM	PM	NM
storage shelves are stable			
no rough or sharp edges, protruding nails or screws, tripping hazards			
outlets are covered			
all items marked "Keep out of Reach of Children" stored in locked or childproof cabinets			
water temperature in all rooms is between 60-120 degrees			
Preparation Activities 1. Develop a checklist or use the one provided (LE2) to identify and monitor health and safety issues both indoors and outside. Share with all teachers. Designate and train specific teachers to use it on a regular basis. Create a plan and procedures to correct identified issues.			

2. Outdoor play area is safe and clean:			
	FM	PM	NM
equipment is appropriate for the ages of the children using it			
children are safely contained in the play area, - gate locks, play area completely fenced			
nine inches of cushioning under equipment			
no entrapment hazards (3 1/2 to 9 inch gaps in fences, gates, etc.)			
play area is free of trash & animal waste			
Preparation Activities 1. Check recommendations for size of playground equipment and fall zones in the US Consumer Safety Commission Playground Safety Guidelines: www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/325.pdf and http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/supplements/playground.pdf 2. Use health & safety checklist to monitor weekly.			

3. Sanitary practices are adequate:			
	FM	PM	NM
surfaces are kept sanitized; toys, tables, and floors are clean			
sinks used to wash hands both before meals and after toileting are cleaned with bleach before meal hand washing routines			
teachers and children consistently wash hands with soap for at least 20 seconds before meals and after toileting			
Preparation Activities 1. Use health & safety checklist to monitor weekly. 2. If sanitation and hand washing practices are not consistent, review guidelines with teachers, post reminders near sinks, and use stories, songs and other techniques to teach children good habits.			

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4. A variety of activities are available to children:			
	FM	PM	NM
there are at least 3 distinct interest/activity areas in each classroom			
there are enough materials in each interest area for at least 3 children to use each area at the same time			
children have access to a quiet area and soft toys			
Preparation Activities 1. Plot out areas for activities such as blocks, reading, art, dramatic play, and fine motor activities. Separate active play areas from quiet play areas. Stable shelf units, rugs, and dramatic play furniture can be used to separate activity areas. See enclosed Sample Room Arrangement. (LE3) 2. If adding materials, give priority to "open-ended" materials, i.e. those that children can use in a variety of ways.			

5. At least 2 books in good condition are available for each child.
Preparation Activities If the program serves infants and toddlers, board books and cloth books should be available to them, as well.

6. Some diversity in culture, age, ability is represented in classroom materials.
Preparation Activities In particular, check books, wall displays, and dramatic play materials.

7. Children can choose some activities during the day according to their individual interest and can get out materials to use without help.
Preparation Activities 1. Review the daily schedule to identify opportunities for choice time for children (should be 1/3 of their day). Rearrange storage of materials if needed. See enclosed Sample Daily Schedule. (LE4) 2. Work with teachers on how to facilitate and supervise activities during choice time.

8. Classroom teachers have conversations with children during the day in addition to using language to give directions:			
	FM	PM	NM
Teachers talk with children during routines such as meals, diapering/toileting, and preparation of activities, as well as, during group and individual activities.			
Teachers ask children "What" and "How" questions.			
Teachers ask for children's opinions and ideas.			
Teachers respond to children's questions and comments.			
Teachers introduce new vocabulary in conversations about children's activities.			
Preparation Activities Observe interactions in all classrooms. Improving teachers practice in supporting children's language and reasoning development may require time and additional training. See suggested resources. (LE6)			

9. Teachers read to children every day, both in groups and individually.



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10. Teachers' interactions with children are warm and positive:			
	FM	PM	NM
Teachers do not speak harshly to children			
Teachers give children positive feedback about their efforts			
Teachers do not use punitive discipline			
Children are not handled roughly (e.g. pulled up by their arms, forced to sit or lie down)			
Teachers smile, laugh, and play with children			
When children are upset, teachers try to comfort them; crying is always investigated			
Preparation Activities Observe interactions in all classrooms. Improving teacher practice in the use of positive disciplinary and guidance techniques may require time and additional training. See suggested resources. (LE6)			

11. Infants are held while feeding and not left in cribs or confined for long periods.

12. When infants are sleeping, they are always placed on their back.

13. Children in diapers are checked periodically and changed when needed.

Preparation Activities
 If needed, assist teachers in re-arranging their classroom schedules to accommodate this individual attention.

14. Children are adequately supervised at all times.

Preparation Activities
 1. Check that all areas used for children's activities allow for visual supervision at all times. If bathroom facilities are separate from classrooms, how is adequate supervision insured?
 2. Observe teachers on the playground. Are they attentive to children? Do they engage with children when outside or simply monitor their activity for safety?

15. Some activities during the day are done in small groups and individually.

Preparation Activities
 Review the daily schedule for each classroom and make adjustments if needed to include more small group activities and to accommodate children's active and quiet cycles.

16. The daily schedule is posted and includes active and quiet periods and time indoors and outdoors.

17. Meals and snacks meet USDA nutrition guidelines.

Preparation Activities
 Review daily menus to insure that USDA Nutrition Guidelines are consistently met. See enclosed Infant & Child Meal Patterns. (LE5a&b)

Total # Criteria Fully Met: _____
80% = 14 Criteria