

4 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The learning areas should be designed to support the interests of the children in the group. They should be organized into three zones: 1. wet/messy, 2. quiet and 3. active. Within those zones, define several different learning centers. In setting up the learning centers, consider various aspects of each location: floor surface, access to light, whether it needs an electric outlet, and whether it has enough space for the planned activity. Provide places for children to sit, either in child-size chairs or in some cases on the floor with mats or cushions. Think about how to store and display materials for each activity. Make an effort to give each area its own identity so that children learn what to expect and what to do in different areas. Create clear boundaries between areas and create pathways so children can move through the space without interfering with each other's play, while maintaining the home-like feel that is desirable in a family child care setting.

4.1

LEARNING AREAS ARE CLEARLY DEFINED

There are separate zones for active, quiet & messy play
 Each area is defined using furniture, rugs & room dividers
 Clear pathways help children move through the space but consideration is given to minimizing potential "run-zones" (long narrow pathways)

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.2

SPACE IS SET UP TO ALLOW FOR EASY SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

RATING: 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.3

THERE IS SUFFICIENT SPACE FOR NUMBER OF CHILDREN

Space does not feel cluttered or look crowded
 Children can move comfortably around the space
 There is enough space to allow for children's activities
 There is space for infants to crawl safely & pull up
 Older children can work & play without interference from younger children

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.4

MATERIALS WITHIN ACTIVITY AREAS ARE WELL-ORGANIZED

Displays are appealing, uncluttered & at child-height
 A range of materials are accessible to children
 Items are labeled with words & pictures

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.5




FURNISHINGS ARE STURDY, WELL-MADE & SAFE

Rounded corners or corner guards are installed
 Shelf & cubby units are attached to wall or floor
 If toy chests are used, there are no lids or lids are removable for the time children are there

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

KEY

0 Does not exist in the center, but should	1 Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	2 Fair: should be improved	3 Good: good quality or in good condition	4 Excellent: first-rate or top quality	N/A Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	PR! Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Center Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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4.6

FURNISHINGS IN THE SPACE ARE APPROPRIATE

Some furnishings are child-size
Soft elements such as rugs, cushions, & upholstered furniture are included

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.7

WELL-EQUIPPED ART AREA IS AVAILABLE

Floor is washable
Running water is nearby
Offers storage for art supplies
Provides place for art activities, such as table or easel
Sufficient art materials including paint, crayons, clay, brushes, sponges & natural items are available
Smocks or cover shirts are available

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.8

BLOCK AREA IS PROVIDED WITH APPROPRIATE RANGE OF ACTIVITIES

Is located in a protected area
Provides carpet for children to sit on
Has storage area & bins for materials
Offers enough age-appropriate blocks & building materials that are in good repair

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.9

ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT IS USED APPROPRIATELY IN THE ENVIRONMENT

Computer, if used, is available on child-height table & has child-appropriate programs
Television & video equipment is used minimally (30 minutes per day) and prohibited during meal times
Children's music, such as tapes and CDs, are available and played daily
Not used for children under two. (FCCERS)

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.10

WELL-EQUIPPED BOOK AREA IS AVAILABLE

Has a book display rack or case that is accessible to children
A variety of age-appropriate books are displayed
Has soft furnishings for children
Offers good lighting

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.11

WELL-EQUIPPED DRAMATIC PLAY AREA IS AVAILABLE

Offers child-sized dramatic play furniture such as a kitchen set
Provides props for play such as dolls, puppets, dress-up clothes, & seasonal items

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COMMENTS: _____

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4
Excellent: first-rate or top quality

N/A
Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home

PR!
Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items

 Health & Safety

 Center Quality

 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics

4.12

WELL-EQUIPPED "TABLE-TOY" PLAY AREA IS AVAILABLE

Provides bins with manipulatives & other table activities
Is stocked with puzzles & games
Has child-sized table & chairs

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.13

WELL-EQUIPPED SAND, WATER &/OR SENSORY PLAY AREA IS AVAILABLE

Sand/water/sensory table is available or alternative solutions such as dish pans are used
Has props for play such as plastic dishes & cups, small bottles, rubber animals & people, shovels, etc.
Is not required for children under the age of eighteen months

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.14

IF INFANTS ARE SERVED THERE IS CLEAN, SOFT FLOOR SPACE AVAILABLE FOR CRAWLING & PLAYING PROTECTED FROM OLDER CHILDREN'S PLAY

RATING: 3 4 N/A PR!

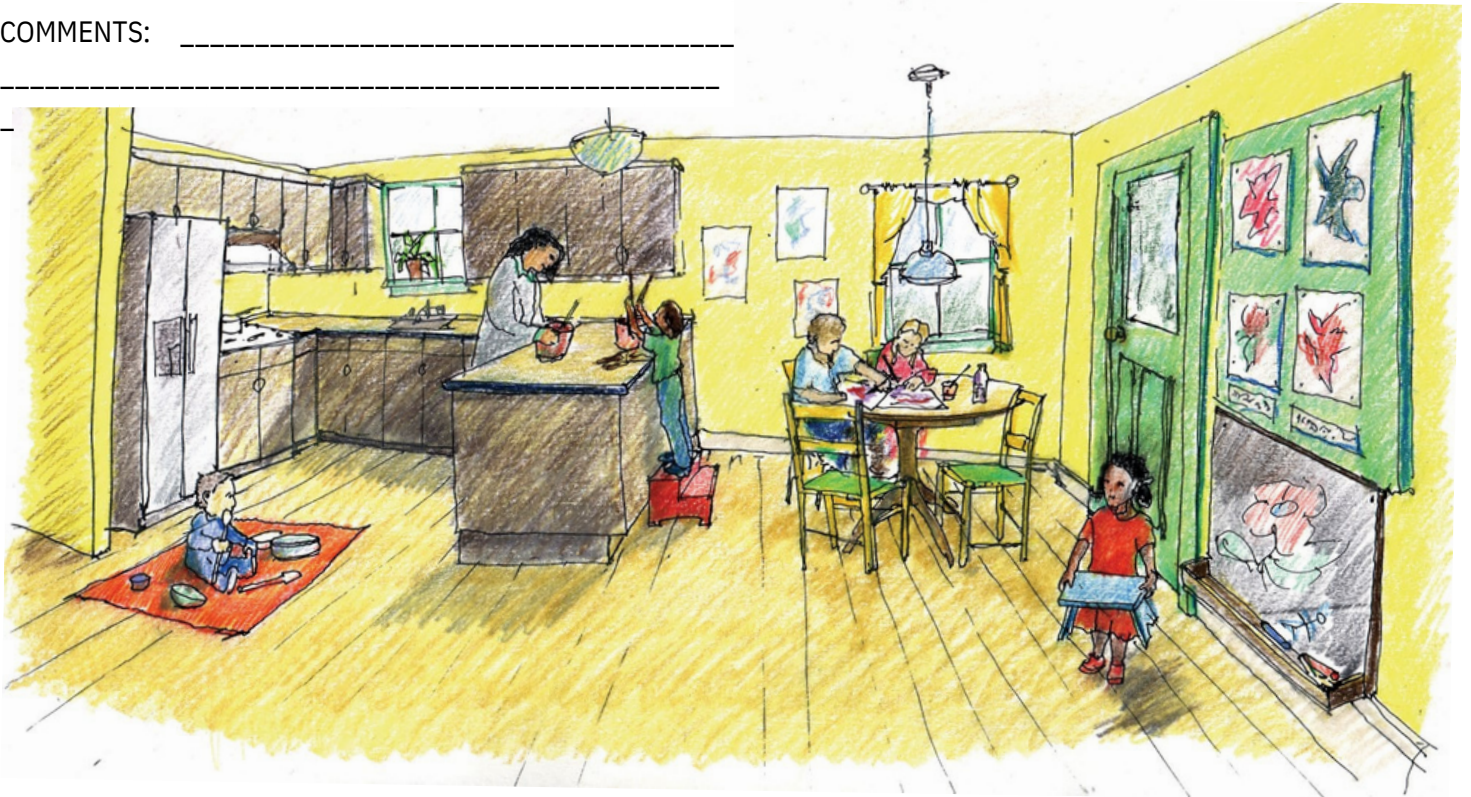
COMMENTS: _____

4.15

SOFT SURFACES & COZY AREAS AVAILABLE

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____



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Health & Safety


Center Quality


Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics

4.16

USE OF “CONTAINMENT EQUIPMENT” SUCH AS AUTOMATIC SWINGS, SAUCERS, ETC. IS LIMITED TO 15 MINUTES

Walkers are never used
It is never used for sleeping

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.17

COMFORTABLE ADULT SEATING FOR HOLDING &/OR ROCKING CHILDREN

RATING: 0 1 2 3 4 N/A PR!

COMMENTS: _____

4.18

MATERIALS, DECOR & DISPLAY REFLECT FAMILY AND COMMUNITY CULTURE & DIVERSITY

Photos of children & families are displayed where children can see them




Materials used (such as books, pictures, dolls, puzzles, etc.) represent a range of cultures & ethnicities

Materials used expose children to a range of diversity including gender, disabilities, & race

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COMMENTS: _____

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