



State of Utah
Department of Workforce Services
**FAMILY CHILD CARE
SELF-EVALUATION**

Program Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Primary Caregiver: _____

Enrollment: _____

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Environment Self-Assessment (ESA) is for programs to evaluate the resources, practices and learning environment in their program. Providers are encouraged to use the ESA to critically evaluate and celebrate their strengths, as well as identify areas for growth.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN THE ESA, THERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

1. This is a self-assessment and not a test. There are no right or wrong responses. The goal is to help you identify your own strengths and areas for growth.
2. You should complete all the questions, notes and goals in this assessment.
3. We hope the questions are interesting to you, and that you choose to answer all of the questions honestly. Your responses will help you prepare for your formal ERS[®] observation.

DIRECTIONS

Read each statement carefully. Decide if the stated criteria are “Rarely” met in the childcare environment, “Sometimes” met, or “Always” met, by placing a check mark in the appropriate box. There must be a check mark after each stated criterion.

Finally, review your responses to identify your strengths and areas for potential growth. Using your areas for potential growth, write goals and identify concrete action steps to accomplish these goals.

DEFINITIONS

- Always or A lot 90% of the time this holds true.
- Sometimes or Somewhat At least 50% of the time this holds true.
- Rarely or Not at all Less than 25% of the time or NEVER holds true.

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids (accommodations) and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities by calling 801-526-9240. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech impairments may call Relay Utah by dialing 711. Spanish Relay Utah: 1-888-346-3162.

FOUNDATIONAL QUALITY			
Space, Furniture and Arrangement			
Think about your child care space. Are the following available?	Yes	No	
Adequate lighting, ventilation, temperature control, and sound-absorbing materials.	☐	☐	
Space in good repair with no major problems that endanger children or compromise care.	☐	☐	
Space that is clean and well-maintained on a daily basis.	☐	☐	
Space that is accessible to children and adults with disabilities.	☐	☐	
Furniture that promotes self-help skills as needed (e.g., steps to diaper table/sink, low open shelves, accessible storage).	☐	☐	
Storage for extra toys and supplies.	☐	☐	
Furniture that is child-sized.	☐	☐	
Comfortable adult seating for working with children in routines and play.	☐	☐	
Toys and materials that are within reach of children.	☐	☐	
Child-created and chosen artwork is displayed.	☐	☐	
Soft toys and furnishings that children can use for relaxation or quiet play.	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Arrange space for different experiences (e.g., active play, quiet play, messy play).	☐	☐	☐
Display photographs of the children, their families, pets, or other familiar faces.	☐	☐	☐
Talk to the children about the photos and materials on display.	☐	☐	☐
Display children's artwork where it can easily be seen by children.	☐	☐	☐
Health and Safety			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Ensure there are no hazards indoors or outdoors (e.g., electrical outlets covered, no easy access to busy roads).	☐	☐	☐
Check for a well-stocked First Aid kit and manual that is quickly accessible.	☐	☐	☐
Help children follow safety rules and explain reasons for safety rules (e.g., "Be careful, it's hot").	☐	☐	☐
Model healthy practices (e.g., washing hands after wiping their nose, upon arrival to program, or coming in from outdoor play).	☐	☐	☐
Encourage children to manage health practices independently (e.g., proper handwashing techniques taught; child shown how to get dressed; health-related books or songs used).	☐	☐	☐
Supervision			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always

Offer consistent, careful supervision that is adjusted appropriately for different ages and abilities.	☐	☐	☐
Frequently scan the child care space and stay aware of the entire group, even when working with just one child.	☐	☐	☐
Participate in activities with the children and show interest in or appreciation of what they do (e.g., offer help and encouragement when needed, bring toys to a non-mobile child, help a wandering child get involved).	☐	☐	☐
Share information with parents about infants/toddlers' routines each day.	☐	☐	☐
Encourage parents to spend time visiting at drop-off and pick-up times.	☐	☐	☐
Talk to children about ideas related to their activities (e.g., ask questions, add information, extend understanding).	☐	☐	☐
EVERYDAY ROUTINES			
Nap and Rest			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Ensure that each child receives healthful provisions for nap and rest (e.g., cribs, cots or mats are not crowded, clean bedding for each child, including a linen barrier such as a sheet).	☐	☐	☐
Help children to relax at nap and rest time (e.g., soft music is played, child soothed by patting back).	☐	☐	☐
Personalize nap time for each child (e.g., use familiar routines, placed in the same spot each day, follow each child's schedule).	☐	☐	☐
Place all cribs, cots or mats at a distance of 36 inches apart, unless separated by a solid barrier.	☐	☐	☐
Provide activities for children who are not sleeping.	☐	☐	☐
Meals and Snacks			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Serve food that meets nutrition guidelines and is age-appropriate (e.g., infant/toddler foods are cut to the appropriate size).	☐	☐	☐
Follow basic sanitary procedures to ensure a healthy eating environment (e.g., children and adults wash hands before and after meals, handwashing is done for 20 seconds, eating surfaces are cleaned and sanitized).	☐	☐	☐
Cooperate with parents to establish good eating habits (e.g., coordinate new foods, share information on nutritional value, plan together on transitions).	☐	☐	☐
Make accommodations based on a child's allergy information or condition. (e.g., allergy information is updated often and easy to find).	☐	☐	☐
Offer an organized, relaxed and pleasant meal time.	☐	☐	☐

Toileting			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Provide adequate supervision for the ages and abilities of the children I serve.	☐	☐	☐
Follow basic sanitary procedures to ensure a healthy diapering and toileting environment (e.g., follow recommended diapering procedure, children and adults wash hands after diapering and toileting, clean and sanitize surfaces as needed).	☐	☐	☐
Meet diapering and toileting needs in an appropriate manner (e.g., reminding children to use the bathroom, individualize diapering schedule and assisting when needed).	☐	☐	☐
Encourage self-help skills as children are ready.	☐	☐	☐
LANGUAGE AND LITERACY			
Books			
Think about your child care space. Are the following accessible to children?	Yes	No	
At least 10 appropriate books accessible (no fewer than 3 books for each age group).	☐	☐	
A variety of developmentally appropriate books in good condition.	☐	☐	
A wide selection of books are accessible to children (e.g., includes fiction and factual books about people and animals, familiar objects and familiar routines).	☐	☐	
Books that are organized together in one or more locations for convenient and comfortable use by children.	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Read books to children and talk about the illustrations while pointing at them.	☐	☐	☐
Add or rotate books at least monthly to maintain children's interest in books.	☐	☐	☐
Engage children when reading books by asking simple "what" and "where" questions.	☐	☐	☐
Encourage child participation (turn the page, select a book).	☐	☐	☐
Use age-appropriate strategies for helping children understand new words.	☐	☐	☐
Interact with children who use books independently.	☐	☐	☐
Listen and respond to children's attempts to communicate both verbally and non-verbally.	☐	☐	☐
Encourage and create opportunities for children to talk to one another.	☐	☐	☐
Interact with children throughout the day, naming objects and actions, describing activities and routines, and asking questions.	☐	☐	☐
LEARNING EXPERIENCES			
Fine Motor			

Think about your child care space. Are at least five materials of the following accessible for each age group of children?	Yes	No	
Rattles with different noises, colors, shapes and textures.	☐	☐	
Easy fit together toys such as large Duplo's, pop beads, stacking cups.	☐	☐	
String beads, lacing cards, pegboards, puzzles, links and gears.	☐	☐	
Lincoln Logs, jigsaw puzzles, interlocking building sets.	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Provide material at different levels of difficulty (e.g., simple and more complex puzzles).	☐	☐	☐
Have conversations with children about fine motor materials they are using, as they use them.	☐	☐	☐
Present new concepts in a variety of different ways, such as learning pets through books, blocks, puzzles, and dramatic play.	☐	☐	☐
Music and Movement			
Think about your child-centered space. Are the following used with children?	Yes	No	
CD's, tapes or digital music with different music genres (e.g., classical, jazz, lullaby, dance).	☐	☐	
Musical toys (e.g., soft bear that plays a tune when you squeeze its hand).	☐	☐	
10 musical instruments for infants/ toddlers (e.g., maracas, piano, xylophones)	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Encourage rhythm by bouncing infant on lap, helps toddler clap to music, and dancing with children.	☐	☐	☐
Formally and informally use songs with children every day.	☐	☐	☐
Provide ample time for children to use instruments during free play.	☐	☐	☐
Avoid using background music that interferes with conversations.	☐	☐	☐
Art			
Think about your child care space. Are at least three to five of each type accessible to children?	Yes	No	
Drawing materials (e.g., paper, markers, crayons, colored pencils, chalk).	☐	☐	
Paints (e.g., finger paints, watercolors, tempera paints).	☐	☐	
Three-dimensional materials (e.g., clay, Play-Doh, popsicle sticks, wood).	☐	☐	
Tools (e.g., child-safe scissors, staplers, tape, glue, hole punch).	☐	☐	
Collage materials (e.g., paste, feathers, cotton balls, yarn).	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Give children 18 months and older a daily opportunity to use art materials to express their ideas and creativity.	☐	☐	☐
Focus on the artistic process rather than the end product when introducing art to children.	☐	☐	☐

Introduce a variety of new art materials as children are ready (e.g., chubby crayons for toddlers, paints, scissors, Play-Doh for older toddlers, scissors for preschoolers).	☐	☐	☐
Blocks			
Think about your child care space. Are the following accessible to children?	Yes	No	
Sensory, soft vinyl or lightweight blocks for infants, unit blocks, hard foam, or hollow blocks for preschool and school-agers.	☐	☐	
Block accessories such as toy people, transportation and animal toys.	☐	☐	
Ample space for uninterrupted block play.	☐	☐	
Ample time for children to access block material and use blocks during free play.	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Talk with children about block play, while they are using block material (e.g., colors, shapes or sizes).	☐	☐	☐
Dramatic Play			
Think about your child care space. Are the following accessible to children?	Yes	No	
Play furniture (e.g., woodworking bench, kitchen, doll furnishings).	☐	☐	
Toy cars/trucks, dolls, soft toys, telephones, common animals.	☐	☐	
Smaller dramatic play toys, such as a small house with people or barn with animals.	☐	☐	
Dress-up clothes or accessories (e.g., hats, purses, ties)	☐	☐	
Play kitchen/housekeeping materials (e.g., pots, pans, dishes, food).	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Have conversations with children and add to their learning during pretend play.	☐	☐	☐
Teach children how to use the materials.	☐	☐	☐
Math			
Think about your child care space. Are the following accessible to children?	Yes	No	
Posters, books and materials that show sizes, shapes and numbers and show the quantity they represent.	☐	☐	
Rattles of various shapes, sorters, toy telephones, stacking rings.	☐	☐	
Number puzzles, magnetic numbers, geometric shapes, books on counting or shapes.	☐	☐	
Rules, tape measures, calculators, unit rods or cubes.	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Count objects for children in an engaging manner (e.g., playfully count baby toes, point to blocks as they are counted, pat each child's head as they are counted, shows number of fingers when using number talk).	☐	☐	☐
Talk about math or number concepts in an interesting way.	☐	☐	☐

Nature and Science			
Think about your child care space. Are the following accessible to children?	Yes	No	
Pictures, books or toys that represent nature realistically.	☐	☐	
Children 18 months and older have experience exploring sand and/ or water.	☐	☐	
Contact with the natural world (e.g., plants, nature walks, observing house pets).	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Point out and talk about nature/science materials and experiences.	☐	☐	☐
Provide close supervision when children use sand/water materials.	☐	☐	☐
Promoting acceptance			
Think about your child care space. Are the following accessible to children?	Yes	No	
Acceptance is easy to observe in books, displayed pictures, and play material.	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Communicate positive and supportive messages that show respect for all people.	☐	☐	☐
Use of Technology			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Offer alternative activities for children while technology is being used.	☐	☐	☐
Restrict screen time for all children under 24 months of age.	☐	☐	☐
Screen time is limited to 20 minutes for all children 24 months and older.	☐	☐	☐
Physical Activity and Development			
Think about your child care space. Are the following accessible to children?	Yes	No	
Playground of large motor equipment or structures with adequate surfacing.	☐	☐	
Variety of portable equipment, including ride-on toys in good repair.	☐	☐	
Playground space with some protection from the elements so children can play nearly all year round.	☐	☐	
Indoor active play area when weather prohibits going outside.	☐	☐	
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Not at all	Somewhat	A Lot
Offer opportunities each day for children to participate in vigorous activity (i.e., tummy time for infants, running for toddlers and preschoolers).	☐	☐	☐
Provide infants with safe, open, and interesting spaces to encourage movement and activities with legs, feet, arms, and hands.	☐	☐	☐
Limit infants' use of equipment such as exersaucers, swings, or bouncy chairs to less than 15 minutes.	☐	☐	☐
Provide indoor space for children to move without being crowded.	☐	☐	☐
Provide 30 minutes of outdoor physical activity each day.	☐	☐	☐
Lead some activities that promote the development of motor skills.	☐	☐	☐

STRUCTURE			
Daily Schedule			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Provide for the physical needs of children, even when the need occurs off schedule (infant can have bottle early, toddler can start nap later if not ready, diaper is changed quickly when needed).	☐	☐	☐
Keep daily schedule flexible and individualized to the children's needs.	☐	☐	☐
Ensure that all transitions are smooth (by preparing activities ahead of time, limiting long periods of wait to under 3 minutes and keeping children actively involved).	☐	☐	☐
Provide some active play and some quiet play options each day.	☐	☐	☐
Free Play			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Offer free play both indoors and outdoors daily.	☐	☐	☐
Actively facilitate children's play throughout the day (e.g., help children get materials, have conversations about their play).	☐	☐	☐
Provide ample time, material, and equipment for free play (children choose their own activities and materials and use them, as much as they are able, independently).	☐	☐	☐
Use supervision as an educational interaction (e.g., encourage child to talk about his activity, introduce new concepts, help develop behavior skills, use child's interest to further learning).	☐	☐	☐
Add materials at least monthly, that stimulates new interest during free play.	☐	☐	☐
Group Activities			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Allow opportunities for children to play individually or be part of self-selected small groups.	☐	☐	☐
Limit whole-group activities to short periods of time, suited to age and needs of the children.	☐	☐	☐
Offer alternate activities that maximize children's success (e.g., enough space, active participation encouraged).	☐	☐	☐
Set up whole-group activities that maximize children's success (e.g., enough space, active participation encouraged, not too long, not too many).	☐	☐	☐
Engage in educational interactions with both small groups and individual children, as well as the whole group.	☐	☐	☐
Provisions for Children with Disabilities			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always

Use special adaptive furnishings as directed to help the child participate.	☐	☐	☐
Follow Individual Education Plans (IEP) for children with a disability, in cooperation with parents.	☐	☐	☐
Make adjustments, as needed, to allow children of all abilities and skill levels to participate in activities.	☐	☐	☐
INTERACTIONS			
How often does the caregiver do the following?	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
Cultivate a relaxed atmosphere in the group, avoiding rushing, ignoring, teasing or punishing children.	☐	☐	☐
Pay attention to the unique temperament of children and consider their preferences when addressing or approaching them.	☐	☐	☐
Quickly stop hurtful peer interactions and encourage cooperative play.	☐	☐	☐
Provide opportunities for children to self-select their playmates.	☐	☐	☐
Allow children to follow their own interests and show enthusiasm for children's ideas.	☐	☐	☐
Provide individualized learning (e.g., responding to variations in abilities, needs and interests of children in the group, providing encouragement and support appropriate for each child).	☐	☐	☐
Provide guidance and discipline to develop appropriate social skills.	☐	☐	☐
Provide support and comfort to children, showing warmth and appreciation when children are anxious, angry or hurt.	☐	☐	☐
Facilitates children's attempts to interact with other children.	☐	☐	☐
Sits on the floor or is down low to be physically accessible to children.	☐	☐	☐
Shows playfulness or appropriate humor with children.	☐	☐	☐

Based on Bright & Early North Dakota Environment Self-Assessment for Preschool Classroom. Used with permission.

For more detailed information on the ERS tools and subscales, please refer to <http://www.ersi.info/scales.html>

Environmental Self-Assessment (ESA) Goals For Continued Quality Improvement

Identify three S.M.A.R.T. goals for the upcoming year. Refer to specific ESA categories above. Ensure each goal is S.M.A.R.T.:

Specific: What exactly will you accomplish?

Measurable: How will you know when you have reached this goal?

Accountable: Who will be responsible for the different parts of this goal?

Resources Needed: What support and resources will I need to complete this goal?

Time-bound: When will this goal be achieved?

EXAMPLE GOAL

This goal will impact the following Environment Self-Evaluation Item(s):

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| ☐ Foundational Quality | ☒ Everyday Routines | ☐ Language and Literacy |
| ☐ Learning Experiences | ☐ Structure | |

SPECIFIC: What exactly will you accomplish?

Develop a new handwashing technique to use when children are washing in large groups (coming indoors, before meals & snacks) so wait time is lessened.

MEASURABLE: How will you know when you have reached this goal?

Children's wait time after handwashing will be less than 3 minutes. Children will stay engaged while washing hands and will be kept engaged when they are done with handwashing.

ACCOUNTABLE: Who will be responsible for the different parts of this goal?

All caregivers who are in the program at the time of handwashing. The primary caregiver will inform the second caregiver and the substitute of the new procedure and check for follow-through.

RESOURCES NEEDED: What support and resources will I need to complete this goal?

A timer, FCCERS-3 Observation Tool notes, and a list of potential songs or activities.

TIME-BOUND: When will this goal be achieved?

Teach all caregivers the new procedure by the end of the month (list actual date). Teach new procedure to the children by the following week (list actual date).

GOAL #1

This goal will impact the following Environment Self-Evaluation Item(s):

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ Foundational Quality | ☐ Everyday Routines | ☐ Language and Literacy |
| ☐ Learning Experiences | ☐ Structure | |

SPECIFIC: What exactly will you accomplish?

MEASURABLE: How will you know when you have reached this goal?

ACCOUNTABLE: Who will be responsible for the different parts of this goal?

RESOURCES NEEDED: What support and resources will I need to complete this goal?

TIME-BOUND: When will this goal be achieved?

GOAL #2

This goal will impact the following Environment Self-Evaluation Item(s):

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ Foundational Quality | ☐ Everyday Routines | ☐ Language and Literacy |
| ☐ Learning Experiences | ☐ Structure | |

SPECIFIC: What exactly will you accomplish?

MEASURABLE: How will you know when you have reached this goal?

ACCOUNTABLE: Who will be responsible for the different parts of this goal?

RESOURCES NEEDED: What support and resources will I need to complete this goal?

TIME-BOUND: When will this goal be achieved?

GOAL #3

This goal will impact the following Environment Self-Evaluation Item(s):

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ Foundational Quality | ☐ Everyday Routines | ☐ Language and Literacy |
| ☐ Learning Experiences | ☐ Structure | |

SPECIFIC: What exactly will you accomplish?

MEASURABLE: How will you know when you have reached this goal?

ACCOUNTABLE: Who will be responsible for the different parts of this goal?

RESOURCES NEEDED: What support and resources will I need to complete this goal?

TIME-BOUND: When will this goal be achieved?

GOAL #4

This goal will impact the following Environment Self-Evaluation Item(s):

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ Foundational Quality | ☐ Everyday Routines | ☐ Language and Literacy |
| ☐ Learning Experiences | ☐ Structure | |

SPECIFIC: What exactly will you accomplish?

MEASURABLE: How will you know when you have reached this goal?

ACCOUNTABLE: Who will be responsible for the different parts of this goal?

RESOURCES NEEDED: What support and resources will I need to complete this goal?

TIME-BOUND: When will this goal be achieved?

GOAL #5

This goal will impact the following Environment Self-Evaluation Item(s):

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☐ Foundational Quality | ☐ Everyday Routines | ☐ Language and Literacy |
| ☐ Learning Experiences | ☐ Structure | |

SPECIFIC: What exactly will you accomplish?

MEASURABLE: How will you know when you have reached this goal?

ACCOUNTABLE: Who will be responsible for the different parts of this goal?

RESOURCES NEEDED: What support and resources will I need to complete this goal?

TIME-BOUND: When will this goal be achieved?