

**LISC**

*Local Initiatives Support Corporation*

# CHILD CARE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT CHECKLIST



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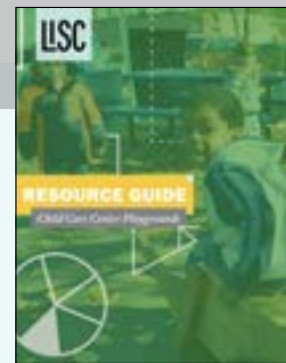
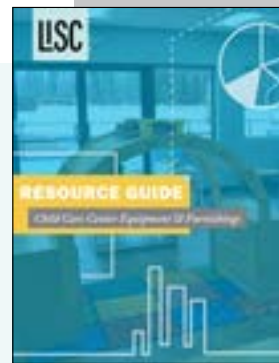
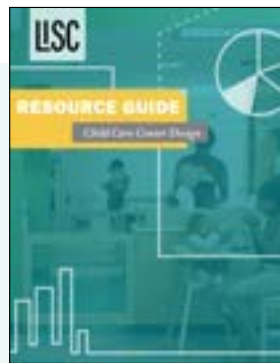
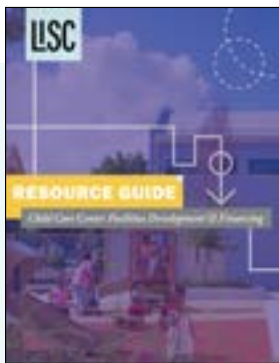
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*LISC is solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this resource guide.*



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# INTRODUCTION

This Checklist was created to help center-based early childhood programs assess the quality of their physical environment. It relies on standards developed by experts in the early care and education field and on experience gained by LISC staff and consultants in their work with programs across the country. A basic assumption of the Checklist is that your program space already meets applicable state building codes, health department regulations and state licensing requirements for child care facilities.

Reviewing a child care space with this tool can help you identify aspects of the physical facility that interfere with your efforts to provide high quality care, including a good working environment for your staff and a family-friendly space for parents. It may help with setting priorities for renovation or reconfiguration of your space. It may also help raise your expectations for the facility and motivate you to work toward a higher standard of quality.

This tool is for your program’s internal use, and is intended to help you reach your goals for quality space. Look at each response and its list of features carefully, and resist the impulse to inflate or exaggerate your ratings. The Checklist will be most useful if it is an objective and honest appraisal of your space.

## INSTRUCTIONS

The Checklist Key at the right shows the rating scale you should use to rate each response. Rate each checklist item based on this numeric scale from 0 to 4 or by marking “not applicable.” Each item also has one or more icons, pictured in the Key, to indicate whether it is related to Health and Safety; Quality; or Maintenance, Repair and Aesthetics.

Use the Checklist as you review the space, examining each item and noting whether your space or furnishings meet the criteria or contain the features described. Reviewing the number and type of features checked under each item can help you determine which number on the scale best represents that particular aspect of your space.

You will note that each item also has a space to identify whether it is a priority item (PRI). You can either mark priorities as you go through the checklist or you may find it easier to think about which items are priorities after you have completed all of the checklist sections. There is no single way to identify priorities. In almost every case a health and safety concern should be a priority. A low scoring item that affects how you implement your program or keeps you from achieving your goals is also likely to be a priority. For example, if your program values creating a welcoming environment for families, but scores low on its reception area, this could be a high priority to address.

## KEY

- 0**  
**Does not exist**  
in the home, 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
- PRI**  
**Priority!** Don't forget to  
identify priority items



Health & Safety



Home Quality



Maintenance, Repair  
& Aesthetics



NOTE: This Checklist is based in part on the following resources: Early Childhood and Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scales, Head Start and Early Head Start Program Standards, Consumer Products Safety Commission, NAEYC Accreditation Standards, and National Program for Playground Safety.

# 1 THE BUILDING EXTERIOR & CENTER ENTRY

The entry to your center, both exterior and interior, sets the tone for your program. It is the first impression that parents, children and other visitors will have of your space. The challenge at the entry is to find a balance between hospitality and security. The entry should be welcoming and the layout and feel of the space should support children in making the sometimes difficult transition from home to the center. Yet it must also provide some control over access to the facility.



## BUILDING EXTERIOR

### 1.1

#### BUILDING EXTERIOR IS CLEAN AND WELL-MAINTAINED

- Area free of trash and debris
- Walls, windows, trim intact
- Exterior stairs, sidewalk in good condition
- Trees, shrubs, lawn well-maintained
- No graffiti on walls

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1.2




#### BUILDING EXTERIOR IS ATTRACTIVE AND WELCOMING

- Materials and colors used on exterior of building inviting to children and families
- Attractive signage clearly welcomes families and visitors and directs them to the entrance
- Covered area at entry allows transition space out of the elements
- Dumpsters and other unattractive items hidden from view if near entry
- Plantings, pathways, seating and other interesting items such as a sculpture or landmark create welcoming feel at entry
- The scale of entry is intimate and non-institutional

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

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## 1.3

### BUILDING IS STRUCTURALLY SOUND AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SAFE

- No plumbing leaks
- Roof is in good condition with no leaks
- Heating and air conditioning systems are fully functional
- Building is lead-free
- Building is radon-free
- Building is asbestos-free
- Building is free of mold

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.4

### PARKING AREA IS SAFE AND CONVENIENT

- Located near center entrance
- Sufficient parking for staff and families
- Parking area and pathways well-lit
- Parking area safe
- Drop-off area located where children don't have to cross in front of moving vehicles

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.5

### OUTDOOR LIGHTING IS ADEQUATE AND WELCOMING

- Security lighting on building and playground
- Exterior lighting makes center more welcoming after dark

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.6

### BUILDING IS HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.7

### ENTRANCE TO CENTER IS SAFE AND SECURE

- Clearly marked
- Has exterior lighting
- Security system controls access to center and screens visitors via intercom, personal contact or technology
- Pathways free of snow and ice

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## RECEPTION AND CIRCULATION

## 1.8




### RECEPTION AREA IS WELL-DEFINED AND SECURE

- Signage directs visitors to reception area
- Clearly defined space for reception
- Controlled access to children's space
- Clear view of visitors entering center
- Serves as transition into the center

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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## 1.9

### LOOK AND FEEL OF RECEPTION AREA WELCOMES CHILDREN AND ADULTS

Offers space for families to congregate, including seating  
 Sets a positive and child-friendly tone  
 Reflects program philosophy through displays and décor  
 Storage for car seats & strollers is provided

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.10

### FLOORING AND WALLS ARE CLEAN, DURABLE AND IN GOOD REPAIR

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_



## 1.11

### DISPLAY BOARDS OR AREAS ARE AVAILABLE

In reception area  
 In corridors outside classrooms  
 Enclosed in glass where required by code

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.12

### CIRCULATION THROUGHOUT THE FACILITY IS EFFICIENT AND SUPPORTS PROGRAMMING

Clearly defined pathways through the center allow children, families and visitors to easily move through the space without passing through other classrooms  
 Warm and welcoming, not institutional  
 Hallways are clean, well-lit and clutter-free  
 Enough room to maneuver strollers and equipment  
 Signage to direct visitors through center and to identify spaces

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 1.13




### STAIRWAYS ARE SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE

Well-lit  
 Non-slip treads on steps  
 Handrails at child and adult height  
 Clean, clutter-free

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

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# 2 PROGRAM SUPPORT SPACE

A child care center is not just for children; it is also a work environment for the adults managing the center and caring for its children. The adult spaces should be comfortable, functional, attractive and well-equipped. Work in child care can be physically and emotionally demanding, with long hours and modest pay. Providing a professional work environment that shows respect for the staff and an understanding of their needs is crucial to ensuring their commitment and professionalism.

The facility is also used by parents and other visitors, and how the space is arranged can welcome them and encourage their involvement, or discourage it. To that end, the space, equipment and materials should convey a message about the values and philosophy of your program.

## 2.1

### SEPARATE OFFICE SPACE IS SUFFICIENT

Office space provides opportunities for confidential conversations between staff and with families  
 Sufficient number of administrative offices to meet center's staffing needs  
 Space for files, materials, office equipment

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.2

### MEETING SPACE IS SUFFICIENT

Sufficient amount of space for staff and parent meetings  
 If it is in a multi-purpose space, storage is available for tables, chairs  
 Comfortable and functional adult-sized furnishings in good repair  
 Good acoustics

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.3

### ADULT LAVATORIES MEET PROGRAM NEEDS

Sufficient number for staff and visitors  
 Conveniently located  
 In good repair  
 No-touch fixtures and dispensers are provided

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.4




### APPROPRIATE WORK SPACE IS DEDICATED FOR TEACHERS AND STAFF OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Resource area with work surface and curriculum materials, tools, and supplies  
 Access to computer and phone  
 Functional, attractive and in good repair

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

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## 2.5

### SECURE AND ACCESSIBLE STORAGE SPACE FOR STAFF IS AVAILABLE IN OFFICES, CLASSROOMS, CLOSETS OR OTHER STORAGE AREAS

- Locked storage for personal possessions
- Storage for files, paperwork, children's records
- Closed storage for classroom materials
- Sufficient storage for bulk supplies, seasonal items, etc.
- Appropriate storage for first aid supplies

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.6

### APPROPRIATE SPACE FOR STAFF BREAKS AND TIME AWAY FROM CHILDREN

- Comfortable adult-sized furnishings in good repair
- Access to phone
- Refrigerator, microwave and area for personal items

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.7

### APPROPRIATE SPACE IS DESIGNATED FOR A SICK CHILD TO REST WHILE WAITING FOR PARENT

- Near lavatory
- Room for cot to rest
- Easily supervised

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.8

### FACILITY FEATURES ENGAGE PARENTS IN THE PROGRAM

- Area set aside for parent resources and information
- Individual parent mailboxes in classrooms
- Décor and display reflect family culture and interests
- Spaces outside the classroom invite parents to linger, meet other parents, talk to teachers or spend time with a child before leaving

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.9

### TELEPHONE SYSTEM IS ADEQUATE

- Sufficient number of phone lines to handle needs of program
- Working telephone or intercom in each classroom
- Telephone system provides intercom between classrooms and office

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.10




### HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING IS EFFECTIVE

- Heating consistent and comfortable
- Cooling consistent and comfortable
- Cooling units do not block windows
- Systems can be manually controlled

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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## 2.11

### LIGHTING IS SUFFICIENT IN ADMINISTRATIVE, STAFF AND PUBLIC AREAS

Balance of natural and artificial lighting  
Fluorescent lighting is not the exclusive artificial light source

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.12

### KITCHEN IS SAFE AND APPROPRIATELY EQUIPPED FOR TYPE OF FOOD SERVICE PLANNED

Conveniently located  
Clean and efficiently laid out  
Closed storage for dishes, utensils, bulk foods, including locked storage for any potentially hazardous items  
Appropriate equipment for type of food service, in good working condition  
Adequate provisions for handling waste and recyclables  
System for record keeping, posting notices

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.13

### KITCHEN IS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S COOKING ACTIVITIES

Layout of kitchen allows children to safely watch or participate in cooking activities, including a child-height counter space  
Kitchen is located near classrooms where it is convenient for staff to access and use

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.14

### LAUNDRY AREA IS WELL-DESIGNED AND CENTRALLY LOCATED

Protected from child access  
Close proximity to infant/toddler rooms  
Full-sized heavy duty washer and dryer  
Laundry sink with hot and cold water  
Counter with space to organize clean laundry  
Storage for supplies and soiled items  
Adequate lighting  
Acoustic treatment to manage sound transmission

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.15

### MECHANICAL/ELECTRICAL CLOSET IS SAFE AND FUNCTIONAL

Locking door  
Control panels for electrical and telecommunications equipment easily accessible for servicing  
Acoustic insulation if near classrooms or offices  
Adequate lighting  
Located near service entrance and accessible through non-classroom space

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2.16




### CUSTODIAL FACILITIES ARE SAFE AND FUNCTIONAL

Locking door  
Provisions for waste handling and disposal  
Slop sink on floor or janitorial sink  
Space for brooms, mops, vacuum cleaner  
Secure storage for cleaning supplies  
Adequate lighting

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

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# 3 CHILDREN'S SPACES

Each group of children and their teachers (as defined by NAEYC guidelines) should have its own distinct classroom space with walls to provide acoustical separation from other classrooms. Although some connections between classrooms through windows or shared bathrooms or changing areas can facilitate teacher communication and provide children with views beyond their own room, it is critical to provide a distinct space for each group.

Each classroom should also have its own individual identity with colors, décor, equipment, display and materials that differ from other classrooms, rather than creating a uniform institutional appearance. Colors should be in tones that will blend harmoniously with the multitude of shades found in children's toys and materials. Find opportunities to use natural materials rather than plastic, to create order instead of clutter, and to create a space that reflects the lives and work of the teachers and children using the space.

Please note that this section does not cover classroom toys and materials. When assessing your center's physical environment, keep in mind that equipping the classrooms with appropriate educational toys and materials is essential to providing a quality program. Information on this is included in the Appendix.



## CLASSROOM

### 3.1

ALL GROUPS OF CHILDREN (as defined by NAEYC guidelines) ARE IN DISTINCT CLASSROOM SPACES ACOUSTICALLY SEPARATED BY WALLS

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.2

CHILDREN'S LAVATORY IS LOCATED DIRECTLY ADJACENT TO CLASSROOM




Opens directly onto classroom  
 Location and design provide good sightlines into lavatory from the classroom  
 No-touch fixtures and dispensers are provided

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: This section should be completed for each classroom in the center. Please photocopy or make an electronic copy if additional copies are needed.*

#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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### 3.3

#### CHILDREN'S LABORATORY IS WELL-DESIGNED FOR CHILD CARE USE

Fixtures, soap, paper dispensers correct size and height  
 Ventilated with mechanical exhaust fan  
 Drain in floor

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.4

#### CLASSROOM OFFERS AMPLE SPACE

**NOTE:** Early childhood experts agree that more than the minimal licensing requirement of generally 35 sq-ft. per child is needed to support a high quality learning environment. Optimal square footage is generally considered 50-70 sq-ft. per child depending on the age and number of children.

Activity area exceeds licensing minimum  
 Allows for flexible use as children's needs change  
 Space does not feel crowded

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

**TIP:** When measuring classroom square footage make sure to subtract the area occupied by large furniture such as cubbies, refrigerators, and cabinetry.

### 3.5

#### CLASSROOM ENTRY IS WELL-DESIGNED

Provides for a distinct and separate area that allows families and visitors to enter without disrupting classroom activities  
 Each child has his or her own cubby large enough for all personal belongings  
 Parent notice board and sign-in  
 Transition area/seating for removing outdoor clothes, etc.

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.6




#### ARRANGEMENT OF CLASSROOM SPACE IS FUNCTIONAL

Clear pathways through the space  
 Mix of floor surfaces: non-skid resilient flooring and carpet  
 Not crowded or cluttered  
 Sufficient space for cots when children are napping  
 Room arranged for wheelchair access if needed

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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### 3.7

#### CLASSROOM SPACE IS SAFE

- Pillars and posts wrapped with soft covering
- Space easily supervised
- Heating units and pipes securely covered
- All outlets are child-safe or covered
- Cords secured out of children's sight and reach
- Hazardous substances and sharp objects stored out of children's sight and reach
- Doors have view panels for safe entry or exit from rooms
- Protective barrier/shatterproof glass on windows at child-height
- Operable windows have secure screens
- Operable windows above the first floor have child-safe barriers
- Shelf and cubby units anchored to wall or floor

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.8

#### ARRANGEMENT AND LAYOUT OF CLASSROOM SPACE SUPPORTS PROGRAMMING

- Separate zones for quiet, active and messy play
- Interest areas well-defined using furnishings, room dividers and architectural features
- Compatible activities adjacent to each other
- Materials displayed and accessible to children
- Interest areas placed near resources to support the activity (art near water, computer near electric outlet, blocks on rug)
- Room organized to promote independence and exploration

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.9

#### SPACE SUPPORTS TEACHERS

- Adult-height sink in classroom (other than diaper sink)
- Adult-height work surface
- Telephone and/or intercom system

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.10




#### AESTHETICS AND MOOD CREATE A COMFORTABLE AND SOOTHING ENVIRONMENT

- Harmonious color scheme
- Furnishings and rugs create a unified look
- Muted color palette
- Many soft elements in the space
- Emphasis on natural materials and nature

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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### 3.11

#### CHILDREN'S FURNISHINGS ARE SUFFICIENT, APPROPRIATE AND CLEAN

Sturdy, well-made, in good repair  
 Cubbies, tables, chairs and shelves  
 have a unified appearance  
 Appropriate size and scale for age group  
 Each child has chair, cubby, storage for  
 individual work, and a cot or crib  
 Soft furnishings available

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.12

#### CLASSROOM IS IN GOOD REPAIR

Ceiling, floor, floor coverings and walls free of splinters,  
 peeling paint, water stains or excessive wear  
 Windows, heating units, other fixed features  
 intact and in good condition  
 Air circulation allowing for ventilation  
 Regular maintenance of HVAC system

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

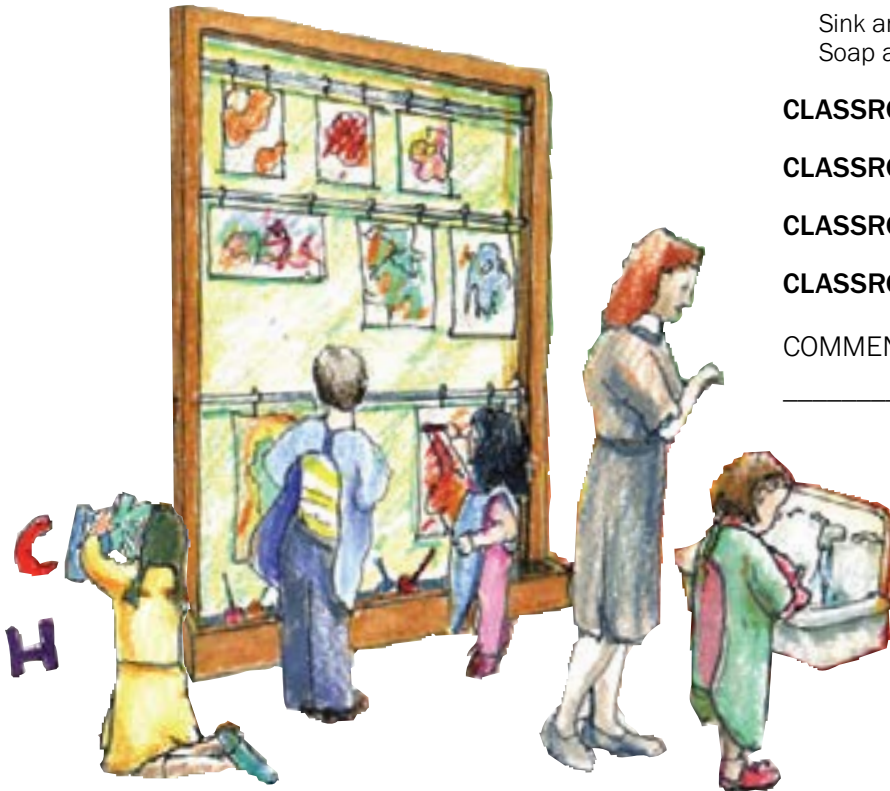
### 3.13

#### CLASSROOM HAS ACTIVITY SINK FOR CHILDREN




Sink and counter at child-height  
 Soap and paper towels flush-mounted at child-height

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_



#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PRI!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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### 3.14

#### SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF EXTERIOR WINDOWS PROVIDE GOOD AMOUNT OF NATURAL DAYLIGHT AND VISIBILITY TO OUTDOORS

Access to child-height windows to the outdoors  
Lofts or raised platforms up to higher windows  
Window coverings adjust to control level of natural light

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.15

#### INTERIOR WINDOWS ALLOW FOR VISIBILITY AND SECURITY BETWEEN CLASSROOMS WHILE STILL PROVIDING ACOUSTICAL SEPARATION

Windows to other classrooms and/or corridors  
Windows or observation spaces allow parents, staff and visitors to see into classrooms  
Safety glass used where glass is child-height

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.16

#### CLASSROOM OFFERS AMPLE STORAGE SPACE

Sufficient space for children’s materials and supplies used on a regular basis  
Closed storage space available in classroom for children’s supplies and teacher materials  
Individual storage for children’s belongings  
Easily accessed storage for cots/mats  
Secure storage of medicines/hazardous materials

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.17




#### HEATING AND COOLING SYSTEM IS SAFE AND RESPONSIVE

Temperature controlled within individual classroom  
Air temperature consistent and comfortable  
Radiant heating in flooring, especially in infant/toddler rooms

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PRI!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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### 3.18

#### LIGHTING IS VARIED AND ADJUSTABLE

Balance of natural and artificial lighting in each classroom  
 Fluorescent lighting not the only light source of artificial light  
 Different lighting used for different activity areas  
 Light level can be adjusted by turning some fixtures on and off  
 Classroom lighting has dimmer switches

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.19

#### ELECTRIC SERVICE IS AMPLE

Sufficient number of outlets to avoid use of extension cords  
 Circuit breakers are not thrown because of overloads to system

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



### 3.20

#### APPROPRIATE ACOUSTICAL FEATURES REDUCE NOISE LEVEL OF CENTER

Absence of ambient noises such as buzzing lights, electronic hums, ventilation system motors, etc.  
 Limited transmission of sound from adjoining rooms or outside street noise  
 Efforts made to soften and absorb excessive noise – use of acoustic tiles and panels, fabric, cushions, rugs, upholstered furniture  
 Absence of high ceilings that would contribute to poor acoustics

<b>CLASSROOM 1</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 2</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 3</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
<b>CLASSROOM 4</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#### OTHER CHILDREN'S SPACES

### 3.21




#### THERE IS A WELL-DESIGNED INDOOR GROSS MOTOR SPACE

Designated space for active indoor play available  
 Suitable climbing, jumping, crawling and balance equipment  
 Safety mats or protective flooring  
 Suitable wheeled toys for different age groups  
 Convenient storage for gross motor equipment

<b>RATING:</b>	0	1	2	3	4	N/A	PR!
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COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



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

In addition to the information above, there are further considerations for infant and toddler rooms. Infants and toddlers spend much of their time on the floor so it should be soft, warm, and clean. Equipment should be sturdy, age appropriate and scrupulously clean.

### 3.22 FLOOR SURFACE IS VARIED

#### FOR INFANTS:

Well-padded carpet, low carpeted risers in crawling spaces  
Easily cleaned resilient flooring in eating areas and at changing table

#### FOR TODDLERS:

Mix of carpet/area rugs and washable flooring  
Floor level changes with carpeted risers or steps

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.23 DIAPER CHANGING AREA IS ACCESSIBLE AND HYGIENIC

Location of diaper area allows teacher to continue to supervise classroom  
Sink location is separate from food prep area  
Diaper sink separate from other sinks and adjacent to diaper area  
Changing table has safety rail and non-porous surface  
Storage of soiled diapers convenient, hygienic and air-tight  
Diapering and sanitizing supplies stored securely  
For toddlers, changing table has steps  
Area is ventilated with mechanical exhaust fan  
Diaper and wipe storage accessible with one hand while teacher still has one hand on child  
Sink features wrist-controlled faucets  
No-touch fixtures and dispensers are provided

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.24

#### SPACE FOR INFANT AND TODDLER ACTIVITIES IS SUFFICIENT AND APPROPRIATE

Sufficient usable floor space for crawling, climbing, and other activities (after subtracting floor space used for cribs, feeding and diapering activities)  
Well-defined napping area such as an alcove or separate crib area (if this meets licensing regulations for supervision and visibility)  
Available space for children to get out of the group, rest or watch the activities

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3.25




#### INFANT AND TODDLER FURNISHINGS ARE APPROPRIATE

Comfortable adult seating, suitable for holding or rocking children  
Soft surfaces: futons, water mattress, other textures if allowed by licensing  
Secure railings and surfaces for children to pull themselves to standing position  
Pictures and non-breakable mirrors at crawler's eye level  
Low open shelves for toys  
Bins to isolate toys that have been in a child's mouth  
Equipment to sanitize infant toys  
Sturdy furnishings designed for use with these age groups  
Cribs and evacuation crib(s) as required by licensing  
Individual feeding chairs  
No use of walkers  
Limited use of "containment" equipment such as Exersaucers, swings, etc.  
Elevated enclosed play platform

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

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

Outdoor play spaces are frequently an afterthought when planning or evaluating child care environments. As a result, many child care playgrounds include one or more pieces of play equipment but offer little else. If the outdoor space is considered an extension of the classroom, it will be designed to support a range of activities: physical activity, exploration, fantasy play, sand and water play, interaction with nature and safe plants, as well as space for quiet contemplation.

## 4.1

### PLAY AREA IS WELL-LOCATED

Classrooms open to outdoor play space  
 If no direct access from classrooms, distance to play area is short and does not require crossing traffic  
 Convenient access to bathroom, sink, drinking water

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.2

### PLAY AREA PROVIDES SUFFICIENT SPACE

Minimum 75 square feet per child of usable outdoor play space for 50% of the total center population  
 Separate play spaces for infants, toddlers and preschool children

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.3

### PLAY AREA HAS SEPARATE ZONES

Areas for quiet activities and active play  
 Areas for large group play and individual or small group play  
 Distinct area for fixed play structures  
 If center is located in housing complex or office building, active zone is away from building  
 Good teacher sightlines

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.4




### CLEAR PATHWAYS DIRECT CHILDREN THROUGH THE PLAY AREA AND AROUND ACTIVITY AREAS/EQUIPMENT

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_



#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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## 4.5

### PLAY STRUCTURES AND EQUIPMENT PROVIDE DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAY

Appropriate size and scale for age group  
Provide a variety of options for climbing, jumping, balancing and sliding

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.6

### AGE APPROPRIATE RIDING TOYS ARE AVAILABLE

Several types for each age group  
Clearly delineated hard surface riding path separate from quiet activities

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.7

### A RANGE OF OTHER OUTDOOR PLAY OPPORTUNITIES ARE PROVIDED

Sand and water play  
Garden area with access to sun and water  
Dramatic play area with props and enclosure (canopy, play house, tent)  
Large flat surface for running, circle and ball games  
Art area with outdoor easels or chalk surfaces, tables or other flat surfaces  
Block and building activities

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.8

### IF THE PROGRAM SERVES INFANTS AND TODDLERS, AGE APPROPRIATE AREAS/ACTIVITIES ARE PROVIDED

Safe and interesting places to crawl, pull up and climb  
Self-contained and protected from other children  
Playground surface does not feature materials that are hazardous if ingested such as small chips, bark, fiber, or gravel

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.9

### NATURAL FEATURES ARE INCLUDED WHENEVER POSSIBLE

Gardening opportunities for children  
Tree, shrubs, child-safe plants  
Rocks or boulders  
Small hills or slopes  
Bird feeders or houses

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.10




### SUFFICIENT STORAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR OUTDOOR AND SEASONAL EQUIPMENT

Storage for large equipment such as riding toys and strollers  
Secure and weatherproof  
Well-organized and easy to use  
Smaller point of use storage units placed around playground for toys and "loose parts"

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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## 4.11

### PLAY AREA IS HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE

Slope of paths and ramps meets accessibility guidelines  
Activity areas are barrier-free

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

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 4.12

GROUND SURFACES ARE VARIED, INCLUDING DIFFERENT TYPES OF GRASS, DIRT OR SAND, HARD SURFACE FOR RIDING TOYS, SUITABLE SAFETY SURFACING UNDER ANY EQUIPMENT, ETC.

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

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 4.13

### PLAY AREA IS CLEAN

Litter free  
No animal waste  
Garbage and recyclables kept in closed receptacle outside play area  
Sandboxes covered when not in use  
Wading pools and water tables emptied and cleaned after use  
Free of insect nests and signs of rodents  
Mats, tiles, and pour-surfaces are well-maintained to prevent tripping hazards

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

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

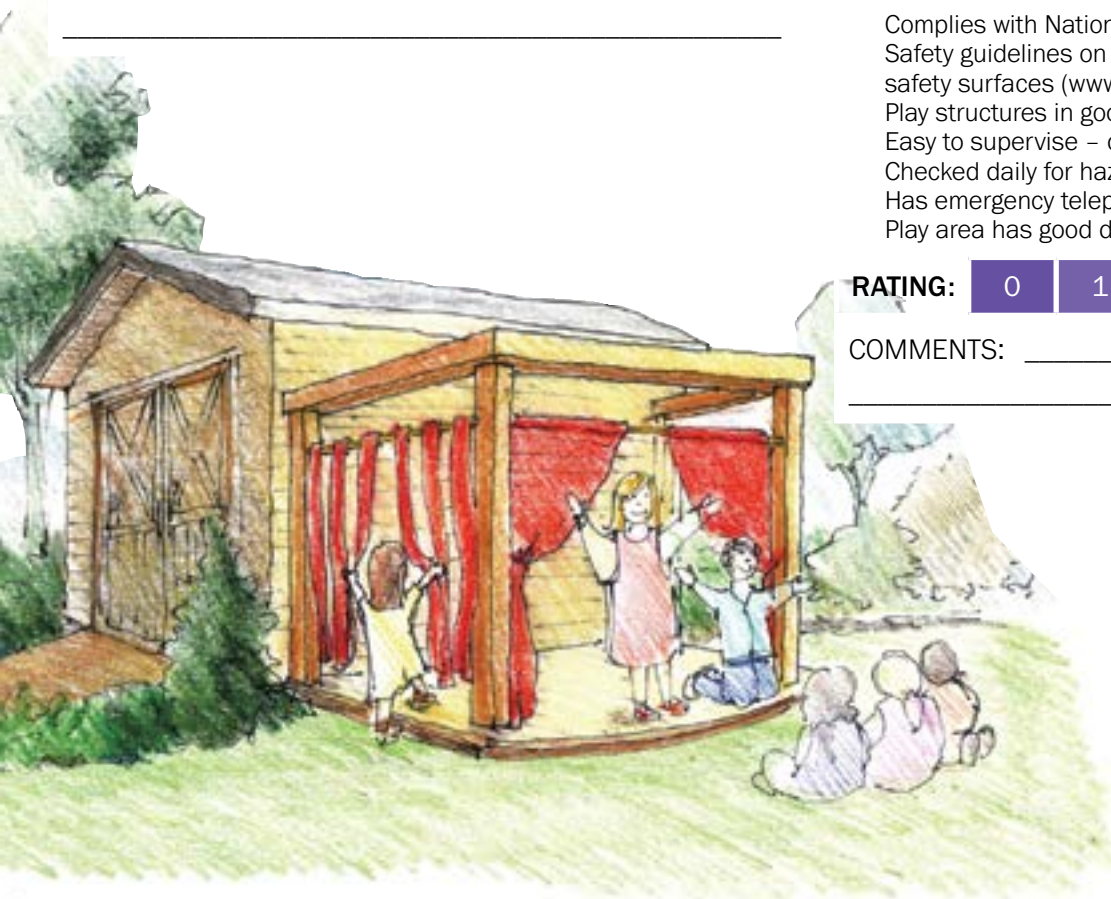
## 4.14

### PLAY AREA IS SAFE




Complies with National Program for Playground Safety guidelines on equipment, fall zones and safety surfaces ([www.uni.edu/playground](http://www.uni.edu/playground))  
Play structures in good repair and inspected regularly  
Easy to supervise – clear sightlines, no large obstructions  
Checked daily for hazards  
Has emergency telephone and first aid kit  
Play area has good drainage, does not collect water

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

**COMMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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### 4.15

SHADE IS AVAILABLE TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM THE ELEMENTS

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 4.16

COVERED PLAY AREA IS AVAILABLE SO CHILDREN CAN BE OUTDOORS IN ALL WEATHER

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 4.17

PLAY AREA IS SECURE

Fenced with appropriate height for the area (minimum four feet), with self-closing gates and a childproof mechanism  
Play area is for exclusive use of the center's children, teachers and parents  
Center entrance does not pass through play area

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 4.18

PLAYGROUND STRUCTURES ARE IN GOOD REPAIR

No loose, broken or missing parts  
Free of splinters and rust  
No open S-hooks on equipment  
No protruding bolts  
Free of cracks and holes  
Concrete footers on equipment are covered

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 4.19




PLAY STRUCTURES ARE SAFE

No gaps in equipment where clothing could be caught (generally a gap between 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> - 9 inches)  
No head entrapments or pinch hazards  
Climbing structure platforms have a maximum height of 24 inches for infants and toddlers and 48 inches for children under 5 years  
Climbing structure platforms have guardrails  
Climbing structures have more than one way on and off  
Steps, ramps and ladders end at a platform that holds more than one child  
Swings are separate from climbing structures and are at least 18-24 inches apart  
Only bucket style swings with straps are used for infants and toddlers  
Preschool slides are a maximum height of 6 feet  
Infant/toddler slides have a gradual slope  
Slides have non-metal surface

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PR!</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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## 4.20

### APPROPRIATE FALL/SAFETY ZONES AROUND PLAY EQUIPMENT

Stationary equipment such as climbers have a fall zone at least 6 feet in all directions  
 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 fall zone extending 10 feet from the end of the slide)  
 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 the back).

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4.21

### SUITABLE MATERIAL USED AT ADEQUATE DEPTH IN ALL FALL/USE ZONES




Equipment 6 feet or higher has at least 12 inches of wood chips, double shredded bark, engineered wood fiber or fine pea gravel or has a synthetic surface such as poured-in-place surfacing or rubber mats/tiles  
 Equipment 4-6 feet high has one of the above surfacing materials or may also have 12 inches of sand or medium gravel  
 Border around loose-fill surfacing  
 No equipment is placed on asphalt, cement, dirt, grass or rocks

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

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_



#### KEY

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

Now that you have used the Checklist to review your center's physical space you should have a better sense of its strengths and weaknesses. Hopefully while you were completing the Checklist you identified priorities and made notes on the specifics of your findings. 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 do you go from here?

Start by going back through the Checklist and your findings to reflect on the results, and 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 while you were completing the Checklist.

Here are some specific steps you can take to help your organization develop a plan for addressing the facilities issues identified through your review.



## 1. IDENTIFY PRIORITY ITEMS THAT NEED ATTENTION

Go back through the Checklist and pull out any items that were identified as priorities, but scored low:

PRIORITY ITEM	SCORE
1. _____ _____	
2. _____ _____	
3. _____ _____	
4. _____ _____	
5. _____ _____	
6. _____ _____	
7. _____ _____	
8. _____ _____	
9. _____ _____	
10. _____ _____	

### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn't apply to the home	<b>PRI</b> Priority! Don't forget to identify priority items	Health & Safety	Home Quality	Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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## 2. CATEGORIZE THE PRIORITY ITEMS




Use the chart below to categorize each of the priority items above according to the size and scope of the project and the level of effort and investment that will be required:

LIGHT REPAIR/ AESTHETIC IMPROVEMENT/ GENERAL MAINTENANCE	MODEST RENOVATION PROJECT	MAJOR RENOVATION TO AN EXISTING FACILITY	REQUIRES MOVING TO OR BUILDING A NEW FACILITY TO ACCOMPLISH
<p><b>Hints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>minimal in cost</li> <li>can often be done by staff or volunteer</li> <li>can be accomplished without structural work</li> <li>can be done in a short time frame</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Painting the center’s hallways</p>	<p><b>Hints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may require some structural work</li> <li>can be achieved without a major fundraising campaign</li> <li>likely to require the assistance of an outside professional</li> <li>will not generally require full architectural plans</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Installing a sink in a classroom</p>	<p><b>Hints:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>typically require a major fundraising effort</li> <li>needs involvement of a full construction team including an architect</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples:</b> Building an addition to an existing center, re-configuring existing space to increase square footage, providing missing features such as storage or staff support spaces</p>	<p><b>Hint:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot be achieved within the confines of the existing building or site regardless of the financial investment</li> </ul> <p><b>Example:</b> Insufficient square footage in classrooms in a building that won’t accommodate any expansion</p>
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.
5.	5.	5.	5.

## 3. LOOK FOR TRENDS

Once you have placed all of the priority items into one of the columns in the chart above, try to identify specific themes. For example, if 80% of the items fall into the category of “requires a new facility,” this is an indication that your efforts should be focused on seeking alternative space. On the other hand, if the majority of your items fall into the “light repair” or “modest renovation” categories, you will be able to begin tackling these items immediately without a long planning process or substantial resources.

### KEY

<b>0</b> Does not exist in the home, but should	<b>1</b> Inadequate: requires improvement or repair	<b>2</b> Fair: should be improved	<b>3</b> Good: good quality or in good condition	<b>4</b> Excellent: first-rate or top quality	<b>N/A</b> Not applicable: doesn’t apply to the home	<b>PRI</b> Priority! Don’t forget to identify priority items	 Health & Safety	 Home Quality	 Maintenance, Repair & Aesthetics
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## 4. 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.”

### CHECKLIST 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?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### KEY

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

## CLASSROOM TOYS AND MATERIALS

Toys and materials are key elements in developing a high quality classroom environment. Select attractive, well-constructed toys that stimulate the imagination. Look for open-ended toys that will maintain children’s interest. Reduce the visual chaos of your space by selecting toys made from natural materials or muted colors rather than the very bright plastic that is so prevalent in children’s toys. Choose toys that suit the age and development of the children in the group – some should be easy to master and others more challenging. Provide several of the more popular toys, particularly for toddlers and young three-year-olds. Look for materials that will build on the interests of individual children as well as the group. Offer children safe and interesting materials to use in their play.

## OUTDOOR TOYS AND MATERIALS

Even a beautifully landscaped and equipped outdoor play area requires a variety of props, toys and materials that children can use in their play. A mix of containers, sturdy dolls and animals, vehicles, balls, child-size tools, and dress ups can be placed in appropriate areas around the playground. For toddlers and preschoolers, add various natural materials: shells, colored pebbles, pieces of wood, baskets, and other materials sorted into weatherproof containers. Planning for storage and display of the outdoor toys and materials is important to their effective use.




## FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ON SELECTING MATERIALS SEE:

- **The Creative Curriculum** by Diane Trister Dodge and Laura J. Colker provides detailed curriculum plans for interest areas and suggestions for materials and furnishings to equip each area.
- **Designs for Living and Learning** by Deb Curtis and Margie Carter includes beautiful photographs and thoughtful ideas about developing a child care environment.
- **Playgrounds that Work: Creating Outdoor Play Environments for Children Birth to Eight Years** by Pauline Berry offers a practical guide to creating appropriate outdoor learning environments.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCE MATERIALS

LISC has produced a series of resource guides on all aspects of child care facilities design and development, including outdoor playgrounds. These guides may be helpful during your planning process. More information is provided on the inside cover.

### KEY

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