FACILITY NAME:

ADDRESS:

REVIEWER NAME:

DATE:















RHODE ISLAND EARLY LEARNING

FACILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL





INTRODUCTION

This tool is designed to guide you through the process of assessing the physical space of your early learning facility. In developing the criteria the following regulations were considered:

- Rhode Island Department for Children, Youth and Families Group Child Care Program Regulations for Licensure
- Rhode Island Department of Education Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Programs Standards for Approval of Preschool and Kindergarten Programs
- BrightStars Framework
- Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS) and Infant Toddler **Environmental Rating Scale (ITERS)**
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as it pertains to child care and educational spaces
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Public Playground Safety Guidelines
- International Building Code
- Caring for Our Children
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Healthy Child Care Guidelines

You can download copies of these standards and regulations at www.riccelff.org. Additional consideration was given to established best practice as it relates to both safety and quality in physical spaces for young children.

The tool was developed for use as part of the early learning facilities needs assessment conducted by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) in the spring of 2014, and has been amended for use by programs to self-evaluate their spaces and to create corresponding action plans.

ICONS Items in the tool are coded with icons in the categories of impact and fix. The key for these icons appears below.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	•	•	•	٠	٠	•	ı

- SUITABILITY OF SITE..3
- **BUILDING EXTERIOR** & ENTRY..........7
- **COMMON AREAS...12**
- **CLASSROOM** CHARACTERISTICS...20
- PLAYGROUND 32
- **SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL . . . 41**
- **BUILDING SYSTEMS** & SUPPORTS. 46
- CONCLUSION 49

IMPACT













MAJOR RENOVATION











INTRODUCTION

CONTINUED

This tool is intended to help you identify and subsequently address deficiencies in your facility. The first step in creating a plan to improve the physical environment is to honestly assess current conditions. When you occupy a space over a long period of time it can be easy to overlook problems in the environment. It is human nature to adapt to our surroundings and to learn to make do. But the children in your care, and the staff spending every day in the environment, need you to honestly assess and work to improve issues that may be impacting the health and safety of building occupants and the overall quality of your programming. Therefore, as part of the overall self-assessment, you should consider involving others in the process of reviewing the space. Parents, teachers and other staff, board members, and community members can all be helpful and potentially more objective in this process.

All items in the tool are not equal in their degree of importance or priority. If, in the process of assessing your facility, you identify regulatory or health and safety issues, those should be addressed immediately. Quality items, while still very important, can likely be included as part of a longer-range facility improvement plan. Guidance for developing a facility improvement plan is provided at the end of this tool.



Our youngest children, those under the age of 5, are in a stage of rapid development with their daily experiences dramatically impacting their overall brain development. Because children's experiences are strongly influenced by their surroundings, the environment we provide for them has a crucial impact on the way their brains develop (Strong-Wilson & Ellis, 2007).

There is growing acknowledgment of the rich body of research related to the physical environment and its relationship to overall program quality. Although the major research studies in the early childhood field have neglected the physical environment as a critical contributor to the quality equation, there is a wealth of highly applicable research that exists in other areas. The fields of environmental psychology and architecture have produced numerous applied research studies demonstrating correlations between school design attributes and both student achievement and teacher retention. Much of this literature is available on the US Department of Education's National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities website, in academic journals from related fields such as environmental psychology, and in collections of articles such as Spaces for Children: The Built Environment and Child Development edited by Carol Simon Weinstein and Thomas G. David (1987).

For more information on the many ways that space supports safe, high-quality programming, visit www.riccelff.org.























SECTION SUITABILITY OF SITE

1A. SITE SUITABILITY	TRUE FRISE	IA IMPACT	ty \
1. The building is located in an area that is convenient for your target families.		R	V
2. It is easy to get to the site from major highways/roadways or using public transportation.		8	V
3. The building is located a safe distance from any potentially dangerous features (busy highways, major industrial areas, etc.).		ļ	V
4. Neighboring properties have complementary uses (complementary uses include schools, parks, libraries, and community centers while non-complementary uses include industrial areas, railroad tracks, totally residential or retail areas).		R	V
5. The neighbors are supportive of the center.		R	V

6. Note here any other comments or observations related to site suitability.

1B. BUILDING SUITABILITY	TRUE!	FALSENIA	INPACT	· / 6t
7. The building is large enough to meet all of your programmatic needs.			R	V
8. The playground space is large enough to accommodate programmatic needs.			R	V
9. The building has access to municipal water and sewer, or, if not, the site allows for sufficient well and/or septic systems.			!	V











SUITABILITY OF SITE SECTION

10. Costs of the facility (mortgage, rent, utilities, maintenance, etc.) are manageable for your program within budget constraints. *List facility costs here:*



11. Note here any other comments or observations related to building suitability.



















SECTION SUITABILITY OF SITE WRAP-UP

Before moving on to the next section of the assessment tool, take a minute to reflect on and summarize your findings. Go back through the section that you just completed, total your observations, and recort them below.					
TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED TRUE	TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED FALSE				
Items marked false should become part of a corrective action pl	lan for your facility. Begin prioritizing these items using the chart below.				
SUITABILITY OF SITE Action Items List here all areas marked false that require correct	tive action. Be sure to include the specific item numbers.				

SUITABILITY OF SITE Strengths

SUITABILITY OF SITE Weaknesses/Concerns







SUITABILITY OF SITE WRAP-UP

Now, by item number, categorize each item marked false in section 1. You may want to involve others, such as staff and board members, in the development of this plan.

Highest Priority	Quick Fix
Note: Any item that is regulatory in nature should be placed	Note: Items that require only maintenance to address should
in this category. Also included in this category should be any health and safety item that poses an immediate danger to children in the center.	be included in this category. Consider items that can be fixed by staff or volunteers, or fairly inexpensively by a professional.
Include in Short-Term Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan
Note: Items included in this category will generally be high priority – lower cost, for example, any health and safety issues that can be addressed with minor renovation.	Note: Quality items and items that require major renovations that must be completed as part of a more comprehensive facility improvement plan fall into this category.

NOTES: Based on your review of the SUITABILITY OF SITE section, note your general observations in the space provided below:















SECTION 2 BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY

2A. BUILDING EXTERIOR	/thilk/fh	SE NIA MPA	£7
12. Area is free of trash and debris.		ļ !	
13. Windows and trim are in good condition (no broken panes, trim not cracked/falling off, etc.). If trim is wood, verify it is not soft or rotting.		ļ	>
 14. Exterior of building, including stairs, sidewalk, etc., is in good condition. The following should be true: Siding is intact No cracks in building No peeling or chipping paint or crumbling masonry Asphalt and concrete in good repair with no cracks or gaps that cause tripping hazards Stairs in good condition with stable handrails If applicable, gutters are securely attached and in working order and are clear of debris 		ļ	<i>></i>
15. Area between parking and entry is free of obvious child hazards, including poisonous plantings, sharp objects, major tripping hazards, etc.		ļ.	
 16. Roof appears to be in good condition. The following should be true: • Documentation on file indicates that roof is still within useful life (e.g., if 25-year shingles are on roof, then roof is not more than 25 years in age) • No obvious loose or falling shingles • No obvious damage to roof or roof flashing • No interior areas where roof is leaking • No gaps or leaks around skylights if applicable • No areas where water is collecting 		ļ	
17. Trees, shrubs, and lawn appear well-maintained.		R	
18. Walls are free of graffiti.		ļ	20







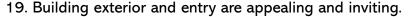








BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY



The entry to your center sets the tone for your program. From the moment families, current and potential staff, and other visitors approach your building they are forming opinions of what is happening inside based on what they see outside. Does the exterior of your center accurately depict the character and quality of your program?

The following should be true:

- Colors and materials on the exterior of building are inviting to children and families.
- Attractive signage welcomes families.
- There is a covered entry area that allows for transition space into the center that is out of the elements.
- Dumpsters and other unattractive items are out of sight.
- There are attractive plantings, seating, and other interesting elements leading up to the center.
- The scale of the entry is intimate and non-institutional.
- 20. Note here any other comments or observations related to building exterior.

2B. PARKING	∕ ₹	St FALSE	MA IMPA	(t) F14
21. Drop-off/pick-up parking is located near center entrance and is clearly defined.			! %	V
22. Sufficient parking is available for staff and families.			! 🔉	V
23. Drop-off/pick-up parking area is located where children don't have to cross in front of moving vehicles.			ļ	V















SECTION 2 BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY

24. Note here any other comments or observations related to parking.

2C. EXTERIOR LIGHTING	/ASE/	alsk IR	MRACI	/ pt
25. Building and playground have working security lighting.		4 4	<u> </u>	>
26. Entrance and parking area have adequate working lighting.			!	<i>></i> .
27. Note here any other comments or observations related to exterior lighting.				

2D. EXTERIOR/INTERIOR SIGNAGE AND SECURITY	/ KRI	E FAISE	la mraci	/ kit
28. Exterior signage clearly welcomes families and visitors and directs them to the entrance.			! 🕅	*
29. Interior signage clearly directs visitors to a reception area.			ļ	> \\
30. Staff have a clear view of anyone entering the center.			Α	V
31. Spaces occupied by children have controlled access (i.e., locked door, key pad, etc.).			Α	>

32. Note here any other comments or observations related to exterior/interior signage and security.

















2 BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY WRAP-UP

Before moving on to the next section of the assessment tool, take a minute to reflect on and summarize your findings. Go back through the section that you just completed, total your observations, and record hem below.						
TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED TRUE	TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED FALSE					
Items marked false should become part of a corrective action	plan for your facility. Begin prioritizing these items using the chart below.					
BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY Action Items List here all areas marked false that require corre	ctive action. Be sure to include the specific item numbers					

BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY Strengths

BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY Weaknesses/Concerns











BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY WRAP-UP

Now, by item number, categorize each item marked false in section 2. You may want to involve others, such as staff and board members, in the development of this plan.

Highest Priority	Quick Fix
Note: Any item that is regulatory in nature should be placed in this category. Also included in this category should be any health and safety item that poses an immediate danger to children in the center.	Note: Items that require only maintenance to address should be included in this category. Consider items that can be fixed by staff or volunteers, or fairly inexpensively by a professional.
Include in Short-Term Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan
Note: Items included in this category will generally be high priority – lower cost, for example, any health and safety issues that can be addressed with minor renovation.	Note: Quality items and items that require major renovations that must be completed as part of a more comprehensive facility improvement plan fall into this category.

NOTES: Based on your review of the BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY section, note your general observations in the space provided below:















SECTION (3) COMMON AREAS

3A. LIFE SAFETY	/<	RUE FAL	SE MIA MARACI	· / 6 [†]
33. All emergency exits and pathways are clearly identified.			ļ	*
34. Emergency lighting is available when normal lighting systems fail and is tested at least monthly.			! 🟛	> *
35. All emergency exits are convenient and unobstructed.			Α	V
36. Hallways meet OSHA standard of at least 28 inches wide. (Measure width of hallways, subtracting space occupied by furnishings or equipment stored there. Indicate open hallway space measurement here:)			!	
37. Necessary evacuation routes are clearly labeled and an evacuation plan is posted.			!	*
38. Note here any other comments or observations related to life safety.				

3B. ACCESSIBILITY	1811 1815 x	JA MPAC	, kit
39. All common doorways are at least 32 inches wide.		ADA	
40. All classroom doorways are at least 32 inches wide.		ADA	
41. Loose carpeting or mats are a maximum of ½ inch high.		ADA	*
42. Doors children use to access play areas are accessible (i.e., at grade, ramped, etc.).		ADA	V
43. Hallways meet ADA standard of at least 36 inches wide. (Measure width of hallways, subtracting space occupied by furnishings or equipment stored there. Indicate open hallway space measurement here:)		ADA	•













3 COMMON AREAS

44. Door handles are between 34 and 48 inches.

45. Door handles are operable with a closed fist.



46. Note here any other comments or observations related to accessibility.

Note: Accessibility of restrooms evaluated later in this tool.

3C. BUILDING CIRCULATION	/R)	K KALSK	Ale.	IMPACT	\ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \ \
47. All classroom spaces can be reached through a central corridor/hallway/ common space, avoiding the need to cut through other children's classrooms.			İ	R	V
48. Corridors/hallways/common spaces are uncluttered and easily navigated.			!		*

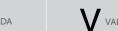
49. Note here any other comments or observations related to circulation.

3D. INDOOR GROSS MOTOR	TRUE LA	SE NA MRACI	, kt
50. Designated space for active indoor play is available.		8	V
51. Designated indoor gross motor area is suitable for climbing, jumping, crawling, and balance equipment.		R	>
52. Safety mats or protective flooring are available.		Α	>
53. Area is suitable for wheeled toys for different age groups.		8	V



















- 54. There is convenient storage for indoor gross motor equipment.
- 55. Note here any other comments or observations related to indoor space for gross motor skills development.

3E. CUSTODIAL/UTILITY SPACE	/R	SE FRISE	IA IMPAC	/ kt
56. Center has a utility room separate from the kitchen with hot and cold running water.			<u></u>	V
57. The utility room has a locking door.			ļ	*>
58. There is secure storage for cleaning supplies.			<u></u>	*>
59. The mechanical and electrical equipment are in a space that is separate from children's areas.			ļ	V
60. The mechanical and electrical equipment are in a space that is securely locked.			ļ.	*>

61. Note here any other comments or observations related to custodial/utility space.

3F. ADULT AND SUPPORT SPACES	/<	AUE FA	SE NI	A MARACT	树	
62. There is a designated space outside the classroom for teacher prep and planning.					V	
63. There is a designated space outside the classroom for staff breaks.				R	V	









SECTION S COMMON AREAS	/RUE/	ratificial market	
64. Office space is sufficient for effective administration of program, including space to meet privately with staff.			V
65. There is a designated and confidential space to meet with parents and outside professionals.		R	V
66. There is a conveniently located laundry area.		8	V
67. There is a kitchen that meets program needs.		R	V

Note: Adult spaces related to restroom facilities will be evaluated later in this tool.

68. Note here any other comments or observations related to adult spaces.

3G. STORAGE



Some things to keep in mind:

- · Closed storage (inaccessible to children) located within classrooms will be deducted from usable square footage when calculating classroom capacity; therefore, planning for bulk storage outside of the classroom is important.
- · Good storage areas allow for bulk purchasing, resulting in savings of valuable resources.
- · Storing things in hallways causes safety hazards during evacuation and reduces clear widths of hallways, potentially violating OSHA and ADA requirements.

69. There is locked storage for staff's personal possessions.	!	*>
70. There is secure (locked) and sufficient storage for files, paperwork, and children's records.	<u></u>	*>
71. There is secure and appropriate storage for first aid supplies.	<u></u>	*>
72. There is sufficient storage for bulk supplies, seasonal items, etc.	R	V





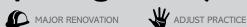














SECTION 3 COMMON AREAS

73. Note here any other comments or observations related to storage.

3H. ADULT RESTROOM FACILITIES	TRUE FALCE	E MIA IMPACT	/ pit
74. Center has separate toilet facilities for staff/adults within same building.		Α	
75. Center has at least one fully handicapped accessible adult bathroom.		ADA	•

76. Note here any other comments or observations related to adult restroom facilities.

31. BUILDING SAFETY AND CONDITION (COMMON AREAS)	TRUE FAISE	A IMPACT	/ pt
77. Ceiling is intact and free of water stains or excessive wear.		Α	>
78. Flooring is free of excessive wear (e.g., cracks, peeling, torn carpet, etc.).		Α	>
79. Walls and flooring are free of splinters and other similar hazards.		Α	>
80. Walls and trim are free of peeling paint.		Α	>
81. Stairways used by children have a second handrail placed at child height no higher than 24 inches from stair tread.		Α	>
82. There are no hazards posed by the presence of asbestos tile. Note: Asbestos tile when completely intact and in good repair is generally not considered a hazard.		<u></u>	! V





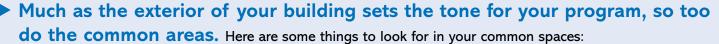








SECTION COMMON AREAS CONTINUED	/RIIE/	FASE A	A MERCY	/ kt
83. Stairways have non-slip treads.			R	>
84. Common areas (e.g., reception, hallways, meeting spaces, etc.) have an overall well-maintained and inviting appearance.			R	*



- · Reception area includes comfortable seating
- Reception area is welcoming and sets positive tone for center
- · Reception area provides enough space for small groups of families to congregate
- · Display boards offer opportunities to easily share information with families throughout center
- · Common space is uncluttered and easily navigated
- · Colors and materials used in common space are welcoming and inviting
- · There is creative use of common areas

85. Note here any other comments or observations related to overall building safety and condition.

















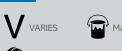


SECTION (3) COMMON AREAS WRAP-UP

•	ment tool, take a minute to reflect on and summarize i just completed, total your observations, and record
TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED TRUE	
nems marked laise should become part of a corrective action plai	n for your facility. Begin prioritizing these items using the chart below.
COMMON AREAS Action Items	
List here all areas marked false that require corrective	ve action. Be sure to include the specific item numbers.

COMMON AREAS Strengths

COMMON AREAS Weaknesses/Concerns











3 COMMON AREAS WRAP-UP

Now, by item number, categorize each item marked false in section 3. You may want to involve others, such as staff and board members, in the development of this plan.

Highest Priority	Quick Fix
Note: Any item that is regulatory in nature should be placed in this category. Also included in this category should be any health and safety item that poses an immediate danger to children in the center.	Note: Items that require only maintenance to address should be included in this category. Consider items that can be fixed by staff or volunteers, or fairly inexpensively by a professional.
Include in Short-Term Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan
Note: Items included in this category will generally be high priority – lower cost, for example, any health and safety issues that can be addressed with minor renovation.	Note: Quality items and items that require major renovations that must be completed as part of a more comprehensive facility improvement plan fall into this category.

NOTES: Based on your review of the COMMON AREAS section, note your general observations in the space provided below:















t this The Who	, 44
	V
<u></u>	V
	V
<u></u>	V
<u></u>	V
8	V
8	>
R	>
R	>
0	





















4B. CLASSROOM ACOUSTICS	/RUE/CA	SE MA IMPACT	ti ₃
96. For classrooms with high ceilings, acoustical tiles and other sound dampening features are used to minimize noise.		8	>.
97. Loud mechanical and hv/ac units are not located within the classroom space.		8	V
98. For open, adjacent classrooms efforts are made to minimize noise between rooms (such as using plexiglass above half walls, using acoustical tiles, etc.).		R	>
99. If building is located near loud roadways, industrial areas, airports, etc., then insulation in walls and windows is sufficient to reduce interior noise.		8	

4C. GENERAL CLASSROOM CONDITIONS	TRUE.	FALSE	A IMPACT	/ kit
101. Ceilings are intact and free of water stains.			Α	>
Classroom #1				
Classroom #2				
Classroom #3				
Classroom #4				
Classroom #5				
Classroom #6				

















	CONTINUED	TRIF	ENLST N	A INPAS		
102. Flooring is in good repair/free of excessive wear (e.g., no cracked or tiles, ripped carpeting, etc.).	peeling			Α	>	
Classroom #1						
Classroom #2						
Classroom #3						
Classroom #4						
Classroom #5						
Classroom #6						
103. Walls and floors are free of splinters and other apparent hazards.				Α	>	
Classroom #1						
Classroom #2						
Classroom #3						
Classroom #4						
Classroom #5						
Classroom #6						

















	CONTINUED	TRIF	ENIZE MI	r IMPAS	/ FIT	
104. Walls are free of peeling paint.				Α	> 4	
Classroom #1						
Classroom #2						
Classroom #3						
Classroom #4						
Classroom #5						
Classroom #6						
105. Heating units, air conditioners, and other fixed features are intact an good working condition.	nd in			Α	>	
Classroom #1						
Classroom #2						
Classroom #3						
Classroom #4						
Classroom #5						
Classroom #6						

















106. Note here any other comments or observations related to general classroom conditions.	
Classroom #1	
Classroom #2	
Classroom #3	
Classroom #4	
Classroom #5	
Classroom #6	









4D. SAFETY OF CLASSROOM SPACES	TRUE FALSE	IA IMPAC	,
107. Pillars and posts are wrapped with soft covering.		Α	> \\
108. Space is easily supervised.		Α	V
109. Heating units and pipes are securely covered.		Α	> \
110. Doors have view panels for safe entry or exit from rooms.		ļ	>
111. All exit doors are unobstructed.		ļ.	>
112. Operable windows have secure screens.		Α	>
113. Operable windows above the first floor have child-safe barriers.		Α	>
114. Medicines/hazardous materials are securely stored in locked cabinet.		Α	*
115. Adults' personal belongings are securely stored in locked cabinet.		Α	*
116. Evacuation plan with routes is posted at each classroom egress door.		ļ	*
117. Note here any other comments or observations related to safety of classro	oom spaces.		













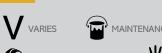


4E. CHILDREN'S BATHROOMS AND SINKS	(RIF	FALSE WA MPAC	(pt
118. Children's bathrooms are located within a reasonable distance of classroom (100 feet or less).		ļ !	
119. Children's bathrooms are located directly in classrooms.		R	
120. Children's bathrooms allow for easy supervision of children.		ļ ļ	V
121. There are sinks located in each classroom.		ļ ļ	<i>></i> .
122. In infant/toddler classrooms there are separate sinks for diapering and food preparation.		Α	<i>></i>
123. At least one bathroom for each age group meets the standards of accessibility per the ADA.		ADA	>.

124. Note here any other comments or	observations related to	o children's bathrooms and sinks.
--------------------------------------	-------------------------	-----------------------------------

4F. INFANT/TODDLER ROOM FEATURES	/*	RUE FR	SEN	A IMPACT	/ ky
125. Location of changing area allows teacher to continue to supervise classroom.				!	V
Classroom #1					
Classroom #2					
Classroom #3					
Classroom #4					











CONTINUE	AUF FALS	MA	MPRC.	村
126. Separate sinks are available for diaper changing and food preparation.		!	R	V
Classroom #1				
Classroom #2				
Classroom #3				
Classroom #4				
127. Diaper changing area is separated from food preparation area.		Į.	R	> *
Classroom #1				
Classroom #2				
Classroom #3				
Classroom #4				
128. There is an appropriate area for storage and preparation of infant formula.		1		> \\
Classroom #1				
Classroom #2				
Classroom #3				
Classroom #4				















C	ONTINUED	1 KINE	FALS MA	IMPA	tit /
129. There is a well-defined crib area for infants that allows them to rest comfortably away from the group while still ensuring easy supervision.				<u></u>	> *
Classroom #1					
Classroom #2					
Classroom #3					
Classroom #4					
130. There is sufficient square footage to allow cribs to be spaced at least 2 feet apart.				<u></u>	V
Classroom #1					
Classroom #2					
Classroom #3					
Classroom #4					
131. There is sufficient square footage to allow cribs to be spaced at least 3 feet apart.				R	V
Classroom #1					
Classroom #2					
Classroom #3					
Classroom #4					

















132. Note here any other comments or observations related to infant/toddler room features.	
Classroom #1	
Classroom #2	
Classroom #3	
Classroom #4	















SECTION 4 CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS WRAP-UP

Before moving on to the next section of the assessme your findings. Go back through the section that you juthem below.	
TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED TRUE	TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED FALSE
Items marked false should become part of a corrective action plan fo	or your facility. Begin prioritizing these items using the chart below.
CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS Action Items	
List here all areas marked false that require corrective	action. Be sure to include the specific item numbers.



CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS

Strengths





CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS

Weaknesses/Concerns





CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS WRAP-UP

Now, by item number, categorize each item marked false in section 4. You may want to involve others, such as staff and board members, in the development of this plan.

Highest Priority	Quick Fix
Note: Any item that is regulatory in nature should be placed in this category. Also included in this category should be any health and safety item that poses an immediate danger to children in the center.	Note: Items that require only maintenance to address should be included in this category. Consider items that can be fixed by staff or volunteers, or fairly inexpensively by a professional.
Include in Short-Term Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan
Note: Items included in this category will generally be high priority – lower cost, for example, any health and safety issues that can be addressed with minor renovation.	Note: Quality items and items that require major renovations that must be completed as part of a more comprehensive facility improvement plan fall into this category.

NOTES: Based on your review of the CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS section, note your general observations in the space provided below:















PLAYGROUND SECTION

INTRODUCTION

Research has shown that the majority of serious injuries in a child care or school setting occur on the playground. Of these injuries the majority are tied to a lack of appropriate safety surfacing or to the presence of age-inappropriate or otherwise inappropriate equipment. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has strong national playground safety standards, developed over decades and with intensive testing, that govern safety on playgrounds. These standards are the law in Rhode Island for public school facilities and are the framework for regulations and quality standards governing community-based early childhood settings.

This section of the facility assessment is not intended to provide you with a complete audit of your playground space, but rather to provide some insights into areas of the playground that may be of concern. We strongly recommend that all centers have at least one full audit of their outdoor playspaces conducted by a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI). For more information on this subject, visit the Resource Section of the RICCELFF website. In developing this checklist we pulled from standards developed by the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), the American Society for Materials and Testing (ASTM), the Department of Justice Americans with Disabilities Design Guidelines (DOJ ADA), and the Environmental Rating Scales (ERS). Best practice in the design of outdoor children's environments was also considered.

5A. PLAY AREA SPACE AND LOCATION	TRUE FALSE	WA MPACT	树
133. Each age group can access the play area directly from its classroom or from a nearby corridor.		R!	V
134. The play area can be accessed without crossing a parking lot or roadway.		ļ !	V
135. Pathways to the playground are unobstructed, do not collect excessive water, and are in good repair.		ADA !	>
136. Access points to the play area are flush and do not have an excessive step height.		ADA !	>
137. There is convenient access to a bathroom and sink.		R	V
138. There is a minimum of 75 square feet of usable outdoor space per child for at least half of the center enrollment.		R	V

















SECTION PLAYGROUND CONTINUED	TRUE FALSE AL	A IMPACT	构
139. The space incorporates several clearly defined zones (active zone, quiet play, group activities, individual play, etc).		R	V
140. Clear pathways direct children through the space.		R	V
141. Slope of pathways and ramps meets accessibility guidelines.		ADA	V
142. Activity areas are barrier-free.		ADA	V

143. Note here any other comments or observations related to play area space and location.

5B. PLAY AREA CONTAINMENT AND SECURITY	TRUE TRUE THE	RACT FIT
144. The play area is completely enclosed with a fence that is a minimum of 4 feet high (as measured from the highest surrounding grade).	A	>
145. The play area has a suitable vehicular barrier (i.e., wood or metal guardrail, high curb, bollards, etc.) along parking areas or roadways with a moderate to high likelihood of vehicular intrusion.	A	<i>></i>
146. Preschool play areas are physically separated from infant/toddler play areas.	A	, >
147. Fence gates properly close and do not have gaps larger than 3.5 inches that would allow passage of child through the barrier or create an entrapment hazard.	A	<i>></i>
148. The fence is properly secured with a suitable clasp or closure fixture.	A	>
149. Fence fittings, bolts, ties, or other hardware are in good condition and are installed in a manner that avoids potential safety issues such as protrusions or entanglement hazards.	A	<i>></i>

















PLAYGROUND SECTION

TRUE FASE NA MARACI

150. Visitors do not need to cross through the play area to reach the entrance to the center.

151. Note here any other comments or observations related to play area containment and security.

5C. GENERAL PLAY AREA CONDITION	TRUE PRISE MA MARC	/ kg
152. Area is free of trash and debris such as glass, metal, animal waste, etc.	A	
153. Area is free of insect nests and signs of rodents.	A	
154. Area has sufficient drainage with no signs of standing water or erosion.	į	V
155. Sandbox can be covered when not in use.	ļ ļ	<i>></i>
156. Objects in the play area are generally in good repair.	A	V
157. Area has sufficient shade through the use of natural or manufactured shade elements.	A	<i>></i> .

IMPACT









158. Note here any other comments or observations related to general play area condition.









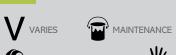


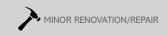
SECTION 5 PLAYGROUND

5D. GENERAL SAFETY	TRUE FAISE	IA IMPACT	
159. There is documentation that the space complies with the National Program for Playground Safety guidelines, such as a report from a Certified Playground Safety Inspector.		ļ	
160. Play structures are in good repair and are inspected regularly.		ļ	
161. Only commercial play structures are used, and documentation is on file that the equipment meets CPSC and ASTM guidelines.		ļ	>
162. The play space is easy to supervise and has good sight lines.		ļ	V
163. The play space is checked daily for hazards.		ļ	
164. There is easy access to a telephone and first aid kit for emergencies.			>
165. Note here any other comments or observations related to general safety.		,	

5E. PLAYGROUND SURFACING AND FALL ZONES	TRUE E	ALSENIA	IMPACI	
166. Stationary equipment, such as climbers, have a fall zone (safety surfacing) that extends at least 6 feet in all directions.				>
167. Slides higher than 4 feet have a fall zone (use zone) of safety surfacing equal to the slide height plus 4 feet (for example, a 6 foot slide would have a use zone extending 10 feet from the end of the slide).				>
168. Swings have use zones of safety surfacing at least double the height of the swing beam (for example, a swing on a 10-foot pole requires 20 feet of fall zone surfacing and clearance in front and 20 feet in back).				>











SECTION	6	PLAYGROUND CONTINUED

CONTINUED	TRUE FALSE	IA IMPAC	kit
169. All use zones are completely free of any conflicting activities.		!	>
170. All play equipment within the "use zone," or designated play area, has the appropriate depth of surfacing in accordance with CPSC guidelines.		! 🏛	>
171. There is a border around any loose-fill safety surfacing to keep it in place.		!	>
172. No equipment that requires children's feet to leave the ground is placed on asphalt, cement, dirt, grass, or non-safety surfacing rated synthetic materials.		!	>
173. Hardtop surfacing for pathways, ball play, riding toys, etc., is in good condition and free of cracks or hazards.		ļ.	×

174. Note here any other comments or observations related to playground surfacing and fall zones.

5F. PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT	/<	AUE FAIS	WA INPAC	, kit
175. Play structures are in good repair.			ļ	>
176. There are no loose or missing parts on play structures.			ļ	>
177. There are no protruding bolts on play structures.			ļ	>
178. Concrete footers on equipment are covered.			ļ	>
179. There are no gaps measuring between 3.5 and 9 inches on equipment which could cause entrapment hazards or cause clothing to be caught.			ļ.	>
180. There are no structures on playground that were built before 1978 (lead paint concern).			ļ	>















SECTION PLAYGROUND 181. There is documentation that the equipment is age appropriate for the intended user groups. 182. Steps, ramps, and ladders on equipment end at a platform that holds more than one child. 183. Elevated structures and platforms have guardrails and/or barrier rails. 184. Elevated structures have more than one way on and off. 185. Swings are separate from climbing structures and are at least 18-24 inches apart. 186. S-hooks are securely closed. ADA 187. At least half of the play components are handicapped accessible and on handicapped-accessible routes. 188. Play structures or components on play area are not made of wood that has been treated with CCA or other preservative treatment that is not recommended for playground use. 189. Slides are appropriate for intended use (non-metal surface, gradual slope for infants and toddlers, less than 6 feet high for preschool children). 190. Note here any other comments or observations related to playground equipment.















PLAYGROUND CONTINUED **SECTION**

5G. QUALITY OF PLAY SPACE	TRUE FALSE	JA MRAC	/ ky
191. There is sufficient secure storage for riding toys, loose parts, etc.		R	>
192. There is ample open space for imaginative play using loose parts and natural elements.		R	>
193. There is an ample mixture of activities to challenge various motor skills, including small climbers, balance beams, steppers, and items that allow for activities such as jumping, balancing, sliding, pushing, pulling, running, etc.		*	>
194. There are at least two different types of surfacing used in the space.		R	>
195. There is a mixture of activities that allows for both directed and non-directed play.		R	>
196. A range of outdoor play opportunities are incorporated, including art, dramatic play, science, building, and games.		R	>
197. Both sand and water are available.		R	>
198. A variety of natural features including gardening, trees and child-safe plants, small hills or slopes, rocks or boulders, bird feeders or houses, etc., are incorporated.		8	>
199. Note here any other comments or observations related to quality of play sp	ace.		















SECTION PLAYGROUND WRAP-UP

•	sessment tool, take a minute to reflect on and summarize you just completed, total your observations, and record
TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED TRUE	TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED FALSE
Items marked false should become part of a corrective action	n plan for your facility. Begin prioritizing these items using the chart below.
PLAYGROUND Action Items List here all areas marked false that require corr	rective action. Be sure to include the specific item numbers.

IMPACT

PLAYGROUND Strengths







PLAYGROUND

Weaknesses/Concerns







PLAYGROUND WRAP-UP

Now, by item number, categorize each item marked false in section 5. You may want to involve others, such as staff and board members, in the development of this plan.

Highest Priority	Quick Fix
Note: Any item that is regulatory in nature should be placed in this category. Also included in this category should be any health and safety item that poses an immediate danger to children in the center.	Note: Items that require only maintenance to address should be included in this category. Consider items that can be fixed by staff or volunteers, or fairly inexpensively by a professional.
Include in Short-Term Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan
Note: Items included in this category will generally be high priority – lower cost, for example, any health and safety issues that can be addressed with minor renovation.	Note: Quality items and items that require major renovations that must be completed as part of a more comprehensive facility improvement plan fall into this category.

NOTES: Based on your review of the PLAYGROUND section, note your general observations in the space provided below:















SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

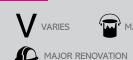
During the last decade the United States has experienced an unprecedented number of emergencies. Natural, technological, or man-made disasters and other emergencies are likely to continue during the coming decade. When these types of disasters strike, those most vulnerable are our youngest children. Children under the age of 5 are not able to protect themselves from harm, therefore, it is critical that centers have well thought out, documented, and practiced plans in place in the event that an emergency occurs. An emergency preparedness plan will minimally include:

- · A designated relocation site and evacuation route (written agreements should be in place if you are relying on another organization for space or resources)
- Clear posting of emergency numbers and other key emergency information
- · Emergency contact information and medical information for all children and staff in a format that can be easily taken with you if necessary
- · Procedures for notifying families
- Procedures to meet the needs of individual children, including children with special needs
- Systems to ensure the protection of valuable records
- Procedures for re-assignment of staff duties as needed
- Provisions to shelter in place if required
- · Coordination with local emergency management officials
- Training to ensure all staff are familiar with the plan

6A. LIFE SAFETY	TRUE FALSE	IA INPACT	/ Fit
200. Center passed a recent (within last 12 months) fire inspection and has documentation on file.		<u></u>	*
201. Center has an emergency preparedness plan.		! 🟛	*
202. Evacuation plans with routes are posted in the proper place.		ļ	*
203. Center conducts monthly fire drills and has a log onsite.		Α	*
204. Building allows for lock-down procedures if needed.		! 🏛	V
205. Building could serve as a shelter if needed.		! 🏛	V















SECTION 6 SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL CONTINUED

206. Note here any other comments or observations related to life safety.

6B. ENVIRONMENTAL INSPECTIONS	/RUE/4	ALSE WA MARACI	,
207. Building is free of lead and has documentation on file.		<u></u>	V
208. Building is free of radon and has test results on file.		<u></u>	V
209. There is evidence that building has been inspected by certified asbestos inspector.		<u></u>	V
210. Water comes from municipal source or the Department of Health has certified water as safe to drink.		<u></u>	V

211. Note here any other comments or observations related to environmental regulations.

6C. AIR QUALITY/TOXINS	/<	AUE FAL	SE NIA	IMPACT	/ pt
212. Each room can be ventilated via ventilation system or opened door(s)/ window(s) to clear odors or concentrations of toxins or harmful particles.			ļ	<u></u>	*
213. Center has integrated pest management plan to manage pest infestations while minimizing human exposure to toxins.				ļ	*
214. Center uses only nontoxic landscaping products.				ļ.	*
215. Center takes steps to minimize asthma triggers in environment (i.e., no scented products, uses HEPA filters, etc.).				!	*









SECTION 6 SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL

216. Note here any other comments or observations related to air quality/exposure to toxins.

6D. CLEANING PRACTICES	TRUE (A)	SE AIR IMPAC	,
217. Center is cleaned professionally on a regular basis.		!	*
218. Only EPA-approved cleaning solutions are used. (Bottles <u>must have</u> designation number on label and be used in accordance with product instructions.)		A	*
219. Where bleach and water solution is used, concentration meets guidelines of "Caring for Our Children."	:	Α	*
220. Center appears to be clean.		Α	*
221. Center has provisions for regular cleaning of ventilation systems (annually).		ļ.	*
222. Center has provisions for deep cleaning (i.e., rug cleaning, deep floor cleaning, etc.) on a periodic (at least semi-annual) basis.		ļ.	*
223. Note here any other comments or observations related to cleaning practices	S.	·	

















SECTION (6) SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL WRAP-UP

•	ment tool, take a minute to reflect on and summarize u just completed, total your observations, and record
TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED TRUE	TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED FALSE
Items marked false should become part of a corrective action plan	n for your facility. Begin prioritizing these items using the chart below.
SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL Action Items List here all areas marked false that require corrective	ve action. Be sure to include the specific item numbers.



SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL

Strengths





SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL

Weaknesses/Concerns



SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL WRAP-UP CONTINUED

Now, by item number, categorize each item marked false in section 6. You may want to involve others, such as staff and board members, in the development of this plan.

Highest Priority	Quick Fix
Note: Any item that is regulatory in nature should be placed in this category. Also included in this category should be any health and safety item that poses an immediate danger to children in the center.	Note: Items that require only maintenance to address should be included in this category. Consider items that can be fixed by staff or volunteers, or fairly inexpensively by a professional.
Include in Short-Term Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan
Note: Items included in this category will generally be high priority – lower cost, for example, any health and safety issues that can be addressed with minor renovation.	Note: Quality items and items that require major renovations that must be completed as part of a more comprehensive facility improvement plan fall into this category.

NOTES: Based on your review of the SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL section, note your general observations in the space provided below:













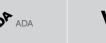
SECTION DUILDING SYSTEMS & SUPPORTS

7A. BUILDING SYSTEMS AND SUPPORTS	/TRUE FA	SE AIA IMPACT	, kt
224. Heating system is in good working order.		Α	V
225. Air conditioning is in good working order.		Α	V
226. Heating system is energy efficient.		R	>
227. Required room temperatures can be maintained in all classrooms.		Α	V
228. Rooms operate on separate thermostats.		R	>
229. Electrical system is sufficient to meet center needs (circuit breakers are not regularly thrown, etc.).		!	V
230. Kitchen meets programmatic needs.		R	V
231. There is a working phone or intercom system that enables efficient communication with and between classrooms.		!	À
232. Note here any other comments or observations related to building systems	and suppo	orts.	



















BUILDING SYSTEMS & SUPPORTS WRAP-UP

Before moving on to the next section of the assessment tool, take a minute to reflect on and summarize your findings. Go back through the section that you just completed, total your observations, and record them below.		
TOTAL # OF ITEMS MARKED TRUE Items marked false should become part of a corrective action plan f		
BUILDING SYSTEMS & SUPPORTS Action Items List here all areas marked false that require corrective	e action. Be sure to include the specific item numbers.	

BUILDING SYSTEMS & SUPPORTS Strengths

BUILDING SYSTEMS & SUPPORTS Weaknesses/Concerns









BUILDING SYSTEMS & SUPPORTS WRAP-UP CONTINUED

Now, by item number, categorize each item marked false in section 7. You may want to involve others, such as staff and board members, in the development of this plan.

Highest Priority	Quick Fix
Note: Any item that is regulatory in nature should be placed in this category. Also included in this category should be any health and safety item that poses an immediate danger to children in the center.	Note: Items that require only maintenance to address should be included in this category. Consider items that can be fixed by staff or volunteers, or fairly inexpensively by a professional.
Include in Short-Term Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan
Note: Items included in this category will generally be high priority – lower cost, for example, any health and safety issues that can be addressed with minor renovation.	Note: Quality items and items that require major renovations that must be completed as part of a more comprehensive facility improvement plan fall into this category.

NOTES: Based on your review of the BUILDING SYSTEMS & SUPPORTS section, note your general observations in the space provided below:















CONCLUSION 🕜



Now that you have used the checklist to assess your space you should have a better sense of the facility's strengths and weaknesses. Hopefully you took the time to establish priorities and make notes in each of the individual sections. If your center is like most others, you no doubt identified a number of items that need improvement. The next logical question to ask is where to go from here.

Start by going back through the Assessment Tool and look over your findings from each section. Take the time to reflect on the results, and to share them with others such as staff and board members. Pay attention to any particular trends and overarching strengths and weaknesses of the facility that became apparent through the process of completing the assessment.

Successful facility improvement projects entail thoughtful planning, but it is important to not confuse planning with inaction. If in the process of assessing your space you identified regulatory or critical health and safety issues, then these items must be addressed immediately. You have a responsibility to the children in your care to provide a safe, healthy environment that complies with all minimal regulatory standards.

Here are some questions to ask as you begin to formulate your plan.

- Do the strengths of this facility outweigh the weaknesses, or is it the other way around?
- Are many of the identified issues caused by poor or deferred maintenance? If yes, how can you develop stronger plans for ongoing maintenance moving forward?
- Is a lack of financial resources the cause of many of your facility's issues? If yes, it may be time to look carefully at your current business model and/or to assess whether you can truly afford the costs of the space you occupy.
 Space costs are not only the cost of rent or mortgage payments but also the ongoing costs to maintain a facility in a manner that assures the health and safety of children and supports overall program quality.
- Do you own or lease the space? If the space is leased, is the landlord truly being responsive to your needs? Could the rent you are paying be better used toward a mortgage payment in a space that you own and control?
- Are there structural issues with the space that you cannot address (for example, building is not large enough, not enough outdoor space or outdoor space is poorly located, location does not work well for families, etc.)? If so you may want to give serious consideration to looking for alternative spaces before making any substantial facility improvements where you are.

NEXT STEPS

Use the following worksheet to develop a plan for each item that you need to work on based on your facility assessment.







DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

The vast majority of programs will benefit from some additional planning and the development of specific action plans for addressing facility improvement priorities. The chart that follows is designed to help you think about the steps you should take.

Complete one chart for each major priority item. Photocopy this page for additional priority items you want to address. It may make sense in some cases to combine several items into one broader category for the purpose of this exercise. For example, if you have multiple priority items under "center entry/reception," you may want to create one broader category of "entry."

CHECKL	IST NUMBER AND	ITEM (or major category)
#:		
TYPE OF	PROJECT (repair,	minor renovation, etc.):

DESCRIBE THE IMPACT ON THE QUALITY OF YOUR PROGRAM IF THIS ITEM IS NOT ADDRESSED

- What will happen if you don't address this item?
- What benefit will be achieved by addressing this item?

WHAT IS NEEDED TO ADDRESS THIS ITEM?

- Financial resources
- Professional experts
- Staff time

POSSIBLE FUNDING SOURCES

- Foundations
- Individuals
- Operating reserves
- Capital campaign

PROPOSED TIMELINE

- How long do you expect this to take?
- When will the project begin?
- When do you hope to have it completed?

ACTION STEPS

- What are the next steps?
 - raising money
 - identifying professionals
 - seeking approvals (landlord, licensing, neighbors, etc.)
- Who will be responsible for carrying out these steps?
- Who will track your progress?





QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUMMARY		
SECTION 1 SUITABILITY OF SITE	SECTION 2 BUILDING EXTERIOR & ENTRY	
Highest Priority	Highest Priority	
Quick Fix	Quick Fix	
	Quiot i ix	
Include in Short-Term Plan	Include in Short-Term Plan	
Add to Longer Range Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan	





SECTION 3 COMMON AREAS	SECTION 4 CLASSROOM CHARACTERISTICS
Highest Priority	Highest Priority
Quick Fix	Quick Fix
Include in Short-Term Plan	Include in Short-Term Plan
Add to Longer Range Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan





SECTION PLAYGROUND	SECTION 6 SAFETY & ENVIRONMENTAL
Highest Priority	Highest Priority
Quick Fix	Quick Fix
Include in Short-Term Plan	Include in Short-Term Plan
Add to Longer Range Plan	Add to Longer Range Plan





SECTION BUILDING SYSTEMS & SUPPORTS	ADDITIONAL NOTES:
Highest Priority	
Quick Fix	
Include in Short-Term Plan	
Add to Longer Range Plan	















RHODE ISLAND EARLY LEARNING FACILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

FACILITY ASSESSMENT TOOL

Rhode Island Child Care Early Learning Facilities Fund

Telephone: 401.331.0131

Rhode Island LISC Office

146 Clifford Street, Providence, RI 02903 Website: www.rilisc.org

A Project of LISC

Local Initiatives Support Corporation 501 Seventh Avenue, 7th Floor, New York, NY 10018

The RICCELFF provides the capital and technical expertise that child care programs need to improve the quality and capacity of their physical space.





improving your space.

Developed and Published by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation Rhode Island Child Care and Early Learning Facilities Fund, July 2015

Development of this tool was supported in part with grant funding received through the State of Rhode Island Department of Education under the Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge Grant and the State of Rhode Island Department of Human Services through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Child Care and Development Block Grant Program.

LISC / RICCELFF is solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this resource guide.

Design by B. Boyle Design, Inc. Illustrations by D.W. Arthur Associates