

Quality Inclusive Child Care Checklist

- Are families and children welcomed, and are children greeted in a loving, respected way? Are parents welcome at anytime during the day?
- Is the overall atmosphere bright, cheerful and child-focused, without being overwhelming?
- Do you notice caregivers/teachers really listening to children and families?
- Are caregiving and teaching practices responsive to differences in children's abilities, interests and experiences?
- Are the sounds of children predominantly happy? Does it appear that the adults and children enjoy being together?
- Is the physical environment safe, secure and free of barriers that limit or prevent access and mobility (e.g., ramps, outside play area, bathrooms)?
- Is there a fenced-in outdoor play area with a variety of safe equipment? Can the caregivers/teachers see the entire play yard at all times?
- Are learning materials and toys sufficient, safe, clean and within reach of all children? Are there enough for the number of children?
- Are there different areas for resting, quiet play and active play? Is there enough space for the children in all of these areas?
- Is there a daily balance of active and quiet activities (e.g., play time, story time, activity time and nap time)? Are the activities appropriate for each ability and age level?
- Are the majority of planned developmental activities individualized or in small groups?
- Do learning materials, books and pictures reflect diversity, including children with special needs?
- Do caregivers/teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of children?
- Do caregivers/teachers facilitate or enhance interactions between children with and without disabilities?
- Are children with disabilities included socially and engaged in meaningful activities throughout the day?
- Are children with disabilities given support and assistance when needed, and is it unobtrusive?
- Does the program accept children who are not yet walking or toilet-trained?
- Are therapeutic and/or support services such as OT, PT and Speech Therapy welcomed and provided on-site?
- Are parent's ideas welcomed? Are there ways for families to be involved in the program?
- Does communication between parents and staff seem open and ongoing? Are events and information shared with families regularly?
- Is the program licensed by the state? Is the program accredited or working towards national accreditation?

When observing and listening, pay particular attention to these five key indicators of quality inclusive child care:

A POSITIVE AND HAPPY LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- Are the children engaged?
- Are staff involved with children at eye-level?
- Are the rooms bright and cheerful without being overwhelming with too many sights and sounds?
- Do the adults speak positively about all children?

THE RIGHT NUMBER AND MIX OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS

- Are all children receiving individual attention?
- Do adults call children by name?
- Are children comforted, when needed, by staff or other children?
- Does staff overuse the “time-out” tactic?



TRAINED AND SUPPORTED PERSONNEL

- Are caregivers trained in early childhood education and special needs?
- Are teaching staff available to attend school district educational meetings with families who have children in their program who are receiving special education services?
- Do those who work with children themselves receive positive support?

A DEVELOPMENTAL FOCUS ON THE CHILD

- Do you see and hear a variety of developmental activities taking place?
- Do the children have opportunities to control objects and events in their environment?
- Are activities based on the children’s level of functioning?
- Are learning materials accessible to children with special needs?

PARENTS TREATED AS PARTNERS

- Does child care personnel help families develop goals for children and plans to achieve them?
- Does the program provide families with regular schedules of activities and events?
- Does the child care staff describe their communication practices as “open”?
- Do parents actively participate with the children?